



The Ecology Action Center News

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Reduce Waste for the Holidays

This is the time of year when people are beginning to do their holiday shopping, which means literally tons of gift wrap, cards, boxes, and plastic are about to be ripped open and then put into the landfill. According to CA.gov, between Thanksgiving and the New Year, an extra million tons of trash are generated nationwide each week. Enough ribbon is thrown out to tie a bow around the Earth! This year, people can save themselves money and help the environment by going green this holiday season. It's easier than you think!

When you go shopping for gifts, bring your own bag. A cloth bag can fit many small items. A cloth bag is also non-transparent. Many stores use see-through plastic bags. By using a cloth bag, you can bring home presents without anyone being able to see what they are. To buy a cloth bag, come visit the EAC or go to Common Ground grocery in downtown Bloomington. You could also make the wrap part of the present. For example, if you are giving someone new silverware, you could wrap it in new kitchen towels.

Unless you're one of those people who carefully peel off the tape so as not to destroy the wrapping paper so that you can use it again one day, wrapping paper is not reusable; but brown paper bags are.

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Turning Bloomington-Normal Green



Imagine Green Bloomington-Normal (IGBN) is a group committed to environmentally sustaining the community. Their goals for the future of

Bloomington-Normal are creating more paths for walking and biking; getting more convenient public transportation; improving recycling programs; obtaining more local food; and getting people together to talk about sustaining the environment. The Imagine Green Bloomington-Normal web site can also teach some "green lingo" to those who are unfamiliar with "green" words.

Now is the time to start sustaining the environment. IGBN is working toward that goal by trying to sustain the environment in Bloomington-Normal.

To find out more information or get involved go to www.bn-green.org.

Ecology Action Center

202 W. College Avenue
Normal Illinois 61761
Phone: (309) 454-3169
Fax: (309) 454-7508

www.ecologyactioncenter.org
9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.



What's New At the EAC

Turn off the
lights when you
are out of the
room.

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Message from Michelle Covi, Outgoing Director

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the staff, former staff, members, interns, volunteers, board members and former board members of the Ecology Action Center for all the support and encouragement that I have received over the more than 9 years that I have served as director of the EAC.

I remember the first time I stepped into the Hewett House and became a member shortly after moving to Normal from Georgia twelve and a half years ago. The following February, I stopped in for a volunteer information meeting and met Anne McGowan for the first time. Anne has always been remarkably generous with her time and resources, and she trained me in graciousness and gave me insight into the community. Michele Bell, who was president of the Board when I became director, was a model for me in teaching— she is so good with children of all ages. Many thanks to Jo Porter and Nancy Armstrong, board presidents, who helped me through several years of learning how a non-profit works and helped develop and professionalize many of our operations.

Former and current staff members, Julie Elzanati, Adam Aspbury, Caroline Wade, DeAnna Belz and Michele Bell have all had a lasting impact and I have been honored to be able to work with them. Unfortunately, I don't have the space here to thank everyone who contributed to the EAC over the years, but I believe our work has been a community effort and have been grateful to serve as a leader.

I am hoping to continue making a positive impact on the environment and with the people I meet in my new life in North Carolina. I know that the EAC has an excellent leader in Michael Brown and I ask you, the members, to continue your support of EAC's worthy work.

Message from Michael Brown, Incoming Director

I am very excited about the opportunity to lead such a great organization as the Ecology Action Center. I bring with me experience from a diverse background of environmental work ranging from working in environmental health with the Peoria City/County Health Department, ecological restoration with Peoria Wilds not-for-profit, management of a 320-acre educational/interpretive park with the Peoria Park District, conservation projects and environmental education with the Peace Corps in Bulgaria, and training volunteers for ecological monitoring with the Illinois EcoWatch. I look forward to meeting all of the great volunteers, partners, and supporters of the EAC; please feel free to stop by and introduce yourself. Most importantly, I wish to thank Michelle Covi for all of her great work during the past 9+ years and wish her well in her future endeavors. You will be missed Michelle!

I'm Dreaming of a Green Holiday

Find organic gifts for the holidays.

Green Gifts for the Holidays

If you're looking to help the environment this holiday season, giving green gifts is a great way to start. Here is a list of ten green holiday presents.

1. Organic chocolate— Organic cacao beans do not contain chemicals.
2. Clothing made of organic cotton— Other cotton uses pesticides and fertilizers.
3. Recycled Crafts Box by Laura C. Martin— Create different projects for children. Available in all bookstores for \$10.95 or less.
4. Global Warming Board Game— Keep Cool: Gambling with the Climate! To order call 323-525-1948.
5. National Parks Monopoly— Order through the National Park Foundation or www.amazon.com.
6. Chico bag— reusable, stylish bag for carrying groceries, or other items.
7. Recycled jewelry— Find beautiful vintage jewelry at www.greenkarat.com.
8. Sustainable food cookbook— Find eco-friendly recipes at your local bookstore.
9. Organic bouquets— Send beautiful flowers to your loved ones. www.organicbouquet.com
10. Bonsai plant— Give a unique plant.

For more suggestions visit www.lowimpactliving.com.

Make creative wrapping paper by decorating a brown paper bag.

Reduce your holiday waste continued

You can still give nice-looking gifts to your friends and family without hurting the environment. Here's what to do: find some brown paper bags (the kind you use to carry home groceries in). Gather any materials you would like to decorate the bags with, such as markers, crayons, bows, ribbons, or gel pens. Decorate the bag any way you like. Then you can either cut off the handles and wrap a gift as you would with wrapping paper; or you could use it as a gift bag and stuff it with newspaper if needed.



Once everyone is ready to unwrap their presents, set aside a box for reusable bows and ribbons. Also make sure to make a pile of reusable boxes. If the boxes cannot be used again, remember to recycle them. You can also save your cards and cut them up so that you can use them as gift tags for next year. If you were given any electronics or appliances, make sure to donate the old ones.

By following these tips, you can help reduce waste and save yourself some money. Happy holidays!

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



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202 W. College Ave. Normal, IL 61761
www.ecologyactioncenter.org

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Phone: 309-454-3169 Fax: 309-454-7508

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SPECIAL STUFF FOR 2008

EAC 2008 Calendar



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Normal, IL 61761
309-454-3169

2008

CALENDAR



Providing electric service in 70 counties.
Find out how to lessen energy costs at www.ameren.com.

Stop in the EAC or Bliss or Common Ground Grocery to purchase our EAC Calendar! Filled with community information, delightful artwork by local elementary school children, dates for EAC events, and interesting dates to remember. Enjoy environmental messages all year long! Perfect for holiday gift-giving. Limited number available.

SAVE THE DATE!



ILLINOIS SUSTAINABLE LIVING &
WELLNESS
EXPO

April 11-12, 2008

www.islwe.org

Location: Illinois Wesleyan University
Shirk Center, Bloomington

Hosted by: Ecology Action Center &
Illinois Wesleyan University
Wellness Center

Join over 100 exhibitors and 30 presenters to learn about the many aspects of sustainability and wellness. This event is free and open to the public.