



ECOLOGY NEWS

ACTION CENTER

Volume 18, Issue 1

Spring 2020

BN Green Events

March

3/14 ILSFA information tables @ WBRP West Bloomington Revitalization Project

3/21 Sugar Creek Stewards Workday 9:00 am—Noon

April

4/21 Town of Normal Bike-Ped Plan Update Open House 5:00-7:00 pm Uptown Station 4th Floor

Compost Kiosks

For the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, the Ecology Action Center is working with local partners to bring a residential food scrap composting service to Bloomington-Normal! This has long been a "wishlist" item for many local residents as backyard composting is not a practical solution for everyone. In addition, due to this service being supported by Better Earth Composting, a commercial-scale facility south of Peoria, this new composting service will accept not only vegetable waste but also meats, bones, and other food scrap materials that are not possible to compost in backyard composting environments.

The new food scrap composting service will be a drop-off program; residents or small businesses can subscribe to the service on an annual basis for a moderate fee (approximately \$120) and receive a 5-gallon bucket with compostable liners and a keycard that will give them unlimited access to one or more "compost kiosks" that will be located in Bloomington-Normal. With the initial launch of the program, we anticipate one kiosk in the area, with a second kiosk to be added assuming there is enough demand and funding available. If the program is widely used, more kiosks may be added later.

To support the successful implementation of this program, the Ecology Action Center is seeking sponsorships from local individuals or businesses to underwrite the cost of purchase and installation of one or more composting kiosks as well as the promotion of the new program. Sponsors at the \$1000 level or above will receive a free one-year subscription to the compost kiosk service. As a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, donations to the EAC are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law. For any sponsors qualifying for the one-year compost service subscription, the tax benefit will be reduced accordingly relative to the retail value of this subscription. Sponsors will be recognized through public print and web materials promoting the launch of the new compost service.

Please direct any questions about this program or sponsorships to Michael Brown at 309-454-3169 x.11.

Community Solar Offers

If you have not received any yet, you will likely soon start seeing advertisements offering community solar share subscriptions.

Community solar allows Ameren Illinois customers (it is not available for CornBelt customers) to subscribe to a portion of a large solar array in their Ameren territory. Residents subscribe for a portion of energy produced by the array and receive net-metering credits on their electric bill. Energy savings with community solar are not as high as savings from on-site solar arrays, but community solar does create opportunities for renters or for customers who do not have a site well suited for solar (like a heavily shaded roof) to invest in renewable energy in Illinois and reduce the cost of their monthly electric supply.

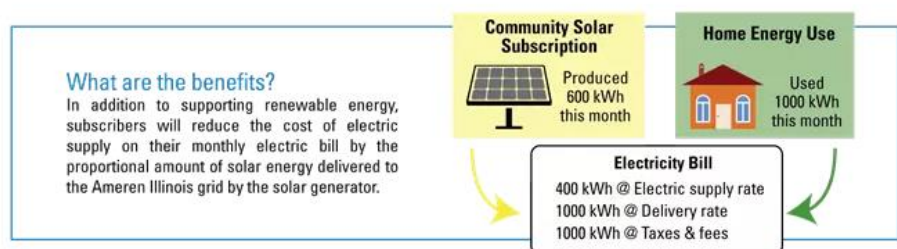
How it works: you sign up to receive your energy supply from a community solar generator. They base the size of your subscription off your average energy usage. Using the example below, if your home used 1000 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in a month, and your community solar subscription generated 600kWh, then you are charged by Ameren for the difference of 400kWh supply you still received from them, and you pay your delivery fees and taxes on the full 1000kWh rate. You will also receive a bill from the community solar generator for the 600kWh of energy supply you purchased from them. Ameren's metering system keeps track of all of this, and the energy produced by your community solar subscription will show as a credit on your Ameren bill. If you move from one home or apartment to another that is still in Ameren territory – you can take your community solar subscription with you.

The community solar projects that were approved by the state last spring are now ready to start gathering subscribers. The EAC is aware of at least one generator that will sell subscriptions with a 20% savings and no cancellation fee – meaning you will pay 20% less per kWh for energy from your community solar subscription than what you would pay from Ameren (or an alternate energy supplier like MidAmerican, the current supplier for Bloomington-Normal residents).

Here are some of the questions the EAC encourages you to ask of potential community solar subscription providers: What is the duration of the contract? What is the supply savings? (As stated above, there is at least one company offering 20% savings) Is there a sign-on fee? Is there a cancellation fee? Can I monitor my subscription's generation activity? Can I adjust the size of my subscription if I decrease my load through efficiency improvements or increase my load by getting an electric car?

There is additional information about community solar in the renewable section of the Ameren Illinois website.

Please contact Larissa Armstrong at larstrong@ecologyactioncenter.org or 309-454-3169 x.15 if you have any questions.



Earth Day Celebrations!

Earth Day is right around the corner. Do you know how you plan to celebrate this year? Look no further than our BN Green Events located on our website at ecologyactioncenter.org. The Ecology Action Center will be out and about all month long in April, collaborating with community partners to promote and host a myriad of events in celebration of Earth Day's FIFTIETH anniversary! In addition to our annual Sugar Creek/Constitutional Trail Clean Up, we have some exciting events in the works including a BIG ANNOUNCEMENT on a new community program to be launched on April 22, Earth Day.

Please be on the lookout for more updates as April draws near so you don't miss any of our exciting announcements or Earth Day activities. More information including event details will be announced via our social media pages and will be available on our website at ecologyactioncenter.org/ED50.



202 W. College Ave.
Normal, IL 61761

ecologyactioncenter.org
309-454-3169



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Staff

Board of Directors 2019–2020

Michael Brown
Executive Director

Larissa Armstrong
Assistant Director

Jen Gravley
Education Coordinator

Gary Kamplain
Program Assistant

Sara Keene
Program Coordinator

Angela Bossard
Administrative Assistant

Melanie Haerle
Stewardship Coordinator

Carl Teichman
President

Tim Golliday
Past President

Mike O'Grady
Vice President

Lisa Huson
Treasurer

Charles Bristow
Secretary

Wayne Aldrich
Ex-officio Normal

Ben Ryburn
Ex-officio Bloomington

George Gordon
Ex-officio McLean County

Myra Gordon

Charlotte Brown

Laurine Brown

Steve Kowalski

Joan Brehm

Julie Emig

Kari Sandhaas

Jay Ivers

Nancy Armstrong

Vince Allen

Elisabeth Reed

