



ECOLOGY NEWS

ACTION CENTER

Volume 17, Issue 1

Spring 2019

BN Green Events

April 11

Normal is Over Screening and Q & A with filmmaker Normal Theatre
ecologyactioncenter.org

April 13-21

BN Clean Up Week
BNcleanUp.org

April 18

6:00 pm—7:30 pm
Rain barrel workshop
sign up at
ecologyactioncenter.org

April 20

9:00 am—12:00 pm
Earth Day Trail & Creek Clean Up
sign up at
ecologyactioncenter.org

June 7

Vermicomposting Workshop for 6-17 year olds
Miller Park Zoo
sign up at
bloomingtonparks.org

August

Normal multi-family recycling goes into effect

September

McLean County Household Hazardous Waste Collection (tentative)
Donate and learn more at
HHWmclean.org

October

Sustainable Gourmet

Rain Barrel Workshop Season is Almost Here!

Spring is right around the corner which means the planting season will be here before we know it. Take advantage of the remaining time beforehand and attend one of our upcoming Rain Barrel Workshops in which individuals build their own water-saving, rainwater collection system. EAC provides all the materials, equipment, and training so that each participant goes home with a high-quality rain harvester.

The Ecology Action Center will hold a rain barrel workshop on **Thursday, April 18, at 6:00 p.m.** Register online via the BN Green Events calendar at ecologyactioncenter.org.

Ready-to-use rain barrels are also available for purchase at the Ecology Action Center. Collect rain from April showers, and use your rain barrel to water your May flowers!

If you built or bought an EAC rain barrel during or prior to 2011, please check to see if the lid of your barrel fits properly and there are no holes or gaps that would allow mosquitoes inside the barrel; they can fit through very small gaps or cracks. If your rain barrel seals poorly or has noticeable cracks/gaps – you can attend a new workshop and replace your old barrel for a new one with a secure lid at a reduced price.



Are you Yard Smart? Save The Date

The 17th annual Yard Smart Garden Walk will be held on Saturday, June 29 from 9 a.m. – noon with lunch and a presentation directly following. The EAC uses Yard Smart to promote environmentally friendly lawn and garden care practices so people can have beautiful, healthy, productive gardens without the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, which can wash into our storm water systems, and are harmful to wildlife and our health. We will post the event and registration form on the BN Green Events page in late April!

Normal Is Over Screening

7 p.m., Thursday, April 11 2019
Normal Theater

Q & A with filmmaker Renee Scheltema follows

Normal Is Over is a compelling and visually rich documentary directed by investigative TV-journalist Renée Scheltema. Her award-winning film is about humanity's wisest response to climate change, species extinction, the depletion of critical natural resources, income inequality and industrial control of our food production.

This unique documentary examines how our economic and financial system connects all these issues, and offers solutions, which could be implemented immediately, from practical everyday fixes to rethinking the overarching myths of our time.

Renée takes off on a multinational voyage, meeting not only prominent experts, but also everyday citizens who concentrate on matters such as organic agriculture, the banning of plastic, saving species, ecological economics, sustainable architecture, renewable energy, and more.

While this film is intended to challenge viewers on many different levels, it most of all offers hope.

normalisoverthemovie.com

Save Energy = Save \$\$\$

The cheapest kilowatt-hour is the one you never use! Did you know that our homes and businesses waste an average of 30% of the energy they pay for?

A lot of this waste comes from small inefficiencies like using light bulbs that are not LEDs, small electronics (TVs, game consoles, and phone chargers) left in standby mode, running the dishwasher when it is not full, washing clothes in hot water, and not setting your thermostat back when you are away or asleep.

You can save a lot of energy and money with simple efficiency improvements you can easily do yourself! Sign up for a \$20 home energy audit from the EAC, and we can help you identify areas of inefficiency and give you the information you need to make improvements! **Bnenergybright.org**

Light Bulb Recycling: A Bright Idea

Lightbulbs, string lights especially, are abundant during the winter season. Over time, these lights lose their luster or simply break. Old string lights can be dropped off for recycling Behr Metals (formerly Morris Tick). Larger lightbulbs however, require a different handling process depending on the type of bulb.

Compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs have replaced their incandescent predecessors over time. One of the components that make CFLs much more energy efficient is mercury. Mercury is a hazardous waste that is illegal to dispose of in the regular garbage due to potentially harmful effects should it be released into the environment. Thus, CFL bulbs are considered to be a hazardous waste that require proper disposal. This also includes fluorescent tubes.

Fortunately, you do not have to wait for a Household Hazardous Waste collection event or travel to a permanent facility to properly dispose of CFL bulbs or tubes. CFL bulbs may be taken to

Lowe's, Menard's, Home Depot, or Batteries + Bulbs.* Fluorescent tubes may be recycled at Batteries + Bulbs.*

If you have questions about recycling lightbulbs or other items you think may contain hazardous waste material, please check out the extensive recycling listings within RecycleCoach at RecycleBN.org, or call the Ecology Action Center at 309-454-3169.

**A small fee may apply.*

Community Solar: Clean Renewable Energy without the barrier of installation costs

Want to save money, invest in renewable energy without putting solar panels on your roof, and help the Ecology Action Center at the same time? Sign up for community solar!

Community solar is not only a great option for people who rent or for whom rooftop solar is not a viable or affordable option, it is a great option for anyone that lives in Ameren Illinois territory.

How it works:

1. Sign up at straightupsolar.com/powerup-eac/. If you use this special link, StraightUp Solar will make a donation to the EAC when you sign up.
2. StraightUp Solar sends you an official letter of intent.
3. Fill out the letter of intent with the amount of your electricity use you would like the community solar array to cover (90% for example), and provide your Ameren account number. Providing your account number allows StraightUp Solar to see how much energy you use on average so they can determine how many kW of the 2MW solar array they need to apportion to you to meet your coverage needs.
4. After the Illinois Power Agency permit lottery, StraightUp Solar will know how many of their arrays they get to build, and will reach out to people that signed letters of intent to begin the contract process.
5. Receive a contract from StraightUp Solar.
6. Check the supply rate they want to charge and compare it to your current supply rate. StraightUp Solar hopes to be able to help people save around 10% on their energy supply costs through a community solar subscription.
7. Sign your contract, and start getting power from the sun!

The energy production from the community solar array and your energy consumption at home are tracked by meters, and your energy account will be credited through virtual net metering for the energy your portion of the community solar array produces.

The highlights:

1. You are not committing to anything until you sign a contract. If you sign up with the EAC right now at straightupsolar.com/powerup-eac/ you can still decline at no cost prior to signing a contract if you decide community solar is not right for you.
2. If you move from one house in Ameren Illinois territory to another, you can take your community solar subscription with you.
3. You can save money on electric supply costs while contributing to renewable energy production in our state and reducing Illinois' greenhouse gas emissions.
4. You are supporting StraightUp Solar, a local business, and you are supporting the Ecology Action Center

Questions? Please reach out to our Assistant Director Larissa Armstrong at 309-454-3169 x.15 or larmsstrong@ecologyactioncenter.org.





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