



ECOLOGY NEWS

ACTION CENTER

Volume 17, Issue 2

Summer 2019

BN Green Events

June

Vermicomposting Workshop
for 6-17 year olds

Miller Park Zoo

sign up at
bloomingtonparks.org

Yard Smart Garden Walk
June 29 9:00 -12:30

July

Wild & Scenic Film
Festival

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

Grow Solar: Bloomington-Normal

Are you hearing a lot of buzz about solar? Seeing numerous ads on social media and beyond from organizations you've never heard of? We are too!

Navigating the solar market can be intimidating, especially with the recent influx of information about solar in our state. We want to help people sift through all that.



The Grow Solar: Bloomington-Normal program exists so we can help our community get the information you need to be an informed solar consumer.

We invite you to join us at an upcoming Solar Power Hour. These free presentations teach you about solar basics, site considerations, pricing, and available federal and state incentives.

Come learn with us, and then if you are think you are ready to go solar now, the EAC will connect you with a vetted local installer offering installations and reduced costs!

Wednesday, June 26 at 6:30pm – YWCA

Wednesday, July 10 at 6:30pm – YWCA

Thursday, July 18 at 6:30pm—Green Top Grocery

The full Solar Power Hour schedule is available at
solarbloomingtonnormal.com.

Come join us and see if solar is right for you!

Contact Larissa Armstrong with any questions –
larstrong@ecologyactioncenter.org or 309-454-3169 x15



Yard Smart Garden Walk

June 29, 2019 9:00 am -12:30 pm

The 17th annual Yard Smart Garden walk is on Saturday, June 29, 2019. Please join us on this **FREE** tour that highlights beautiful and functional yards in our community that use environmentally friendly practices to protect our water and provide a safe place for people, pets, and wildlife. This year's walk features a family garden that is repopulating a wooded space with native plants, a beehive, a fully landscaped front yard, and more! You will see 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 by Bill Inks from AB Hatchery about the benefits of and how to use organic garden products. 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.



Please join us! You can register on the EAC website in the BN Green Events section.

Build-Your-Own Composter Workshops Are Back!

The Ecology Action Center is excited to once again offer our build-your-own compost bin workshop. After an extended hiatus due to a significant loss of supplies and workshop space from a fire in later 2017, we will be hosting our first compost workshop of 2019 on Wednesday, June 26 at 6:00 pm. Workshop fees are \$60 (\$50 for EAC members) and include everything needed to successfully begin home composting. Various types of compost systems and techniques will be discussed in addition to troubleshooting tips to avoid potential problems. Backyard composting is the easiest way to reduce garbage from home and create rich soil nutrients to feed the garden at the same time. By taking advantage of natural processes, the amount of residential waste being landfilled can be reduced while also producing a valuable organic fertilizer. Participants will make and take home a composter ready for use with instruction on setup and maintenance. This workshop will also mark the debut of our new compost bin model. These new bins are constructed with two pieces that can detach for easy transportation and relocation.

Interested individuals can register online at ecologyactioncenter.org. Pre-registration is required. Consult the BN-Green Events calendar on the right side of the home page for more information. Pictures of the new compost bin model can be found on the registration page as well. This workshop runs rain or shine. Workshop location and other pertinent details will be sent out prior to the workshop.

Clean Water and Stormwater Drain Stenciling

Heavy and extended rainfall can often result in more pollution being discharged into our local waterways, as stormwater spends washes across impermeable surfaces like roadways, parking lots and sidewalks, picking up various pollutants along the way. It is critical that we keep our local water resources clean enough for consumption by doing our part to protect both the quantity and quality of our water resources, which serve as our sources of drinking water. The EAC is here to assist residents with making environmentally-conscious decisions when it comes to how we use and interact with water in our community.

Harvesting rainwater runoff is a low energy, high impact option that helps reduce stormwater pollution by lessening the amount of rainwater traveling across the landscape. Residents are encouraged to take advantage of the EAC's next rain barrel workshop on **June 27 at 6:00 pm**. This convenient, at-home water harvesting system helps protect the quality of our local waterways in addition to helping residents save money on their water bills. Interested individuals can register online at ecologyactioncenter.org; pre-registration is required. Consult the BN-Green Events calendar on the right side of the home page for more information.

If you are an individual that is eager to help educate and encourage others about the importance of clean water in our community, then the EAC needs YOU! Through our storm drain stenciling program, volunteers help educate local residents on stormwater runoff pollution and how to help reduce it. Interested in gathering a group of volunteers together to spend a lovely day outside, get some great exercise AND have a positive impact on our community? Contact EAC's Education Coordinator, **Molly McCready**, at **309-454-3169 x.12** to learn more about our storm drain stenciling volunteer opportunities.

Wild & Scenic Film Festival

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival will be held on **July 10th at Normal Theater**. The focus is on 9 films which speak to environmental concerns and celebrations of our planet. Please join us and get energized to work to protect clean water, wildlife habitat, and our rich natural landscapes! You can go to <https://prairierivers.org/wsff-films/> to see a synopsis of the films.

The Films include *Ashes to Ashes*, *Blue Carbon*, *Blue Heart*, *Downstream*, *Givers and Takers*, *Greenland Melts*, *March of the Newts*, *Our National Parks Belong to Everyone*, plus a PRN original short film—*Scream Pillow*

Tickets are on sale now at NormalTheater.com



2019 Summer Library Reading Program

Why Should YOU Recycle?

Do you or someone you know have a young reader participating in the summer reading program this year at their local library? All ages are encouraged to attend any of our upcoming library visits to learn more about how fun recycling can be as we follow the story of one family's quest to properly recycle all that they can.

Throughout our story of "Why Should I Recycle?", we will learn all about the various everyday items that can be reused and recycled into new items that we may not even realize are made from recycled materials!

Check out our **BN-Green Events calendar** for upcoming dates of when EAC will be at your library this summer.



202 W. College Ave.
Normal, IL 61761

ecologyactioncenter.org
309-454-3169



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