

ecology action center news



Volume 12, Issue 3

Fall 2014

Buy your Tickets for Sustainable Gourmet!

By **Kris Hall**, EAC Assistant Director

The Ecology Action Center invites you to attend the ninth annual Sustainable Gourmet on Thursday, October 23, at 5:30 p.m. This popular fundraiser features artisanal local food, hors d'oeuvres, a tasting of organic wines, and a silent auction with fabulous sustainable items from local businesses and organizations.

This year the event will be held at Epiphany Farms at 220 E. Front Street in Bloomington, the home of local farm to fork creations. WGLT, Green Top Grocery, Dr. Matt Fraker and Dr. Sherri Thornton, Charlotte Brown and Ted Morris, and Springfield Electric are all generously sponsoring the fundraiser, proceeds of which benefit the Ecology Action Center and its important environmental education efforts for our community.

Tickets are \$40 and are available online or at the Ecology Action Center at 202 W. College Avenue Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tickets **must** be purchased in advance; the ticket sales deadline is October 20 or when tickets are sold out, whichever comes first. NOTE: this event has sold out the past four years in a row. Get your tickets early!

Hazardous Waste Collection Events

By **Michael Brown**, EAC Executive Director

Here at the EAC, we encourage all McLean County residents to safely dispose of household hazardous waste for the benefit of our environment and our community. Having recently received funding from the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal and McLean County for a collection event every other year, we are currently planning upcoming Fall 2015 and 2017 hazardous waste drives.

Nevertheless, we understand how important it is to you to be able to quickly get rid of those old chemicals you just found in your garage! The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency recently announced the fall schedule of Illinois hazardous waste collection events.

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Mark Your Calendar

September 26 & 27: We Care Twin Cities Races

October 9: Green Drinks at Medici

November 15: America Recycles Day at Illinois Wesleyan Henson Student Center

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- The Eco-friendly Way to Kill Fruit Flies
- Get prepared for winter and sign up for an energy analysis
- Last call for the We Care Races registration!



*Check it out:
EAC's Greenhouse
Gas Inventory
Baseline Report*

*Have you ever
wondered about
what sources
contribute to
Bloomington-
Normal's climate
change footprint?*

*Go to [www.ecology
actioncenter.org](http://www.ecologyactioncenter.org)
and check out our
newly released
baseline
Greenhouse Gas
Inventory report!*



Eliminating Fruit Flies, the Eco-Friendly way

By **Emily Cross**, Energy Program Coordinator

As we harvest the bounty from our gardens this fall, some unwanted creatures may try to make themselves home: fruit flies! The bane of many homeowners' existence, fruit flies only have about a 10 day lifespan and can lay hundreds of eggs at one time.

Fruit flies get their name because they love laying their eggs near the surface of fermenting (ripening) foods. They can also lay eggs in sink drains, garbage disposals, empty cans or bottles, and garbage bags.

While your first inclination at the sight of a fruit fly may be to rush to the grocery store and grab the nearest insecticide, these flies can be eliminated with an eco-friendly alternative.

While it may seem obvious, the first step is to always eliminate the flies' breeding ground — identify where they are hiding and make sure they cannot lay any more eggs in that spot. For example, scrub the inside of your sink drain, take out your garbage, and compost any organic materials that may be harboring flies. If at any point in time you get out or prepare food, make sure to clean up promptly!



What's lurking in your kitchen? Try these eco-friendly ways to get rid of any fruit fly intruders! *Photon_De, Creative Commons*

But before you compost *all* of that ripened fruit, save a little bit for your eco-trap!

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1) Start with your little piece of ripening fruit, like an old banana, tomato, or apple. If you don't have some on hand, you can substitute apple cider vinegar or red wine.

2) Get a small bowl and place your fruit, or a few teaspoons of vinegar or wine, in the bottom. Add a couple drops of dishwashing liquid.

3) Stretch a piece of clear plastic wrap over the bowl, making sure that you seal the plastic against the entire rim of the bowl.

4) Get a bamboo skewer or toothpick and poke a few holes in the plastic

wrap. Make sure that the holes are big enough for a fly to squeeze in.

5) Wait! With all other sources of food eliminated, flies will be drawn to the smell of ripening fruit. Because of the dishwashing liquid and clear plastic wrap, flies will become trapped. Wait for a day or two until it is full.

6) Rinse and repeat. Some larger infestations can require a few iterations, since the trap is only eliminating adult flies that have hatched, not any remaining eggs. If you're having trouble drawing flies in, try poking more holes or switching to a different bait.

Remember that during this time it is critical to keep the area clean and continue composting any spoiled fruits!

Hazardous waste, continued from page 1

You can bring the following items to these events: oil-based paint, paint thinners, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, old gasoline, pool chemicals, cleaning products, mercury, household batteries, used motor oil, drain cleaners, lawn chemicals, solvents, antifreeze, hobby chemicals, aerosol paints, fluorescent bulbs, and old pharmaceuticals.

Date	Location	Address
September 20	Cambridge Henry County	Henry County Fairgrounds 311 East North Street
September 27	Monticello Piatt County	904 Allerton Road
October 4	Lombard DuPage County	Public Works parking lot 1051 S. Hammerschmidt Avenue
October 11	Lincoln Logan County	Logan County Fairgrounds 1408 Short 11th Street
October 18	Oregon Ogle County	Ogle County Farm Bureau 421 W. Pines Road

Prepare your Home for Winter Savings

By **Emily Cross**, Energy Program
Coordinator

As we move into fall, there's more to look forward to this season than pumpkins and sweaters! With winter right around the corner, fall is the best time to prepare your home for colder weather and get your home prepped for energy savings throughout the season.

Although what may first come to mind when you think of energy savings is turning off the lights when you leave the room, your home has countless opportunities to achieve savings that are much more meaningful than flicking a switch! Here are a few to consider:

1. Check your attic insulation.



Ryan McFarland, Creative Commons

Even in newer homes, inadequate attic insulation is usually a primary source of uneven heating and cooling. In the

picture shown here, much more insulation is needed — if you can see the beams of your attic, that's a red flag that your attic is letting all of your heat escape. Also, make sure your attic hatch is insulated and sealed.

2. Seal up leaky areas.

Drafty areas are a number one issue for energy loss — and comfort loss in the winter! Check windows & doors for drafts or if you can see daylight through any cracks. Weatherstripping is an inexpensive fix and makes your insulation more effective!

3. Get an HVAC Check-up

Now is the time to get your HVAC system tuned up, change your air filter, and check around for leaks in your ductwork. Don't waste valuable hot air on inefficient HVAC systems! Call your unit's manufacturer to find an HVAC expert.

4. Sign up for an Energy Analysis!

If you are an Ameren or Nicor customer in Bloomington-Normal, go to **BNenergyBright.org**, sign up for an energy analysis and set a goal to get serious about energy savings. Our professional staff will visit your home and make recommendations on how you can best save energy.

LAST CALL!

With the We Care Twin Cities races just around the corner, now is your last chance to register!

2014 Race Lineup

September 26: GE Park

- 5:30 pm: Kid's Fun Run
- 6:00 pm: 5k Race

September 27: Eastview Christian Church

- 7:00 am: Half Marathon
- 7:30 am: 10k Race

Even if you don't feel like running, come on out to cheer on our runners and support your community!

The We Care Twin Cities race benefits the Ecology Action Center.

Find out more at www.wecaretwincitiesmarathon.org





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