

# Earth Day 2004

## Earth Day Energy Fair

*Bring the kids to this free, family event in Downtown Normal!*

**Saturday, April 24, 2004 1:00-4:00 pm  
on the Constitution Trail  
between College Ave. and North St.**

### Live Entertainment

Vocalist Naomi Hills, Local Band "Backs Against the Wall," and a variety of other musical and dramatic performances

### Contest Awards

McLean County Recycling and Waste Reduction awards, the EAC's "World of Difference" award, and our T-shirt art project award

### Giveaways

Free energy efficiency information and free compact fluorescent light bulbs

### Booths and Vendors

Residential Energy Information, Agriculture, Organic Produce, Soil Analysis, Gardening, Environmental Education, and more

### Door Prize

Sign up to win a Vac 500 Foodsaver (a \$130 value) from Tilia Direct

### Kids' Activities

Keep the kids busy with Face Painting, a

### Food

Walking Tacos, a Bake Sale, and more

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## The Ecology Action Center "Re-Sale"

*Reuse, recycle, shop, and support the EAC all at the same time!*

**Saturday, April 24, 2004 10:00 am - 3:30 pm  
at the Ecology Action Center  
202 West College Ave., Normal**

- Furniture
- Kitchen items
- Wall art
- Lamps
- Home Décor
- Antiques
- Collectibles
- Automobile memorabilia
- Disney items
- Toys
- Puzzles and games
- and much more!

**(We need your used items! See page 8 for details)**

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**MARCH  
2004**

# Earth Day Raffle

**Great Prizes! All proceeds support the Ecology Action Center!**

Drawing will be held at the Earth Day Energy Fair  
Saturday, April 24 at 3:45 pm  
on the Constitution Trail  
between College Ave. and North St., Normal

Tickets \$5.00 or six for \$25.00  
available at

**Ecology Action Center • Wild Country • The Garlic Press  
Common Ground • Wild Birds Unlimited • Vitesse Bicycle Shop  
Garden on Wheels**

## Prizes Include:

- Swifty Kayak (a \$370 value)  
-Wild Country
- Wildlife Prairie Park Overnight Stay  
(a \$127 value)  
-Wildlife Prairie Park
- Le Creuset Cookware (a \$75 value)  
-The Garlic Press
- Zhumell Binoculars (a \$90 value)  
-Zhumell
- Soil Analysis (a \$45 value)  
-Eco-Lawn
- Family Cruise (a \$35 value)  
-The Spirit of Peoria Riverboat
- Massage (a \$35 value)  
-Fox and Hounds Day Spa
- Ned Kelly's Gift Certificate (a \$15 value)  
-Ned Kelly's
- Canoe Trip (a \$50 value)  
-The Mackinaw River Partnership
- And more...

## **Call for Volunteers**

(Contact the EAC if you would like to help with any of the following events.)

### **Earth Day Energy Fair** (Saturday, April 24)

Volunteers are needed before, during, and after the fair to set up, decorate, sell raffle tickets, tear down, and do a variety of other odd jobs.

### **Ecology Action Center "Re-Sale"** (Saturday, April 24)

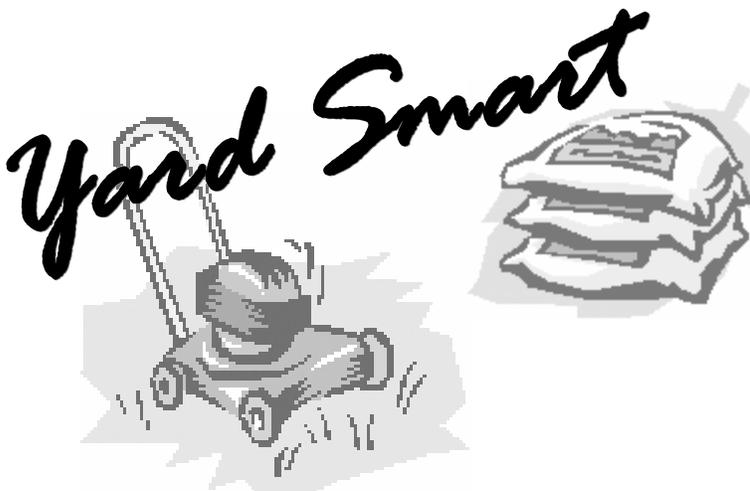
Volunteers are needed both the day before and the day of the sale to price, haul, and sell items.

### **Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Collection Day** (Saturday, May 1)

Volunteers are needed the day of the collection to help collect non-hazardous items, direct traffic, and hand out survey forms.

### **Electronics Recycling** (The third Saturday of every month—the next one is April 17)

Volunteers are needed each month to assist with collection.



### Is your yard ecologically “smart”?

Would you like to be recognized for providing a healthy atmosphere around your home? The Yard Smart campaign, sponsored by Living Upstream, JWP Audubon, and the Ecology Action Center, encourages our community members to maintain healthy, chemical free yards by recognizing local homeowners who use ecological practices on their own property.

#### Yard Smart means...

- Working with (not against) nature.
- Supporting native diversity in plants and wildlife.
- Preventing the pollution of air, soil, and water.
- Conserving natural resources such as water and fossil fuels.
- Avoiding or minimizing the use of synthetic pesticides and high-nitrogen fertilizers.
- Providing a safe place for children, adults, pets, and wildlife.

If you would like to be recognized for maintaining a healthy, ecologically sound yard, you can apply for Yard Smart certification by calling the Ecology Action Center: **(309) 454-3169**, or by emailing us: [eac@ecologyactioncenter.org](mailto:eac@ecologyactioncenter.org). You will receive a lawn sign that designates your yard as Yard Smart, and tells your neighbors that your lawn is safe for kids and pets.

#### “How can I be Yard Smart?”

##### Feed the soil

Rake about an inch of compost into your lawn each spring.

##### Feed the grass

Leave clippings on the lawn.  
Use organic fertilizers.

##### Re-seed annually

A thick turf helps control weeds.

##### Mow high, mow less

Set your mower to its highest setting, and keep the blades sharp.

##### Water less, but longer

Once a week in the early morning for several hours.

##### Control weeds

Try corn gluten as a pre-emergent this spring.

##### Deal with pests naturally

Beneficial nematodes can control most common lawn pests.

## Yard Smart Walk

JWP Audubon will host a “Yard Smart Walk”

Saturday morning, June 19 (time TBA). Participants will have the opportunity to see how various local homeowners have established and maintained ecologically safe yards through the use of native plants, composting methods, and low-mow techniques. For further information, contact the EAC: **(309) 454-3169** or [eac@ecologyactioncenter.org](mailto:eac@ecologyactioncenter.org).

# Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day

**Saturday, May 1, 2004**  
**8:00 am-3:00 pm**  
**The Interstate Center**  
**Bloomington, IL**



The Ecology Action Center, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), and the University of Illinois Extension are co-sponsoring the annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day. This event is open to all Illinois residents and is free of charge.

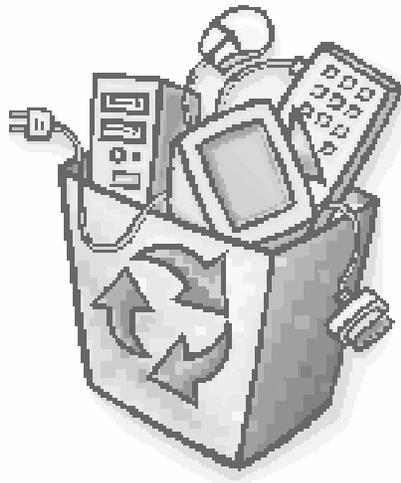
Household hazardous wastes are products which are commonly used for gardening, cleaning, and other types of home and automobile maintenance, but which can pose health threats and endanger the environment if disposed of improperly. Although the frugal purchase and use of these products are most important in addressing concerns associated with them, community collection days deal with their proper disposal and give residents the opportunity to *responsibly* dispose of them without harming themselves, their families, or their environment. The IEPA strongly encourages Illinois citizens to take advantage of this collection project as an alternative to storing or improperly disposing of hazardous chemicals.

## Electronics Recycling

An Electronics Recycling event will accompany the Household Hazardous Waste Collection. Devices both in working and non-working condition will be accepted. All functioning electronics will be refurbished and redistributed to individuals and families in need. All donations are tax deductible.

A variety of electronic items will be collected, including:

- computers
- monitors
- computer or electronic components
- copiers and other office equipment
- phone systems
- cell phones
- televisions
- VCRs and DVD players
- radios (all types)
- CD, tape, and record players
- cameras (all types)
- microwaves
- small kitchen appliances



\*\*\*Prescription eyeglasses will also be collected for recycling.\*\*\*

*Note: Because smoke detectors contain a small amount of radioactive material (which does not pose a health threat unless opened) they cannot be collected for electronics recycling. Smoke detectors should be shipped back to the manufacturer for proper disposal.*

## Acceptable Hazardous Waste Items:

- oil-based paint
- paint thinners
- herbicides
- pesticides
- insecticides
- old gasoline
- pool chemicals
- cleaning products
- mercury
- household batteries
- used motor oil
- drain cleaners
- lawn chemicals
- hobby chemicals
- antifreeze
- solvents
- aerosol products
- fluorescent bulbs
- lead acid batteries
- fire extinguishers

## Unacceptable Hazardous Waste Items:

- latex paints
- medical wastes
- business/commercial wastes
- agricultural waste
- explosives
- fireworks
- smoke detectors
- institutional wastes
- farm machinery oil

# Alternatives for Hazardous Household Products

If you use up or dispose of this product...	You can replace it by doing this...
Rug or Upholstery Cleaner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sprinkle stains with dry cornstarch or baking soda and vacuum.</li> <li>• Use soap-based, non-aerosol cleaners.</li> </ul>
Glass Cleaner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use 2 teaspoons white distilled vinegar in 1 cup warm water.</li> </ul>
Furniture Polish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use mineral oil.</li> <li>• Use a mixture of 2 parts olive or vegetable oil and 1 part lemon juice. Heat the mixture and cool before using.</li> </ul>
Metal Polishes for Copper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rub with a paste of equal parts flour, salt, and white vinegar or lemon juice. Rinse.</li> </ul>
Metal Polishes for Copper and Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Polish with non-gel toothpaste.</li> <li>• Scrub with a paste of equal parts of baking soda, soap, and water.</li> </ul>
General Cleaners and Disinfectants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a water-dampened cloth.</li> <li>• Mix 1/2 cup borax in 1 gallon hot water. Cool before using.</li> </ul>
Toilet Bowl Cleaner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix 1/2 cup borax in 1 gallon hot water. Cool before using.</li> </ul>
Tub and Tile Cleaner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrub with baking soda or a combination of cream of tartar and 3% non-bleaching hydrogen peroxide.</li> </ul>
Oven Cleaner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place a shallow pan of water in heated oven. The steam will loosen the grime.</li> <li>• Warm the oven. Moisten spills and sprinkle with baking soda, salt, or a nontoxic abrasive (if the oven is not self- or continuous-cleaning). Scrub.</li> </ul>
Drain opener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a plunger.</li> <li>• Pour in 1/2 cup vinegar and 1 cup baking soda. Cover tightly for 1 minute and follow with boiling water.</li> </ul>
Roach Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix 1 part borax or boric acid, 1 part flour, and 1 part sugar and set out in warm, dark places. Replace periodically.</li> <li>• Seal all cracks and crevices.</li> </ul>
Mothballs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use fresh cedar chips or balls or use lavender flowers.</li> </ul>
Ant Repellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash countertops with a mixture of equal parts vinegar and water.</li> <li>• Plant mint around your house.</li> <li>• Scatter coffee grounds around the outside of the house.</li> <li>• Bait ant hills with corn meal.</li> <li>• Use boric acid for ants, roaches, and other crawling insects.</li> </ul>
Aphid Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a few drops of liquid dishwasher soap in a quart of water and spray on plants.</li> <li>• Add ladybugs to your garden.</li> </ul>
Flea and Tick Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed brewer's yeast and garlic to pets.</li> <li>• Add 1 teaspoon vinegar to 1 quart water per 40 pounds pet weight and use as a dip or spray.</li> <li>• Spread diatomaceous earth moistened with water on the yard (1 lb per 1000 sq ft). Avoid breathing dust.</li> </ul>
Houseplant Insecticide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash leaves with soapy water, then rinse.</li> </ul>
Weed Killer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dig or pull weeds when the soil is wet, keep them cut to the ground, or use organic gardening products.</li> </ul>
Enamel or Oil-based Paints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use latex and water-based paints instead.</li> </ul>
Paint Thinners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use mercury-free or latex paints.</li> </ul>

# "Septic" Systems in Illinois: Surface and Sub-Surface Wastewater Treatment and Dis- posal

Un-sewered rural or suburban residential, business, and industrial developments do not allow the diversion of wastewater to a centralized treatment facility that is typically used in urban environments. Traditional "septic" (also known as "on-site" or "decentralized") system designs use gravity diversion of the wastewater to an underground septic tank followed by a drain (or "tile") field, which then slowly discharges the treated wastewater underground. This *sub-surface* discharge is usually limited to smaller-volume, intermittent wastewater discharges in order to avoid soil saturation, which may limit treatment effectiveness. Alternative *surface* on-site systems release treated wastewater to lakes, rivers, streams, or ground surfaces when the amount of wastewater, soil, or other site characteristics make traditional sub-surface discharging systems less viable.

Both surface and sub-surface systems are designed to reduce contaminant levels that may be of concern to public health and the environment. However, treated wastewater may still contain contaminants of concern, including potentially disease-causing microorganisms and various plant nutrients such as nitrate and phosphate. Sub-surface treatment, unlike surface treatment, limits access of humans and other animals to this treated wastewater.

Since 1972, the national Clean Water Act has regulated the volumes and contaminant levels of wastewater discharged to lakes, rivers, streams, and ground surfaces in the U.S. The primary authority for regulating these discharges has been delegated from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to the environmental protection authorities of most states.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) regulates surface discharges that exceed 1,500 gallons per day, which includes most large businesses, industries, and municipalities. The IEPA issues NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permits that help establish and enforce regulations on wastewater. It is difficult for state authorities to regulate the thousands of existing smaller-volume (1,500 gallons per day or less) surface discharges through the traditional NPDES permit system due to economic and personnel constraints. Therefore, through an agreement between the IEPA and the Illinois Department of Public Health

(IDPH), smaller-volume surface wastewater discharges are regulated by IDPH through the Private Sewage Disposal Licensing Act.

The USEPA promotes the concept that surface systems should be used only under conditions where there is no feasible alternative. This means that surface systems should not be used when a sub-surface system is possible, given the soil conditions and other characteristics of the proposed building site. However, there may also be economic considerations, since a sub-surface system may be more expensive under some circumstances than a surface system. But maintenance issues should also be taken into consideration, as some surface systems may include components such as pumps, disinfection systems, and aeration units that require more stringent design and upkeep than simpler sub-surface systems. Monitoring of the treated wastewater may also be necessary to ensure that these systems are operating as designed.

Nationally, proposals to address the issue of smaller-volume surface wastewater discharges have ranged from requiring NPDES permits for all existing surface systems to progressively managing these types of systems more effectively. The problem with retroactively requiring NPDES permits is that it would place a substantial economic burden on the thousands of Illinoisans currently using these types of systems. Progressively increasing management, including design, permitting, designer/contractor/installer licensing, maintenance, and monitoring requirements, may have the indirect effect of increasing the cost of surface systems enough to encourage developers to choose sub-surface systems whenever possible. Home buyers may then choose to purchase homes with sub-surface systems because of the decreased relative costs of maintenance and monitoring. Educating homeowners, realtors, developers, public health and environmental protection workers, and other "stakeholders" is a key component to helping everyone involved make informed, responsible choices concerning wastewater treatment and discharge.

The IEPA and the IDPH held "round table" discussions at four locations in the state of Illinois during January and February, 2004 to encourage citizen education and response to these concerns. Information about these types of systems is available at the following websites:

- <http://www.epa.gov/owm/mtb/decent> (USEPA)
- <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/permits/waste-water/index.html> (IEPA)
- <http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/prisewage.htm> (IDPH)



## Normal Community Energy Program Update

As part of the Normal Community Energy Program (NCEP), the EAC has worked to improve the environment through energy conservation in homes and buildings, to help residents and businesses save money, and to promote economic development. In January 2004, we held a Community Energy Expo at The Chateau that featured 12 seminars and 18 vendor booths to provide information about selected energy management products and services. Over 80 people attended the successful one-day event.

The NCEP offers the following resources:

- 30-minute seminars for residential organizations. Participating Normal residents receive an energy awareness kit (\$50 value).
- Interactive displays that provide comparisons of electricity generation (conventional vs. renewable), insulation materials (fiberglass, icynene foam, and cellulose), and light bulbs (incandescent vs. compact fluorescent).
- Energy education curriculum for Normal elementary and junior high classrooms. Our school resources meet Illinois Learning Standards.

- Energy-efficiency grants to Normal businesses. Our grants match up to 50% (maximum of \$1000) of the cost for energy improvements in any Normal business facility. Funding is still available – the process is very simple, but **the deadline for applications is May 7, 2004**. Projects must be completed by May 21, 2004.

Though the NCEP is set to expire on May 31, 2004, the positive impact of this program on our community has only just begun. Since the inception of the NCEP in June 2002, public awareness of our resource capacity has increased. Many residents and businesses regularly contact the EAC for information about improving energy efficiency in their homes and buildings. On behalf of the Town of Normal, we will reapply to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to renew the NCEP grant. We also hope to expand the program to Bloomington residents and businesses. No matter what happens, the EAC will continue to serve as a resource center for energy information and education.

Please contact us if you would like more information:

Julie Elzanati  
Assistant Director/Community Energy Coordinator  
**(309) 454-3169**  
[eac@ecologyactioncenter.org](mailto:eac@ecologyactioncenter.org)

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## Top Five Tips for Saving Energy in Your Home

### 1. Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.

They last up to 10 times longer, reduce energy consumption up to 75%, and decrease emissions of carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and sulfur.

### 2. Turn off lights when you leave the room or the house.

Lighting accounts for about 25% of the average home's electrical bill.

### 3. Weatherize to reduce air infiltration and leakage in your home.

The amount of energy that escapes through windows and doors in the U.S. every winter is the equivalent of all the oil that flows through the Alaskan pipeline each year.

### 4. Install a programmable thermostat.

Let the program do the work—you will avoid using your thermostat as a manual switch.

### 5. Install low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators to use less hot water.

A standard shower head uses about 5-7 gallons of water per minute. If each member of a family of four takes a daily 5-minute shower, they will use more than 700 gallons of water every week—a 3-year supply of drinking water for one person.



Recycle **Ecology Action Center Newsletter** by passing it on to someone else after you have read it.



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## Donate Your Used Items to the Ecology Action Center "Re-Sale"

Do you have used stuff lying around? Your "trash" might be someone else's treasure!  
Here's your opportunity to reuse and recycle your stuff by donating it to the EAC's "Re-Sale."

We are looking for:

- Furniture
- Kitchen and Household Goods
- Home Décor
- Wall Art
- Mirrors
- Lamps
- Antiques



- Collectibles
- Toys
- Stuffed animals
- Puzzles and Games
- Other children's items
- Anything else we might be able to sell (no clothes, please)



Bring all donations to the EAC between Friday, April 16 and Friday, April 23 during our regular hours (1:00-6:00 pm Monday-Thursday and 1:00-5:00 pm Friday & Saturday).

The sale will begin at 10:00 am on Earth Day (Saturday, April 24) and will run until 3:30 pm (during the Earth Day Energy Fair).

All proceeds will go to support the EAC.



**(Volunteers are also needed to help prepare for and run the sale. See page 7 for details.)**

