



# ECOLOGY NEWS

ACTION CENTER

Volume 16, Issue 2

Summer 2018

## BN Green Events

### JUNE EVENTS

#### June 16, 2018

9 am—12pm  
Sugar Creek Stewards  
Workday  
Sign up at  
[Ecologyactioncenter.org](http://Ecologyactioncenter.org)

#### June 20, 2018

6 pm  
Rain Barrel Workshop  
Register at  
[ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org)

#### June 23, 2018

9 am— 12:30 pm  
Yard Smart Garden Walk  
Register at  
[ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org)

## EAC's Yard Smart Gardens and Upcoming Walk

Did you know the Ecology Action Center's landscape is a Yard Smart demonstration garden? The EAC green space is complete with native species, rain barrels, a rain garden, composting, and is chemical free. Our space is designed to be an example of a productive, beautiful, and functional yard that protects our water sources by reducing storm water runoff pollution and serves as a safe space for people and animals too. Cathy Bilow from Accent Nature LLC helped design our rain garden and much of our other current landscaping. She also provides regular landscaping clean-up and ongoing maintenance for the EAC to keep our gardens looking beautiful! When you come by the EAC you'll see Cathy's beautiful designs, along with the EAC's interpretive signage about our rain garden, native plants, the benefits of chemical-free lawns, composting, rain barrels and about being Yard Smart. You can see more Yard Smart gardens and examples of Cathy Bilow's garden designs on the upcoming Yard Smart Garden Walk!



The 16<sup>th</sup> annual Yard Smart Garden Walk is on Saturday, June 23, 2018 from 9am – noon. This year's walk features a church garden that overcame issues with standing water by installing a rain garden, and multiple family gardens with a diversity of styles, plants, and yard smart methods. After the garden walk, we reconvene for lunch from Green Top Grocery, a Freecycle Exchange of plants and garden tools, and a presentation about pollinator health by Dr. Ben Sadd, Assistant Professor of Infectious Disease Ecology at ISU,

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## Solar 2.0 Power Hours

### Upcoming Bloomington- Normal Solar Power Hours

#### June 20, 2018

12:30pm – 1 :30pm  
Solar Power Hour  
First United Methodist  
Church  
211 N. School St, Normal

#### June 28, 2018

6:30 pm—7:30 pm  
Solar Power Hour  
Bloomington Public Library  
Community Room

#### June 30, 2018

1:30pm—2:30pm  
Solar Power Hour  
Epiphany Farms  
Restaurant  
220 E Front St ,  
Bloomington

#### July 12, 2018

Thursday 6:30 pm  
Bloomington Public Library  
Community Room

#### July 17, 2018

Tuesday 6:00 pm  
Green Top Grocery  
921 E Washington  
Bloomington

#### July 18, 2018

Wednesday 1:30p pm  
Interstate Center  
1106 Interstate Dr.  
Bloomington

For a full listing, visit

[solarbloomingtonnormal.com](http://solarbloomingtonnormal.com)



CHILDREN AND ELDERS FOREST  
A non-profit organization

## Children and Elders Trees Now Available for Sponsorship

Children and Elders Forest is now accepting sponsors to plant new trees at Eagle Grove. Eagle Grove is just south of Normal West High School, and adjacent to the west side of Parkside Road. Each sponsor names members of two or more generations in their family and pays the Town \$175. For that fee, the Town buys, plants, maintains, and replaces any trees that die. CEF stewards will monitor tree tags and labels, do light pruning, and notify the Town regarding any tree health issues. The deadline to sponsor a tree is September 1, 2018.



Go to [ceforest.wixsite.com/ceforest](http://ceforest.wixsite.com/ceforest) for more information.

## Go Solar with Solar Bloomington-Normal 2.0!

Solar Bloomington Normal 2.0 is off to a good start! This solar group purchasing program is available for **all residents and businesses in**

**McLean County.** The group buy is designed to make solar more affordable and accessible for everyone. The cost per watt for the program is around 10% lower than market prices. The federal tax

credit and state renewable energy credits are at their highest levels right now, and for the first time ever, even renters and people with shaded roofs can go solar with Community Solar! Attend an upcoming Solar Power Hour presentation to learn more and to sign up for your free site assessment from StraightUp Solar!



**You can find a full list of presentation dates/times/locations at [solarbloomingtonnormal.com](http://solarbloomingtonnormal.com)**

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Yard Smart promotes a healthier more sustainable approach to lawn and garden maintenance. Working with nature to build a balanced ecosystem in both the soil below ground and the yard above ground reduces pollutants that runoff into our local water supply, and produces a more beautiful, sustainable and safer environment for everyone. The program encourages local homeowners to reduce the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, conserve natural resources such as water and fossil fuels, and make room for wildlife in their yards. Yard Smart Certification recognizes local homeowners who use ecologically sustainable practices in maintaining their yards and who realize that their lawn, garden and landscaping decisions affect the health of the whole community.

**To register go to [ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org) or call 309-454-3169 ext. 15**

## HHW Update Spring 2018

Spring cleaning means residents are looking to purge their garage or basement of unneeded items. This often means HHW—Household Hazardous Wastes, which can include oil based paints, pesticides, fertilizers, harsh household cleaners, and other materials that are explosive, corrosive, flammable, or otherwise toxic.

As has been the case for several years now, traditional state funding for one-day household hazardous waste collection events is not reliable; that funding is frequently “swept” from the Illinois Solid Waste Fund for other purposes. A quick look at the Illinois EPA website shows no changes in the schedule of HHW events—in fact the most recent event date is from a year ago.

The McLean County HHW Fund is currently on an every-other year schedule. Our last locally-funded event was fall of 2017, which makes our next event likely for fall of 2019.

While we are better meeting the need for proper HHW disposal than most communities in our state, we know it’s not good enough. In 2020, EAC plans to conduct a feasibility study for a permanent HHW collection facility to make proper disposal of HHW even easier for McLean County residents so that these materials are not dumped improperly. Donate to support this effort at [HHWmclean.org](http://HHWmclean.org).

## Summer Library Program

### Reading Takes You EVERYWHERE!

The EAC is hosting a Summer Reading Program at all Mclean County libraries. The theme this year is the recycling adventure of a plastic bottle from start to finish. Participants will learn why recycling is better than throwing a water bottle away.

Bring your children to find out what happens to water bottles in Mclean County. There will be an engaging presentation to show how Midwest Fiber recycles the water bottles that are collected locally.

Afterwards, young readers are invited to spend some time on the EAC website to learn more about the world of recycling. Children can also participate in a summer art contest to demonstrate their knowledge about the importance of recycling. Their artwork might even be featured in the EAC office for all visitors to admire!

Visit the BN Green Events calendar at [ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org) for dates and locations.



202 W. College Ave.  
Normal, IL 61761

ecologyactioncenter.org  
309-454-3169



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