



ECOLOGY NEWS

ACTION CENTER

Volume 19, Issue 3

Fall 2021

BN GREEN EVENTS

Compost Workshops

Multiple dates/times

\$5.00 for workshop
\$85.00 for workshop, compost bin, aerator, and thermometer

Rain Barrel Workshops

Multiple dates/times

\$5—workshop only
\$45—workshop and 55gal EAC rain barrel

Find dates & register at ecologyactioncenter.org/bngreenevents

Household Hazardous Waste Collection—October 9.

Appointment Required—Volunteers Wanted
HHWMClean.org

OFFICE UPDATES

Office Open Hours—M, T, Th, F
9am—5pm

On the Wings of Butterflies

In honor of our community nature friend, Deanna Frautschi, who is currently fighting cancer, and to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Ecology Action Center, I am raising funds for a new Ecology Action Center "On the Wings of Butterflies" project. I hope to raise \$2000 to provide Milkweed seeds to each participant in the EACs upcoming Household Hazardous Waste Collection on Saturday, October 9, 2021, and for other native planting efforts. Please join me in this effort to honor Deanna's nature work and the important work the EAC does to protect our natural environment.

Donations can be made online at ecologyactioncenter.org/frautschi or you can mail a check to: Ecology Action Center, Attn: Wings of Butterflies, PO Box 97, Normal, IL 61761-0097. Please write "Wings of Butterflies" on the memo line of your check. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Thank you,

Myra Gordon

*Former Director of Operation Recycle
Ecology Action Center Board Member
Emeritus*

On the Wings



of Butterflies



Community Solar Update

MCLEAN COUNTY RESIDENTS WITH AMEREN ILLINOIS ELECTRICITY SERVICE ARE NOW ELIGIBLE TO ENROLL IN COMMUNITY SOLAR!

What is community solar?

A large solar array in your utility territory (in central Illinois that means **Ameren only** – there are no community solar options for CornBelt) that feeds the electricity it produces directly to the power grid. Customers sign up for their own shares of the array, the size of the share is based on your home electricity usage. Subscribers receive credits on their utility bill for the energy generated by their share, and they purchase those credits at a discounted rate from the company managing the community solar array.

The standard offer is a 20% savings on your electricity supply rate (not your total bill), with no sign-up fees, and no cancellation fees. Residents who meet the below maximum household income levels are eligible for a 50% savings through the Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) program.

Number of people in the household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maximum Income for Bloomington, IL HUG Metro Area (McLean County)	\$46,700	\$54,400	\$60,050	\$66,700	\$72,050	\$77,400	\$82,750	\$88,050

How does community solar work with your current electricity bill?

Here is a real bill example from a current Nexamp Community Solar Subscriber: you use 979kWh of electricity in a month, and your community solar subscription generated 600kWh worth of electricity. Your Ameren bill will show the 979kWh usage, with a 600kWh credit. You will pay your Ameren supply rate for the remaining 379kWh. You will pay your delivery fees and taxes to Ameren for the full 979kWh.

You will receive a subsequent bill from your community solar provider for the 600kWh – but the rate you are charged for that energy is 20% lower than the Ameren supply rate charge (or 50% lower if you are participating in the ILSFA program).

Current subscribers to Nexamp Community Solar should see their first bill this month. Energy generation from the community solar array began in June, but there is a 3 month delay for billing.

Usage Summary

Total kWh	979.0000	Summer kWh	979.0000
Off-Site Gen kWh	-600.0000	Delivery Net Total kWh	979.0000
Del Prior Carryovr Gen	0.0000	Delivery Net Billable kWh	979.0000
Delivery Carryovr Gen kWh	0.0000	Del Net Summer kWh	979.0000
Supply Net Total kWh	379.0000	Supply Prior Carryovr Gen	0.0000
Supply Net Billable kWh	379.0000	Supply Carryover Gen kWh	0.0000
Supply Net Summer kWh	379.0000		

Smart Meter

Net Metering-Method A/C-Non-TOU-Apr

	CHARGE DESCRIPTION	USAGE UNIT	RATE	CHARGE
Electric Delivery Ameren Illinois DS-1 Residential Delivery Service	Customer Charge			\$6.63
	Meter Charge			\$4.66
	Distribution Delivery Charge Summer	979.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.05274000	\$51.63
Electric Delivery				\$62.92
Electric Supply Ameren Illinois BGS-1 Basic Generation Service	Purchased Electric Summer	379.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.03375000	\$12.79
	Purchased Electricity Adjustment	379.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.00107999	\$0.41
	Supply Cost Adjustment	379.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.00168000	\$0.63
	Transmission Service Charge	979.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.01278000	\$12.52
Electric Supply				\$26.35

Community Solar Updates (Continued)

Why community solar?

Community solar is a great option for:

- Homeowners who have heavy shade making on-site solar nonviable.
- Renters – as long as they are responsible for their own utility bill (and electricity is not included in their rent).
- Homeowners who might not be able to afford the upfront investment required for an onsite solar installation at their house. However – the ILSFA program also provides rooftop solar options with no upfront costs income eligible residents.

Interested in signing up?

The Ecology Action Center is a community solar subscriber with Nexamp. If you are interested in a community solar subscription you can sign up using an EAC referral code (email Larissa!) and will get a \$25 Amazon gift card (and the EAC will get one too!). Community solar providers will ask you for 12 months of your energy usage to determine what size portion of the community solar array will cover your energy needs. The community solar array is online and producing energy. When you get signed up, residents participating in Bloomington and Normal's municipal aggregation will need to opt out of that service. If you are unsure whether or not you are getting your energy supply from an alternate energy retail supplier, look at the energy supply section of your Ameren bill. If you are enrolled in municipal aggregation, Homefield Energy will be listed as your supplier. To opt out of aggregation just call their number at 866-694-1262 and cancel.

If you have questions about solar (community or onsite), or think you might be eligible for the ILSFA program please contact Larissa Armstrong at larms@ecologyactioncenter.org or 309-454-3169 x15 for more information.

BN Community Composting

The BN Community Composting kiosk at Normandy Village got an upgrade! It now has more capacity, and a wider opening. We hope there will be an additional kiosk at AB Hatchery soon!

If you are already using BN Community Composting service, **please purchase your compostable bag refills from the Ecology Action Center store.** There is a surcharge built into the cost of the bags at the EAC that goes to Better Earth Logistics to continue to pay for the compost disposal. If program users purchase bags elsewhere, it puts the longevity of the program at risk.

If you are not yet participating in BN Community Composting, you can learn more about the program at bncommunitycomposting.org.

Starter kits are \$20.99, and refill kits are \$16.50.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection—October 9

The McLean County Household Hazardous Waste Collection is Saturday, October 9 from 8am—3pm. **Appointments are required.**

In a change from recent years, the EAC is NOT asking for donations to help fund the collection event this year. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is covering most costs for the event this year. It is being held at the Interstate Center in Bloomington, and it is open to all Illinois residents at no costs. Illinois regulations mandate that only residential wastes may be collected—NO business or commercially generated wastes are accepted.



We are asking for volunteers to help us make the event run smoothly. Please consider signing up for a shift to assist with traffic control or other needs. All volunteers must be 18 years or older and must be able to stand on their feet for the entirety of their shift.

Find a full list of accepted hazardous materials, sign up for an appointment to drop off, and sign up for a volunteer shift at **HHWMcLean.org**.

Final Summer Projects? Here's What You Should Know About Paints and Stains

With summer coming to an end, some of those long awaited projects are finally at the top of your to-do list. Maybe you are staining your deck or brightening up the kitchen with a fresh coat of paint. DIY projects using paints, stains and finishes are satisfying to work on, but some of the products used can be harmful to the environment and human health.

Oil-based paints and stains are hazardous materials. One of the main reasons oil-based paints and stains are hazardous is because they contain oil binders rather than water, and since they are not water soluble, must be thinned with turpentine or petroleum-based mineral spirits. These elements make oil-based paint and stain products highly flammable. Oil-based paints and stains also contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs are solvents released into the air as the paint dries. Other household products that emit solvents include adhesives, harsh cleaning supplies, and some home furnishings. VOCs can cause acute symptoms, including headaches and dizziness. The long-term effects are less certain, but according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, some VOCs are suspected carcinogens. Not only do VOCs reduce indoor air quality, but when outside, they can combine with nitrogen oxides to produce ozone, a harmful greenhouse gas.

Oil-based paint can also contain biocides, antimicrobial additives that reduce growth of microorganisms on painted surfaces. They are added to paints to prevent mold and mildew growth in high-moisture environments, such as bathrooms and exterior areas. In some cases, toxins from these mold-inhibiting biocides can be detected in the air almost five years after original application. Instead of biocides, consider improved ventilation and other sound practices to

Paints & Stains (Continued)

prevent fungal growth in your home.

When you are working on home project, look for water-based, and low VOC items instead of oil-based products. Check labels for ingredient lists and indications such as “biocide free”, low or no VOC, or reviews by third-party certifiers like GreenGuard Environmental Institute. Consider alternative approaches to achieve your goals – for example, utilizing a clear water-based sealer on top of a water-based stain to maintain color and durability while reducing the release of pollutants into the atmosphere.

When you do have to use hazardous paints or stains, use as much as the product as possible. This may mean applying an extra coat of paint, or even painting something you didn't initially intend to refinish. Make sure you have adequate ventilation when using high VOC products to keep yourself and your home safe. When you do need to dispose of hazardous materials like oil-based paints and stains, the only proper means of disposal is through a Hazardous Waste Collection Event or permanent drop-off facility. **The next local drop-off event for household hazardous materials is on Saturday, October 9. It is an appointment-only event. Please visit HHWMClean.org to make your appointment. Register by noon on Friday, October 8.**

The four permanent Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facilities are located in northern Illinois in Rockford (815-987-5570), Naperville (630-420-6095), Gurnee/Lake County (847-336-9340), and Chicago (312-744-7672).

Remember - latex paint is not considered hazardous, and are not accepted at household hazardous waste collection events or drop-off facilities. To properly dispose of latex paint, pour it out in thin layers on a disposable material like cardboard or layers of newspaper. Allow the paint to dry completely, then roll up the paper or cardboard and throw it in the trash.

Hot Compost Reduces Spread of Jumping Worms

Highly destructive jumping worms do not move far on their own. They are largely spread through human activity. The following activities contribute to jumping worm spread:

1. Carrying dirt and debris from lawn to garden to nature preserves on your shoes. Cleaning your shoes after gardening and before a hike helps!
2. Swapping plants with friends and landscaping with plant starts potted in untreated soil. Check with garden stores about their plant soil, and avoid sharing plants with friends and neighbors.
3. Inactive composting. Compost piles need to be active and reach high temperatures to kill jumping worm eggs. Attend an Ecology Action Center composting workshop to learn best practices for hot composting!

The EAC has multiple “Compost With Care” workshops coming up. Workshop cost is \$5, or for \$85 you can receive a compost bin, aerator, and thermometer to start your own hot compost pile in your backyard. You can find workshop dates and register at ecologyactioncenter.org/bngreenevents.





PO Box 97
Normal, IL 61761
ecologyactioncenter.org
309-454-3169



Printed on Recycled, Chlorine-Free Paper, Of Course!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Staff

Board of Directors 2020–2021

Michael Brown
Executive Director

Larissa Armstrong
Assistant Director

Riley Francis
Education Coordinator

Jen Gravley
Program Assistant

Gary Kamplain
Program Assistant

Angela Bossard
Administrative Assistant

Nathan Bair
Stewardship Coordinator

Carl Teichman
President

Tim Golliday
Past President

Mike O'Grady
Vice President and
Ex-officio McLean County

Nancy Armstrong
Treasurer

Charles Bristow
Secretary

Wayne Aldrich

Kevin Koethe
Ex-officio Bloomington

Myra Gordon

Laurine Brown

Steve Kowalski

Kari Sandhaas

Joan Brehm

Julie Emig

Jay Ivers

Vince Allen

Elisabeth Reed

Ben Ryburn

George Gordon



Bloomington
Normal Water
Reclamation District

