



The Ecology Action Center News

Fall 2007

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Ecology Action Center

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9-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

Free-4-All!



Join us Saturday, September 15 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Anderson Park on College Ave. for the Ecology Action Center's Freecycle™ Free-4-All!

Just bring unwanted items (that are legal and appropriate for all ages) to the park and take "wanted" items home. Freecycle is an online gifting exchange open to everyone

who wants to find a new home for items that can still be used to keep them out of the landfill.

Suggested items to bring: clothing, household decorative items, kitchen items, books and magazines, toys and games, or anything you no longer have a use for and believe other people would. Then, browse through items others brought and take what you'll use. You are not required to drop off items to be able to pick some new ones up. What a great way to keep unwanted items out of landfills and be Earth-friendly.

The event is free and open to the public. If you have questions, call the Ecology Action Center at (309) 454-3169.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Coming

Clean out your garage or basement this fall. Sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Ecology Action Center and the University of Illinois Extension, the **Household Hazardous Waste Collection** will take place **Saturday, October 6** from **8 a.m.-3 p.m.** at the **Interstate Center**, 2301 W. Market St. in Bloomington.

This is your chance to get rid of any potentially hazardous materials you may have around your house or garage.

Acceptable wastes: unwanted medications (no illegal substances), oil-based paints, paint thinners, pesticides and lawn chemicals, old gasoline, pool chemicals, mercury, cleaning products, hobby chemicals, household or lead acid batteries, solvents, drain cleaners, aerosol products, fluorescent bulbs, and fire extinguishers.

The materials will be collected by the IEPA and properly disposed of. We will have a special Saturday Collection of Electronics at this event. Get rid of your unwanted electronics on Saturday, October 6.

Help us spread the word. If you have anyone you can tell or if you have a newsletter, email group, even a group of friends that might benefit from knowing about this event, please let them know. For more information see our website at www.ecologyactioncenter.org.



Recycling Help

**Americans
throw away 2.5
million plastic
bottles every
hour**

EAC Staff

Michelle Covi
Director
DeAnna Belz
Assistant Director
Michele Bell
Environmental
Educator

Have a question? Ask the Recycling Guru!

Recycling Guru,



I noticed that some recycling centers only accept certain numbers of plastic. What do the numbers mean and why don't recycling centers accept all types of plastic?

Signed,
Confused Recycler

Confused Recycler,

If you look on the bottom of a plastic water bottle or milk jug, you will see a triangle with a number inside of it. That number identifies the type of plastic that the bottle is made of. Many recycling centers only accept plastic numbers 1 and 2 because they are the most commonly used. Plastic 1 is used to make bottled soft drinks, bottled water, etc. Plastic 2 is used to make plastic milk bottles and washing up liquid. Plastics 3-6 are used to make shrink wrap, dry cleaning bags, bottle caps, plastic tableware and protective packaging. Plastic 7 is any kind of recyclable plastic that does not fit into categories 1-6. Each number of plastic has a different chemical property, which means that different types of plastics cannot be combined. Local recycling rules depend upon the availability of plastic manufacturers who use recycled plastic. In Bloomington/Normal, bottle or jar shaped plastics are accepted in curbside and drop-off programs.

Signed,
Recycling Guru

Reducing Pollution at Area Lakes

Evergreen Lake and Lake Bloomington are important parts of our community water systems. Both lakes, though, are experiencing increased phosphorus levels and increased sediment, as well as other issues.

. Meetings are occurring now to address ways to reduce pollutants to meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) as set by the Environmental Protection Agency. The TMDL is the EPA's way of addressing water quality impairments in lakes and streams by setting a goal level for pollution reduction.

The Ecology Action Center has initiated the Lake Smart program this summer which can help to reach the TMDL goals for our Lakes. The Lake Smart program encourages area residents to reduce runoff and prevent pollution from entering the water. This is possible by using fewer chemicals, integrating native plants, and conserving water. A traveling educational display has visited Towanda and Hudson Library and will visit Carlock next.

Watershed planning requires local input and participation. You can find out more and become involved. More information can be found at mcleantmdl.com.



What's New at the EAC

Meet the Interns

Stephanie Hildebrandt is an English Publishing major and German minor at ISU. She is currently a senior working on finishing up her last semester! She loves animals; especially cats and is a TV addict. Her favorite shows are Lost and Family Guy.

Leslie Morrison is a senior environmental studies major at IWU. She is president of IWU's student environment group the Sierra Student Coalition. In her free time, Leslie obsesses over college basketball, High School Musical, and Survivor.

Cheryl Daley is a senior English/Publishing major with a minor in psychology. In her free time she enjoys exercising on the Constitution Trail and watching Chelsea Lately on cable.

EAC Board of Directors 2007-2008

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Students help to "Keep it Clean"

On August 25, freshman Illinois Wesleyan students stenciled storm drains in Normal as part of each city's storm water pollution prevention program. In Normal, the program is co-sponsored by the EAC. Storm drains near north Normal were stenciled with the message "Drains to Stream, Keep it Clean." Residents received an educational flier on their door informing them of the project and ways that they can help keep the water clean.



Bloomington and most of Normal are part of the Sangamon Watershed. Sugar Creek and tributaries are the major waterways through the cities and the quality of the water depends on the activities of residents. Help keep our water clean by keeping inlets clear of litter and yard debris. Do not rake or sweep leaves, grass or soil into streets to reduce sediment and clogging of drain systems.

Don't dump- Dispose of waste properly, pick up litter and recycle.

Reduce Lawn Chemicals- Avoid applying anything before a storm.

Pick up After Pooch- Pet waste has bacteria and viruses that make water unsafe for humans.

If you would like to get your neighborhood involved, call the EAC to organize a neighborhood storm water event. If you would like to volunteer, check out the calendar on our web site at www.ecologyactioncenter.org for dates and times.



Simple ways to help

One quart of oil can contaminate 2 million gallons of water a year.

According to The Wall Street Journal, the U.S. goes through 100 billion plastic shopping bags a year.

Want to lower water bills?

Thanks to high water bills, droughts and water restrictions, rain barrels have come back into use. Rain barrels collect rain water which can be used to water plants and landscaping. Normally, this water flows from the roof of a house, through the yard, through the pavement, into a storm drain, and then into our creeks, rivers, and lakes. This runoff water is full of pesticides, fertilizer, animal waste, and soap from car washing. Rain barrels keep this contaminated water out of our rivers and lakes and use it in a beneficial way to keep our plants healthy.

A spigot is drilled into the barrel 1 to 2 inches from the bottom. This spigot allows people to drain water from the barrel into a bucket which they can use to easily water their plants.

A rain barrel can be purchased from an internet store for about \$100 or a recycled barrel can be requested from at the Ecology Action Center and turned into a rain barrel.

Rain barrels should not be made from garbage cans because they degrade in the sunlight and could cause algae to form in the water.

To use a rain barrel, place it on concrete blocks so that there is enough room under the rain barrel to place a bucket. Make sure to tie down the barrel in case of strong winds. The barrel should have a hose or pipe at the top that connects to the gutter downspout.

The water collected in the rain barrels is not for drinking because it is not filtered. The rain barrels should also have a lid for safety reasons, to keep bugs out and to slow evaporation.

At the end of the rainy season, rain barrels should be rinsed out and stored where they will not freeze.



Cloth Bags

Getting tired of those pesky plastic bags starting to pile up? Then it's time to do away with them! The EAC is selling recycled cotton cloth bags for \$6.00 a piece. Using a cloth bag to carry your groceries in is a great way to help the environment. Plastic bags cause litter and are responsible for killing 100,000 whales, seals, turtles and other marine animals each year worldwide. So the next time you have to choose between paper or plastic, choose neither and put your groceries in your cloth bag.

You can purchase your cloth bag at the Ecology Action Center in Normal or at Common Ground.



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

The first real recycling program was introduced in New York City in the 1890s.

A food mile is how far food travels from the farmer who produces it to the consumer who eats it.

McLean County Recycles Day

On Saturday, November 10, the residents of the Bloomington/Normal community will be coming together with the Ecology Action Center and the Children's Discovery Museum to celebrate McLean County Recycles Day. The program will begin at 11 a.m.

At 12:30 p.m., the winners of the "2008 EAC Calendar" contest will be announced. The talented artists will each be given a prize bag. Once the winners have received their prizes, free refreshments and pizza will be served to all guests.

Please join us to celebrate McLean County Recycles Day!



Conservation Cat made a special guest appearance at last year's McLean County Recycles Day.

Welcome to our New Members (July and August)

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Mary Anderson | Kristin Mroz | Cheryl Daley |
| Amber Williams | Tracy & Judy Bass | Amy Aalberts |
| Janet Tulley | Janet Guaderrama | Carol Straka |
| Ron Hopper | Dave Horgenson | Carol Csanda |
| Shirley Craig | David and Cari Korowicki | Lisa Thomas |
| Meryl & Michael Brown | Sandy Stephenson | Pat Furnance |
| Jan McNutt | Pam & Ramiro Bosquez | Michael Baran |
| Allen & Julie Jacobs | Joann Steinberg | Candy Rogers |
| Bob Warfield | Tony Ragusa & Billy Stroud | |
| Linda Woith | Ryan & Gretchen Church | |
| John Bowen | Nelda Smith | |
| Julian Westerhout | Kathy McKinney | |
| Alka Arya-Ahlstrom | Sue McKinney | |
| Raymond Mucha & Annilee Rohrscheib | | |

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



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Coming Up...

Upcoming Events

September

- 15** Free-4-All
Anderson Park
- 18** Storm drain Stenciling, 3:45 p.m.
Chiddix Junior High, Normal
- 22** Storm drain Stenciling, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
Fell Park Neighborhood, North Normal
- 29** Storm drain Stenciling, 10 a.m.—12 p.m.
Fox Creek Subdivision, Bloomington

October

- 20** Storm drain Stenciling, 10 a.m.– 12 p.m.
Pleasant Hills Neighborhood, Normal
- 27** Le Roy Health and Safety Day

November

- 10** McLean County Recycles Day
- 13** Wellness and Environmental Fair at ISU
- 14** *Trashed* with the EAC, 6:30 p.m.

Get Trashed **with the EAC**

Join the EAC for a movie night featuring the movie *Trashed*. This is the story of garbage... American style. The movie takes a hard look at the American garbage business. The movie will be showing in the Normal Public Library Community Room on Wednesday, November 14 at 6:30 p.m. It has a running time of 77 minutes. There will be free popcorn and soda. Let's celebrate America Recycles Day together!