



**ECOLOGY**  
ACTION CENTER



20



21



**ANNUAL REPORT**

# ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER

The Ecology Action Center is a not-for-profit environmental agency with a mission to inspire and assist our community in creating, strengthening, and preserving a healthy environment. The EAC acts as a central resource for environmental education, information, outreach, and technical assistance in McLean County.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note from the Executive Director	4	Clean Water	
Education & Outreach		Yard Smart Garden Walk	27
2021 by the Numbers	7	Sugar Creek Stewards	28
In the Community	8	Rain Barrels	29
Elementary Programs	11	Constitution Trail & Sugar Creek Clean-Up	31
Recycling & Waste Reduction		Storm Drain Stenciling	31
Household Hazardous Waste Collection	13	Energy	
County Recycling Rate	14	BN Energy Bright	32
Community Composting	17	Illinois Solar for All	34
Recycle Coach	18	Ameren-Nicor Pilot Program	35
Earth Day Live	19	Financial Summary	36
Clean Air		Funders & Sponsors	38
Tree Corps	24	Staff	39

# A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends of the Ecology Action Center,

Thank you for all of your support this past year. In 2021 we celebrated the origins of the Ecology Action Center as Operation Recycle, which held its very first recycling drive in 1971. We've come a long way since then thanks to the longstanding broad-based support from the Bloomington-Normal and McLean County community. We have grown from a grassroots recycling initiative into the community's nonprofit environmental sustainability agency. As such, the EAC is unique in the state of Illinois, if not the entire Midwest.

Unfortunately, as we have grown over the past 50 years to better address the needs of our local community, the environmental challenges have also increased. In addition to our traditional waste reduction, recycling, and clean water protection initiatives, increasingly our efforts focus a lot on energy efficiency, clean renewable energy, air quality improvement, and the changing climate.

As such, in 2021 we launched the Tree Corps, our bold, large-scale tree planting initiative seeking to plant at least 10,000 trees a year for at least 10 years. Where possible, we are planting in urban areas, especially near environmental justice areas, where the trees are most needed to remove ozone, particulate matter, and other air quality pollutants that negatively impact the health and well-being of residents who live there. As the saying goes – the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago but the next best time is today.

We are preparing for today and tomorrow's increasing environmental threats in multiple ways. We are planting trees in a big way in order to improve the lives of current and future generations. We are also looking at the sustainability of our own organization. With one eye looking back to the past 50 years and the other eye looking forward to the next 50, we are starting a new endowment fund called the 2071 Fund.

With your help, this endowment fund will:

- Help diversify our funding structure to reduce dependence on funding from local government organizations
- Increase unrestricted funds to allow for more growth of our programs and initiatives
- Provide reliable long-term independent funding
- Help better balance workloads for our hard-working staff

Please watch for more details as we launch the 2071 Fund in the near future. I look forward to our continued partnership to improve our local environment and community in the year ahead and in the 50 years beyond!

**Michael Brown**  
Executive Director





# EDUCATION & OUTREACH

**The Ecology Action Center provides:**

Recycling and waste education to fulfill the Illinois Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act requirements for McLean County, Bloomington, and Normal;

Storm water education to meet the public education requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Phase II Storm Water Management Plans for Bloomington, Normal, McLean County, and the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District;

Energy efficiency and renewable energy education

and outreach for Bloomington and Normal, including residential and small business energy assessments;

Air quality data through our greenhouse gas emissions inventory process and the development of a Community Energy Strategic Plan to reduce emissions; and

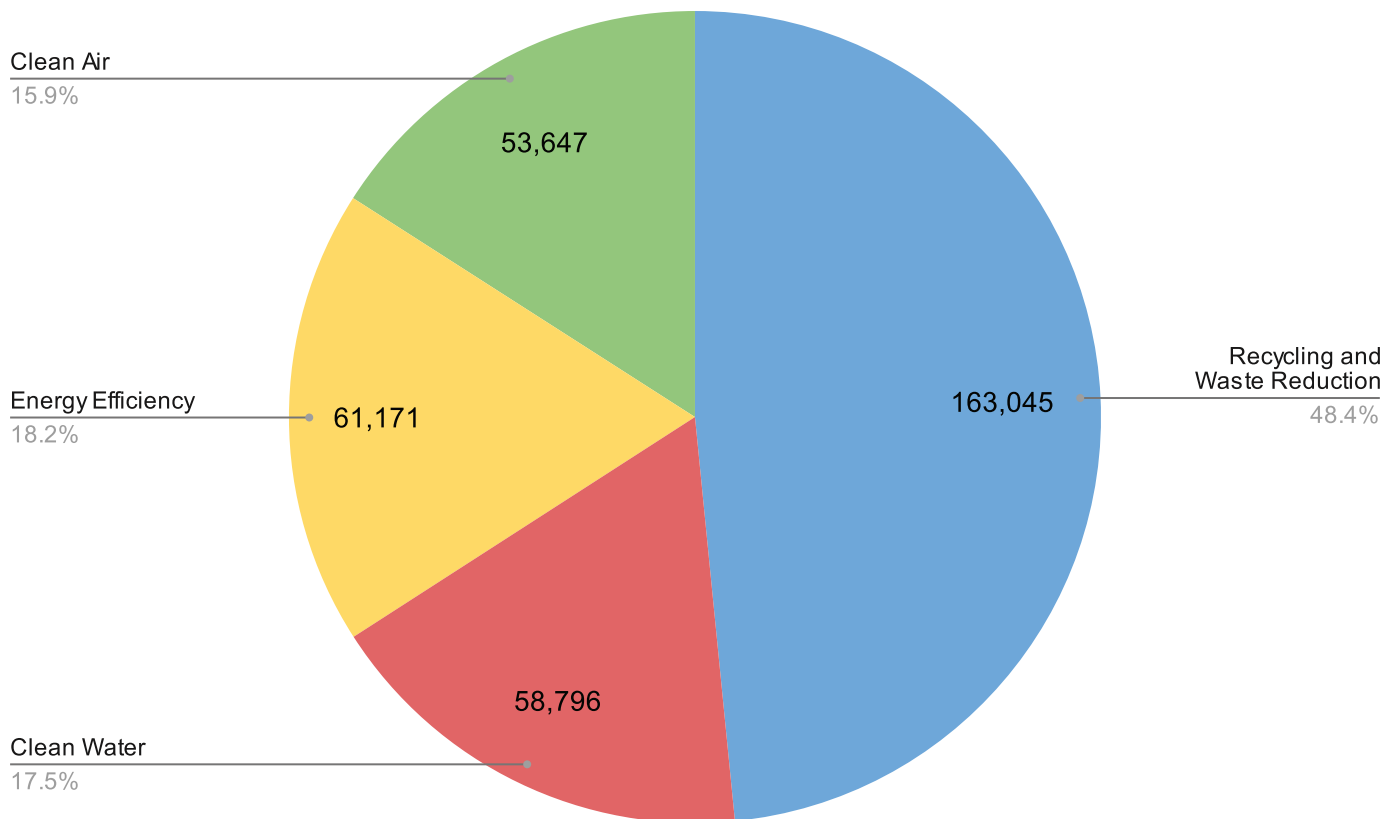
Distribution of resources on numerous sustainability topics for a more healthy and sustainable community.

# 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

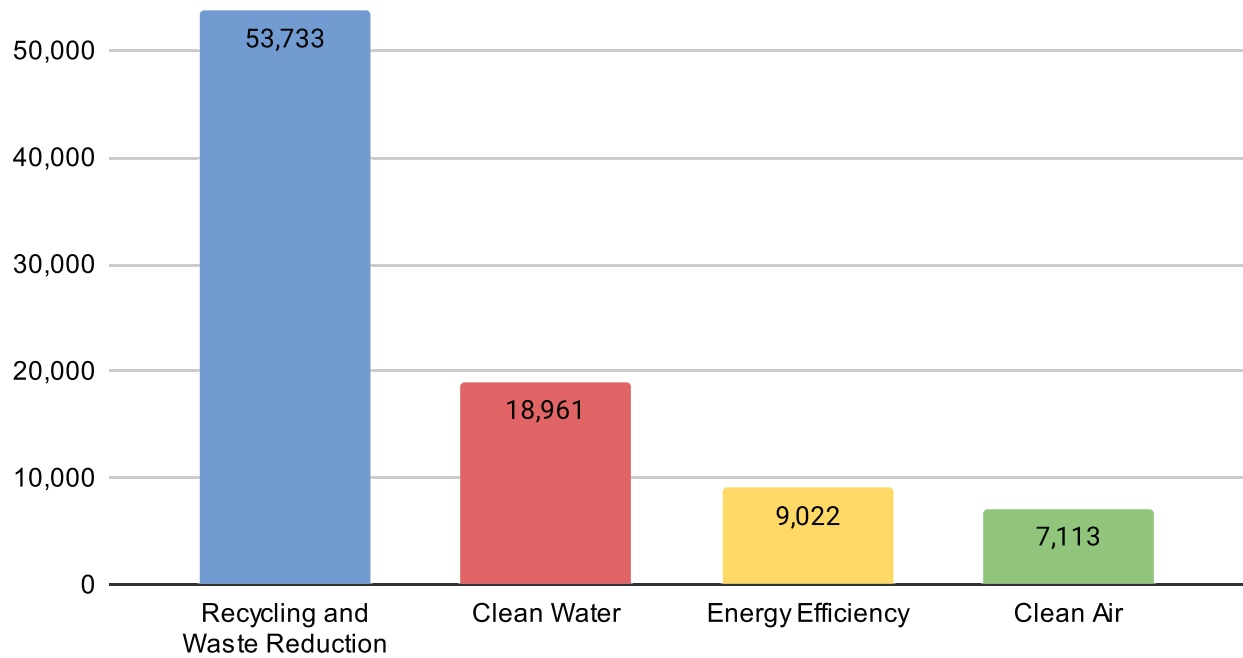
**1,349,457**  
**TOTAL MEDIA**  
**IMPRESSIONS**

The Ecology Action Center does extensive media outreach to share information, help spread awareness, and to promote upcoming events or initiatives. Information is shared through newspaper ads, radio commercials, and through direct newspaper and radio interviews.

## Social Media Impressions (Facebook and Twitter)



# EAC Website Visits



**1,541**  
**HOUSEHOLDS**



Received a monthly e-newsletter covering eight different issues.

Received a quarterly newsletter covering multiple issues.



**452**  
**RECIPIENTS**

# IN THE COMMUNITY: A SNAPSHOT

## 662

viewers of Earth Day Live, a special, virtual event held by EAC to provide information on multiple topic areas including clean water

## 54

students learned about watersheds at Sheridan and Stevenson Elementary

## 40

individuals attended the NAACP October Chapter meeting about the EAC's energy programs including the Ameren-Nicor and ILSFA income qualifying programs

## 20

youth and adults utilized EAC trash grabbers to do trail and creek clean-up at Ewing Park in Bloomington

## 45

residents attended the Young Men's Club on waste issues

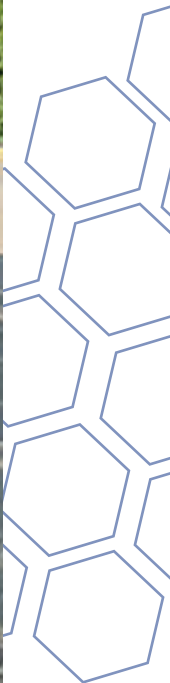
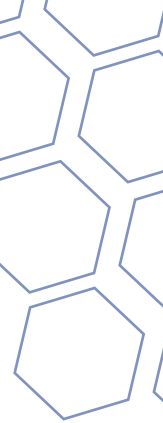
## 456

individuals at the Sweet Corn Circus in Uptown Normal helped the EAC fill six, 95-gallon carts with corncobs and other compostable waste

## 168

total attendees of the "Nature Walk" sessions, a collaboration with the Children's Discovery Museum. Participants walked with EAC staff to Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary and learned about the negative impacts of trash in natural areas, and ways proper waste disposal can help natural areas.





# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Ecology Action Center provides educational programs for third and fourth grade classrooms in McLean County.

Third grade students learn about the water cycle, and storm water runoff pollution. Staff uses an enviroscape watershed model to provide an interactive demonstration of the sources and effects of water pollution. The tool allows the EAC to easily demonstrate how storm water runoff carries pollutants through the watershed to streams, rivers and lakes, and teaches students about methods to reduce storm water runoff pollution.

Fourth grade students learn about the amount of waste sent to the landfill, and then have an interactive discussion about materials that are regularly disposed of in their homes, and different options for that waste, including reducing consumption, reusing items, proper recycling, and composting.



## CLASS NOTES:

- Presented to a class of ISU future K-12 educators on the EAC's clean water 3rd grade education programs with 24 students participating.
- Presented the Clean Water Program at Mulberry School including reading "Over and Under the Pond" and an Enviroscape demonstration with 24 students participating.
- Presented on watersheds to three fifth grade classes from Sheridan Elementary and Stevenson Elementary reaching 54 students.
- Presented on clean water programming and storm drain stenciling opportunities to the Youth Conservation Conference at Miller Park Zoo with 13 students participating.
- Provided education for 13 participants for the Illinois Art Station and Boys' and Girls' Club summer camp, on waste and recycling.

## Clean Water

3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom programs at McLean County Schools



**18**  
schools



**32**  
classrooms



**661**  
students

## Recycling and Waste Reduction

4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom programs at McLean County Schools



**19**  
schools



**43**  
classrooms



**855**  
students



# RECYCLING & WASTE REDUCTION

The Ecology Action Center is the Solid Waste Agency for McLean County, the City of Bloomington, and the Town of Normal.

The EAC helps residents and businesses reduce waste, increase recycling, and properly dispose of hazardous waste through numerous educational and outreach programs including our Recycle Coach app, our 4th grade recycling classroom

programs, and at local events like our biennial Household Hazardous Waste Collection. We continue to provide education on backyard composting, and in late 2020 we opened our first drop-off kiosk to launch a new BN community composting program that now has over 100 subscribers!



# COUNTY WIDE RECYCLING RATE

As the community's solid waste agency, the EAC annually collects waste and recycling data to calculate the amount of municipal solid waste generated and recycled for all of McLean County.

The information gathered serves as a lagging performance indicator of the success of outreach programs on waste generation and recycling. While the performance indicator is limited, it does help guide the EAC's efforts to improve the county's recycling rate and increase source reduction.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented impacts in waste management and recycling. As much of the global population stayed home, commercial and industrial waste generation decreased. However, even as many municipalities limited collection and sorting in order to safely and efficiently operate with a reduced workforce, residential waste generation skyrocketed.

In McLean County, commercial/industrial waste streams decreased, and the use of cardboard and plastic rose sharply as residents relied heavily on delivery and online purchasing. Residents across the USA cooked more and spent time on yard work while at home, and nationwide food and yard waste trended up.

While some municipalities worldwide diverted recyclables to landfills in early stages of the pandemic, haulers servicing McLean County continued to pick up recycling throughout 2020. The Ecology Action Center's annual calculation of community-wide waste generation and recycling shows that the County realized a recycling rate of 36% in 2020. The decrease of 22%

compared to 2019 is consistent with national and global deviations that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. Categories of notable change included paper/cardboard, restaurant waste, automotive fluids, and non-traditional recyclables. Recycling of restaurant waste declined significantly, likely due to the closure of many businesses including restaurants. The decrease in recycling of automotive fluids probably also followed business closures and a reduction in driving. Many recycling drop-off programs were suspended, so recycling of non-traditional recyclables such as batteries also declined. One category of recyclables significantly increased compared to 2019; paper and cardboard recycling rose 127%, likely due to online shopping.

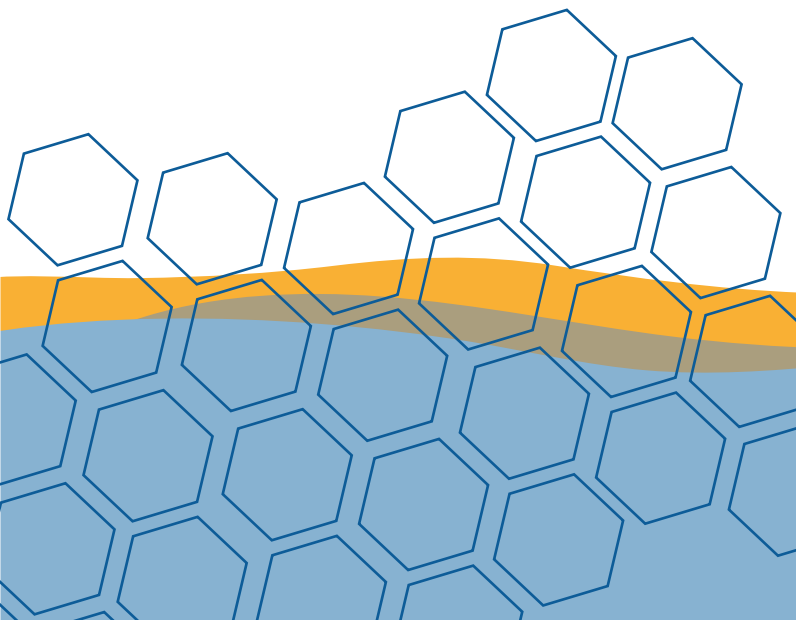
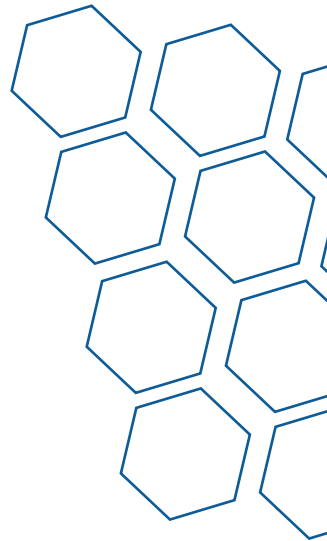
Even though there was a decrease in the overall recycling rate, McLean County's total amount of municipal solid waste decreased 16%, and the amount sent to the landfill in 2020 remained nearly identical to the amount landfilled in 2019. This decrease in overall solid waste production from 2019 to 2020 bodes well for ongoing progress towards the new community-wide recycling rate goal of 50% set in 2017 under the new 20-year solid waste management plan.

With the closure of the McLean County Landfill in late 2018, the Ecology Action Center continues to focus on waste management priorities as outlined in the Twenty-Year Materials Recovery and Resource Management Plan for McLean County, Bloomington, and Normal, Illinois. This includes diversion strategies for waste that would otherwise require landfill disposal further away from the source of origin.



# MCLEAN COUNTY WASTE GENERATION AND RECYCLING RATES: 2015 - 2020

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Total MSW Recycled (tons)</b>	81,302	83,335	88,459	94,804	88,330	58,193
<b>Total MSW Landfilled (tons)</b>	154,662	120,815	124,364	109,467	104,772	104,919
<b>Total Municipal Solid Waste Generated (tons)</b>	235,964	204,150	211,230	204,271	193,102	163,113
<b>Recycling Rate</b>	34.5%	40.8%	41.9%	46.4%	45.7%	35.7%



# COMPOSTING WORKSHOPS

The EAC's composting workshops cover the basics of backyard composting and information on how to avoid spreading invasive jumping worms. Participants learn basic techniques to build a compost pile, what materials to include, and what to do with compostable materials that cannot be composted in a backyard setting. The workshop explains proper compost pile monitoring and maintenance, how to know when compost is ready to use, and how to know it is safe to use!

EAC educators provide resources to help participants identify jumping worms, and proper compost methods to keep them at bay. Participants leave the workshop with a sound understanding of the individual and community benefits of composting, and the confidence to set up and monitor compost in their own backyard compost pile, while keeping invasive jumping worms out of the garden.

The EAC held five compost workshops with 16 participants.





# COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

The BN Community Composting program launched in November 2020 received 95 new subscribers in 2021 bringing the total number of users to 153 at the end of 2021. The EAC hopes to add a second collection kiosk in 2022 to increase ease of use.

Participation in the program is easy – you simply purchase a starter kit (a 5 gal bucket, compostable liners, instructions, and a key card to access the drop bin) from the Ecology Action Center then start collecting your organic waste, and when your bucket is full, empty it at the kiosk, and begin again. After the initial kit purchase, the cost of participation is just purchasing additional compostable bags from the EAC; all service and disposal costs are built into the price of the bags.

The BN Community Composting program allows people to divert all of their food waste from the landfill, along with other organic materials as well.

Here's what you can compost with your subscription: all food scraps and leftovers (this includes fruits and vegetables, meats, prepared foods, dairy, bones, grains, etc.). You can also compost Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certified compostable packaging/containers, paper towels, paper napkins, and greasy pizza boxes.



For more information about the program, details on how to purchase your compost starter kit, or to find out how to sponsor the second next kiosk for our community, visit [BNcommunityComposting.org](https://BNcommunityComposting.org).



# RECYCLE COACH

Recycle Coach is the web and mobile app the Ecology Action Center uses to help residents get up-to-date information on waste and recycling options in the community. Recycle Coach provides geographic-specific answers on curbside, drop-off, traditional, and non-traditional recycling program, in addition to customized optional reminders of collection days, hazardous waste collection events, and more. The mobile app is available (free) to all residents on Android or Apple smartphones, and the web version of the app is available at [RecycleBN.org](http://RecycleBN.org).



## During 2021:

- Recycle Coach had 13,699 users
- Users completed 345,641 interactions

[Learn more at RecycleBN.org.](http://RecycleBN.org)

# MCLEAN COUNTY FREecycle



Administration and promotion of McFreecycle, a free listserv on the internet for the free exchange of materials in McLean County to avoid disposal of usable items. There are 1,786 current members with an estimated average

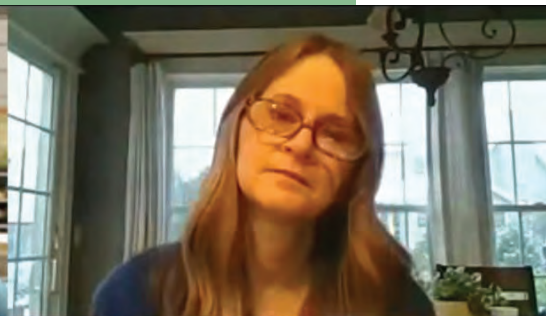
of 24 messages exchanged monthly. Usage of the service appears to be declining, likely due to redundant "free items" services now available as a part of social media platforms like Facebook and Nextdoor.com. In response to this trend, the EAC has developed guidance for the free exchange of materials using these additional platforms, and continues to provide support for community reuse to avoid disposal of usable items.

# EARTH DAY LIVE

Earth Day Live was such a success in 2020 we brought it back in 2021! This year we celebrated Earth Day and the Ecology Action Center's 50th Birthday!

Staff worked hard to put together a thoughtful, informative, and entertaining online program to celebrate our environment together with our community. Through the Facebook Live stream and YouTube over 650 people viewed the program.

We launched our online event with a fun "infomercial" to promote BN Community Composting. To celebrate our new Tree Corps initiative, staff read the wonderful book, "We Planted a Tree" by Diane Muldrow, and Nate Bair, Horticulturalist with the Town of Normal and our Stewardship Coordinator helped us plant a tree in Larissa Armstrong's backyard to provide detailed instruction on proper tree planting techniques! We had a live performance of "Petals" from the Sarah Quah Band. The online event wrapped up with lovely 50th Anniversary messages from our friends and partner organizations.





# CLEAN AIR

In 2014, the Ecology Action Center completed an initial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory for the Bloomington-Normal community using data from 2008. This initial report quantified total and per capita emissions, identified primary sources of direct emissions, and serves as a baseline for future inventory comparison. The EAC recently completed a new inventory with 2015 data and a broader scope; incorporating other air quality emissions that can be harmful to public health, like ozone, regulated under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The Bloomington-Normal community is currently an attainment area for all six categories of air pollutants, meaning current concentrations of

pollutants are below levels established by NAAQS. However, past ozone measurements did exceed the new ozone standard five times, and could fail NAAQS requirements in the future. The financial cost of nonattainment is significant and can include loss of federal transportation funding and mandatory vehicle emissions testing among other ramifications. These impacts are in addition to the public health risks; ozone can damage the lungs, causing chest pain, coughing, and shortness of breath while also exacerbating chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma.

To combat the potential for non-attainment, and to improve the overall air quality in our community, the

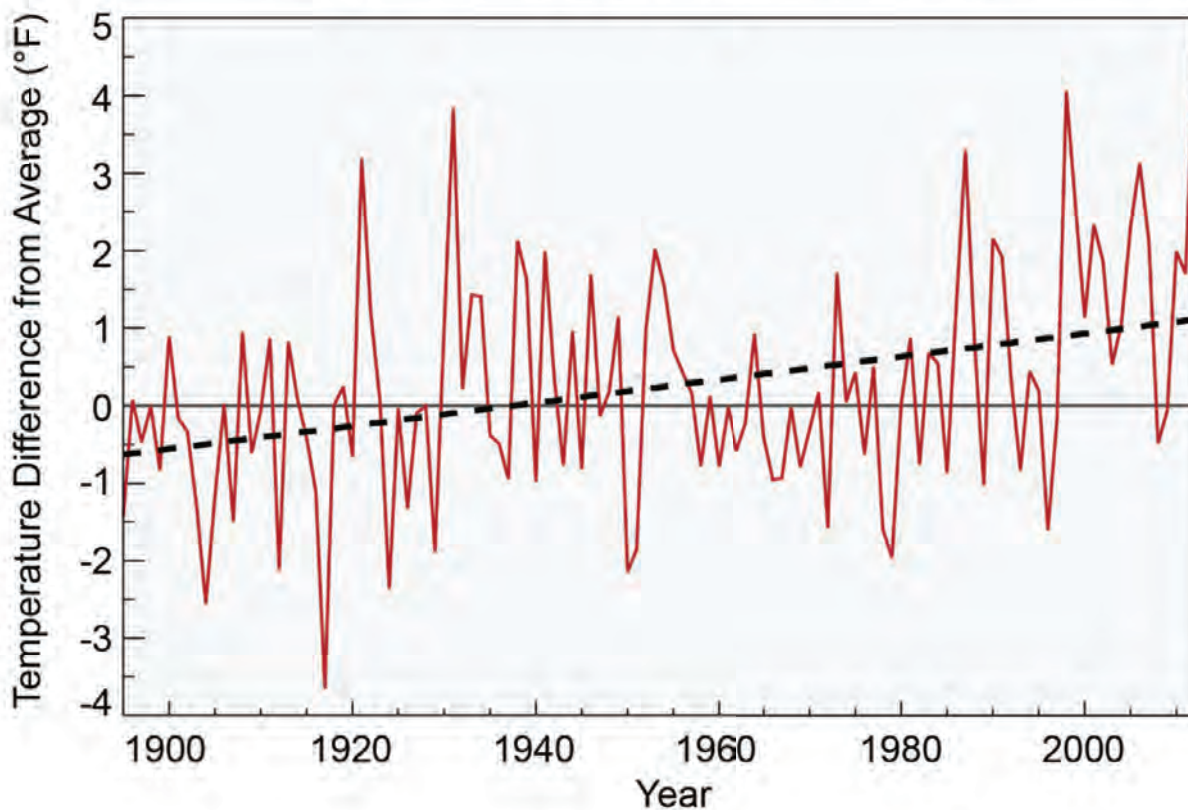
EAC is currently finalizing the Bloomington-Normal Community Energy Strategic Plan (BNCESP) developed over the last several years through a collaborative community planning process. The BNCESP focuses on developing strategies for carbon emissions reduction and air quality improvements. Stakeholders representing a variety of perspectives and backgrounds were instrumental in the development of the plan, and spent significant time brainstorming strategies to help combat issues contributing to climate change, carbon emissions, ozone, and other forms of air pollution.

The EAC hopes to have the draft BNCESP completed in mid-2022.

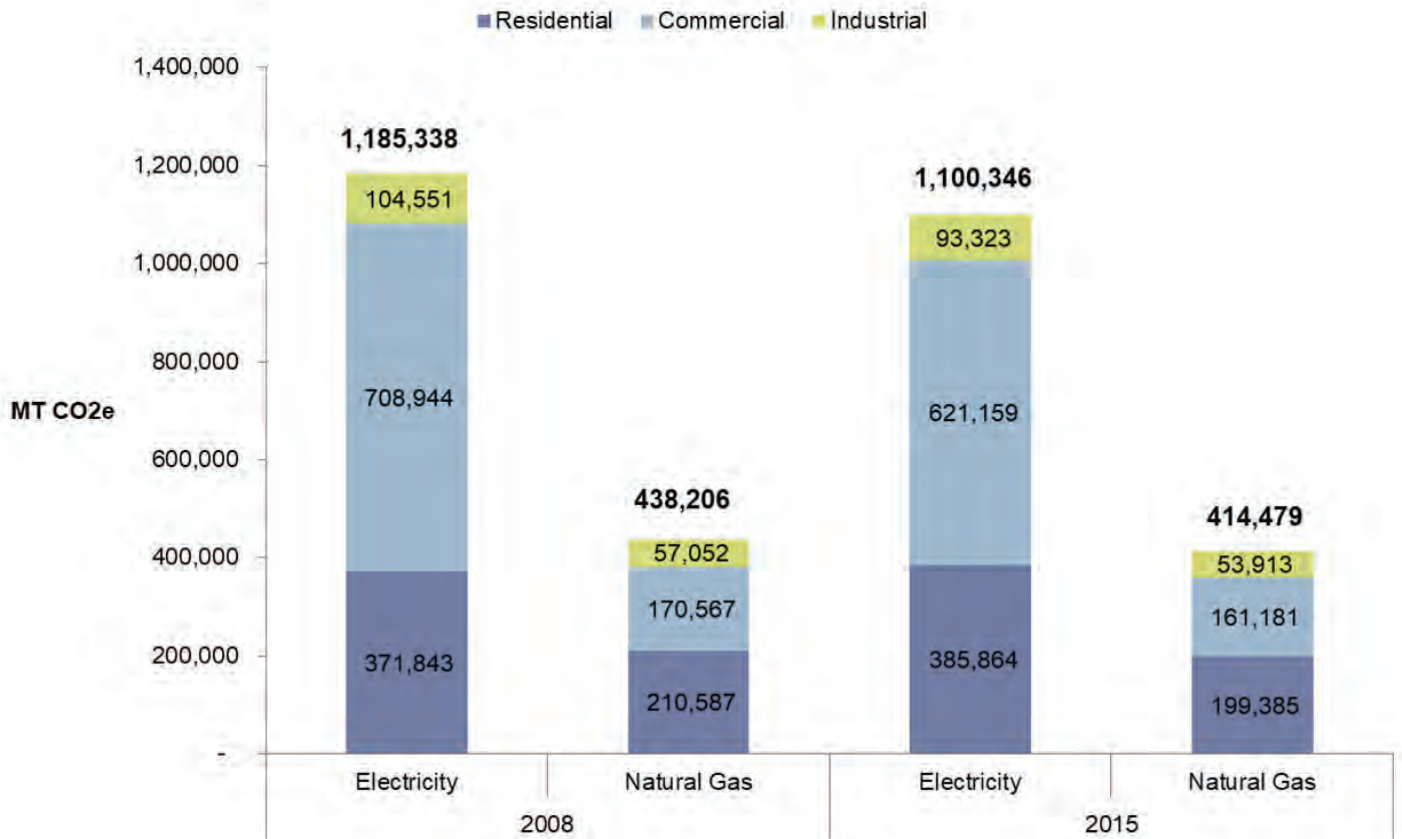
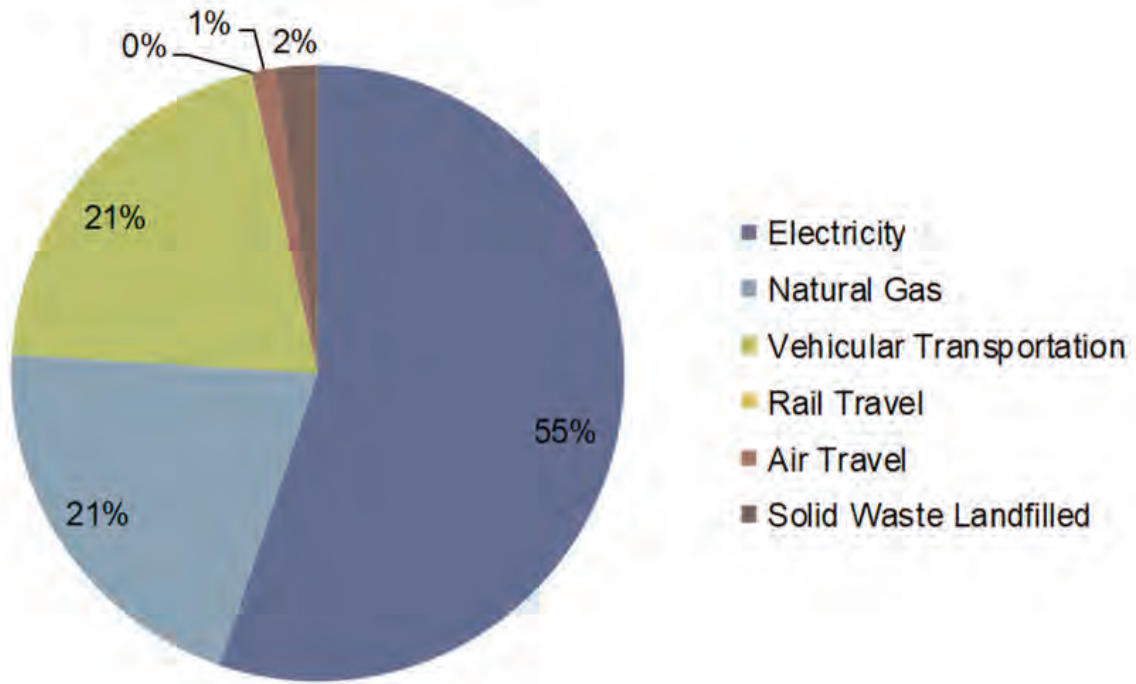
Some of the concepts contained in the plan are already well underway in our community. There are numerous programs offered by the EAC and other community organizations to increase energy efficiency and the adoption of renewable energy in Bloomington-Normal.

The EAC also launched its new Tree Corps initiative, to improve future air quality by planting 10,000 trees a year in McLean County, at the very end of 2020.

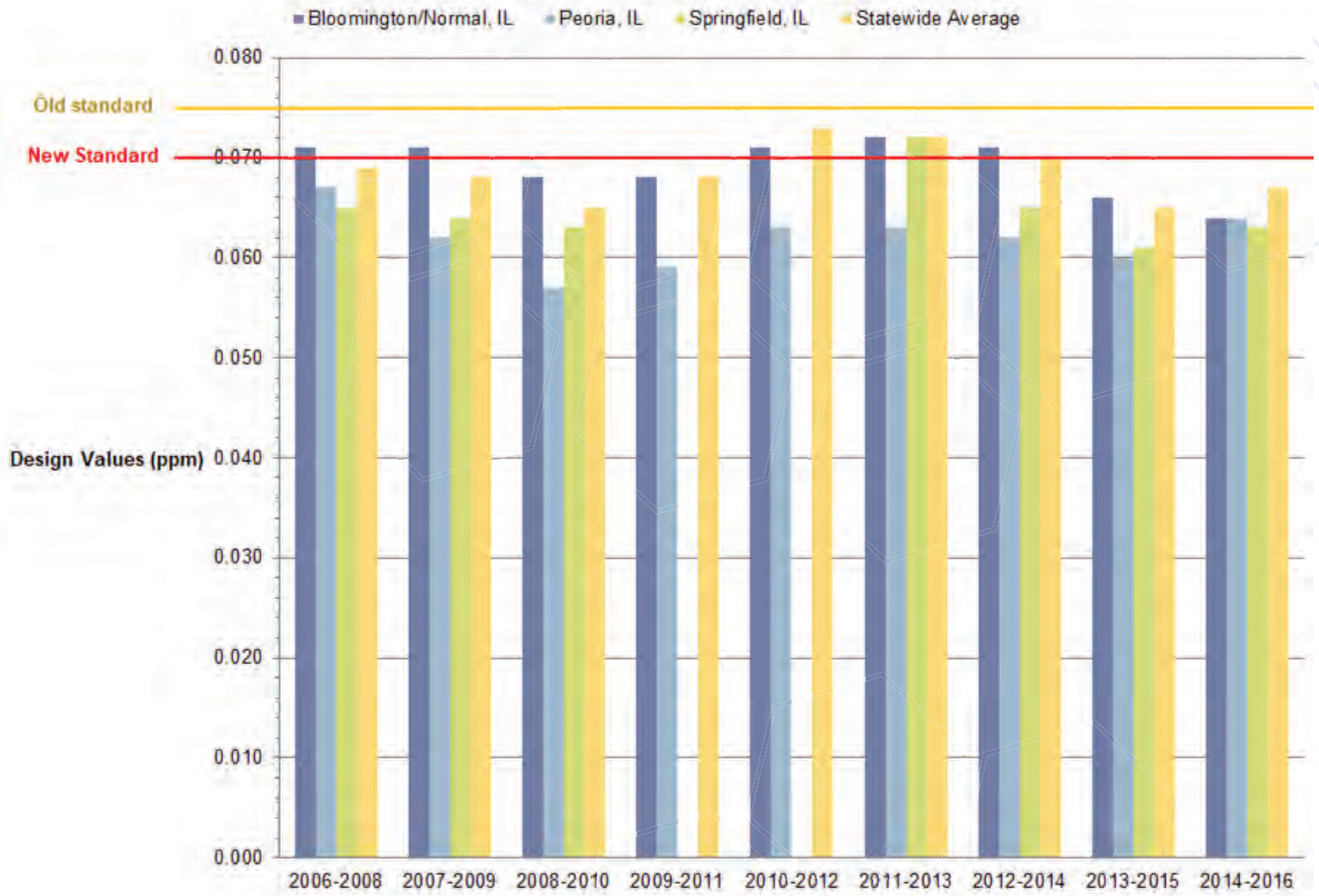
### Temperatures are Rising in the Midwest



2015 B-N Community Scale GHG Emissions by Category. Includes new 2015 variables.



## Bloomington-Normal Ozone Design Values



# TREE CORPS

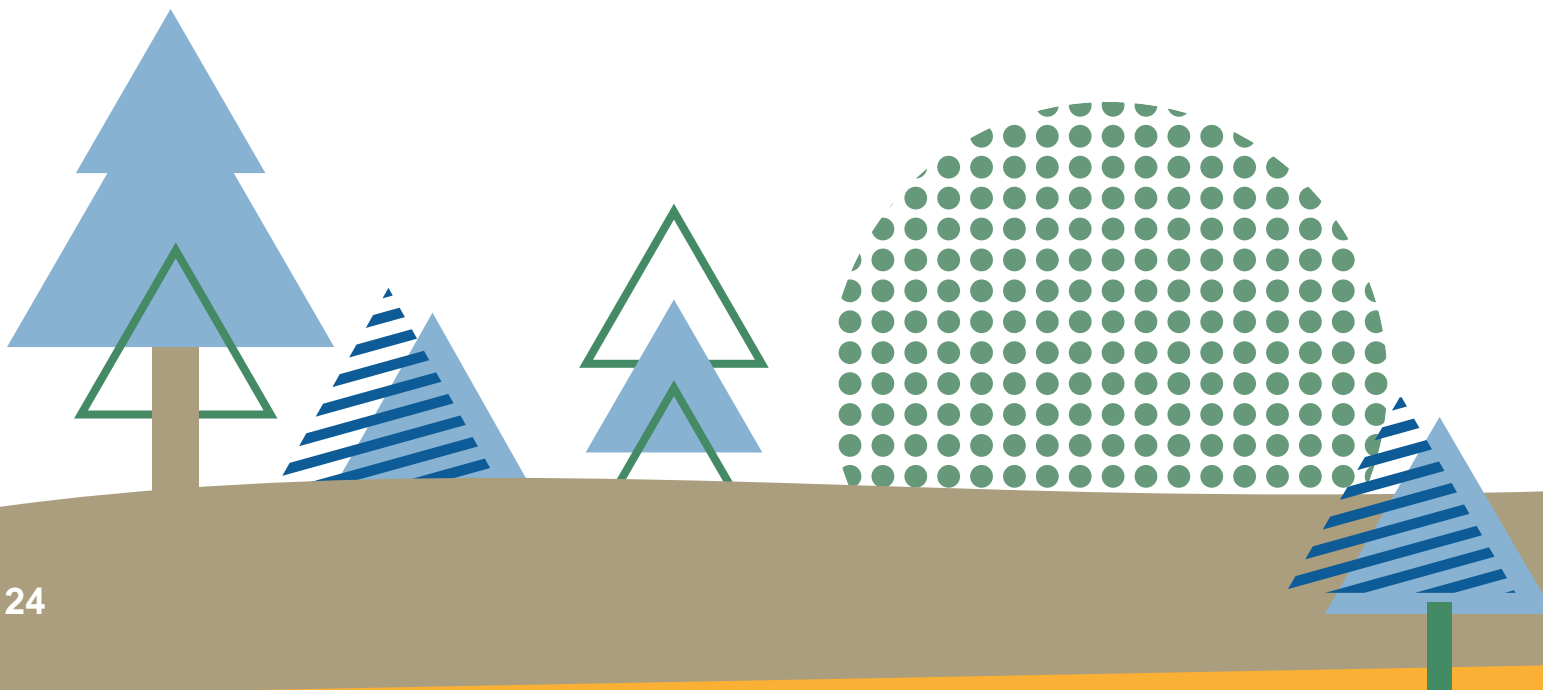
In late 2020, the Ecology Action Center launched Tree Corps, an initiative with a goal to plant at least 10,000 new trees in Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County over the next ten years.

Why trees?

- Trees help improve air quality. Our community is close to exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, an air quality pollutant that contributes to asthma and other respiratory diseases, negatively impacting public health.
- Trees are one of the most cost-effective strategies for carbon sequestration to help address greenhouse gas emissions.
- Trees help provide watershed protection, increase wildlife habitat, and offer opportunities for recreation areas, as demonstrated by the McLean County Greenways Plan. All trees planted through the Tree Corps are Illinois native species in order to maximize suitability for local environmental conditions and to support native pollinators and other species dependent upon native primary trophic level food supplies.
- Back in the early days of the Ecology Action Center in the 1970's and 1980's, when the organization was known as Operation Recycle, profits from recycling drives were utilized for tree planting efforts including helping to plant at Comlara Park on Evergreen Lake.

To make Tree Corps a success the EAC is building upon new and existing partnerships with local nonprofits, businesses, faith-based organizations, and governmental entities, to seek out opportunities and funding to increase tree plantings significantly in our community.

In 2021, with the help of generous donations from individuals and organizations, the hard work of our many volunteers, and with the support of our major partner organizations, Parklands Foundation, Friends of the Constitution Trail, and Living Lands and Waters; we successfully planted over 10,000 native trees in McLean County in April and May of 2021.

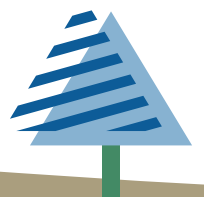
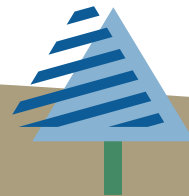
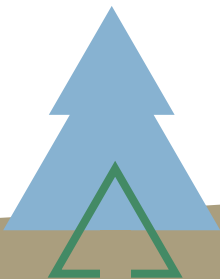




## FRIENDS OF THE TRAIL PLANTING



## PARKLANDS MOHR TRACT PLANTING





# CLEAN WATER

The Ecology Action Center educates the community about the negative impacts of storm water runoff pollution and provides information and resources to help people reduce their contributions to water pollution.

The EAC promotes clean water protection and watershed awareness through education and

outreach programs including programs for all the third grade classrooms in McLean County, the Yard Smart program, storm drain stenciling, the mCLEANwater.org watershed clearinghouse website, rain barrel workshops, an annual creek and trail clean-up event, the Sugar Creek Stewards, septic system maintenance messaging, and reminding our community to curb their leaves in the fall.

# YARD SMART GARDEN WALK

The EAC held its annual Yard Smart Garden Walk on July 10. After a year of holding the event online, the event resumed in-person participation and had a record 97 attendees. This year's event coincided with the EAC's 50th Anniversary.

In order to accommodate the high number of attendees EAC staff split participants and toured the gardens in two smaller groups. The gardens included Phil Houser and Marcia Rossi's homes, where they turned their front and side yards into beautiful native plant landscapes. Their gardens are Yard Smart, registered with the Illinois Prairie Wild Ones as part of the Pollinator Pathway Program, and registered with the National Wildlife Association as certified wildlife habitat.

The tour also stopped at the ISU Horticulture Center to learn about their prairie space. Both groups then gathered at the final garden, the home of Nancy and Joe Armstrong, long time EAC supporters and board members. Attendees found a surprise garden party complete with educational booths from multiple partner organizations, snacks, and live music. Yard Smart Garden Walk attendees learned about the benefits of landscaping with native plants, and saw a variety of methods to incorporate native plants into a home garden.



# SUGAR CREEK STEWARDS

Sugar Creek Stewards is designed to raise awareness about Sugar Creek as an important community storm water system and ecosystem. The EAC works with volunteers at designated sites to improve the overall health and aesthetics of Sugar Creek through invasive species control and removal, allowing native species to thrive.



## Bloomington

- In February, three volunteers helped clear honeysuckle and other woody brush at Ewing Park.
- In March, ten participants helped seed previously cleared areas with native shade tolerant seed at Ewing Park.
- In April, seven volunteers removed honeysuckle from the east side of the creek bridge at Ewing Park.
- In June, two volunteers removed honeysuckle from Ewing Park.
- In August, four volunteers removed honeysuckle and spread native plant seed at Ewing Park
- In October, two volunteers helped remove honeysuckle, spread native plant seed, and plant 20 serviceberry trees at Ewing Park II in Bloomington.
- In December, three volunteers worked to remove invasive plants and spread native

shade-tolerant plant seed at Ewing Park II in Bloomington.

## Normal

- In January, four volunteers helped remove honeysuckle and other woody plants on the west side of the creek at Fairview Park.
- In May, four volunteers worked in the rain spreading native plant seeds and removing honeysuckle at Fairview Park.
- In July, five volunteers removed invasive plants from the prairie on the east side of the creek and seeded with native seeds at Fairview Park.
- In September, four volunteers helped remove invasive species and spread native plant seed along the creek through the main part of Fairview Park.
- In November, workday two volunteers helped remove invasive plants and spread native plant seed along the creek just west of the playground at Fairview Park in Normal.



# RAIN BARRELS

The EAC offered 8 rain barrel workshops to 21 participants where we provide rain barrel best practices and participants take home custom built 55 gallon rain barrels.

The EAC also sold 19 ready-to-use rain barrels through the EAC online store.



## Ecology Action Center

hosted weekly Facebook Live EAQs chats on varying topics, including clean water

# CONSTITUTION TRAIL AND SUGAR CREEK CLEAN UP DAY

After taking 2020 off, the Ecology Action Center re-launched the annual Constitution Trail and Sugar Creek Clean-Up day.

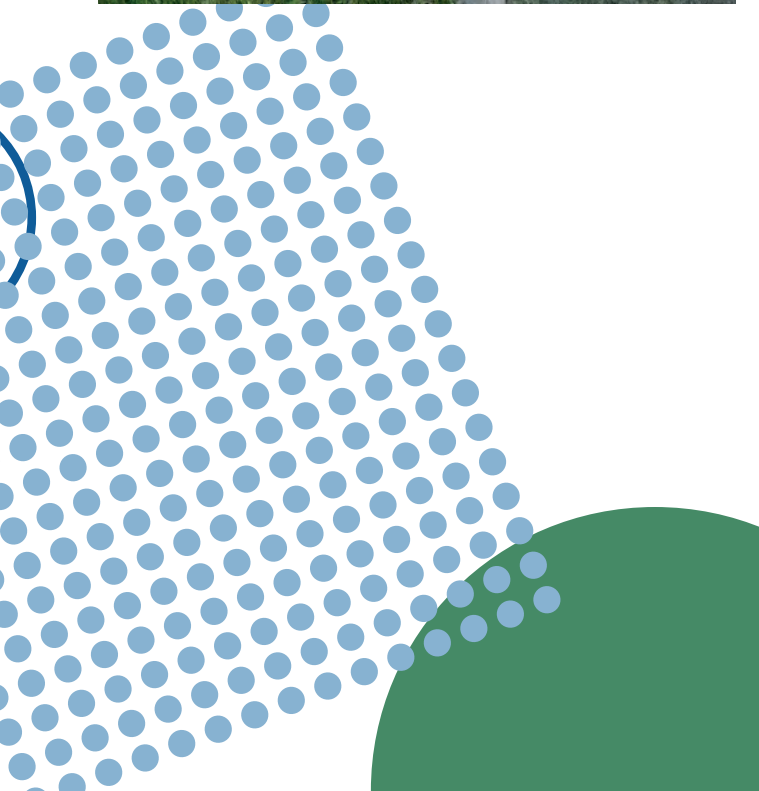
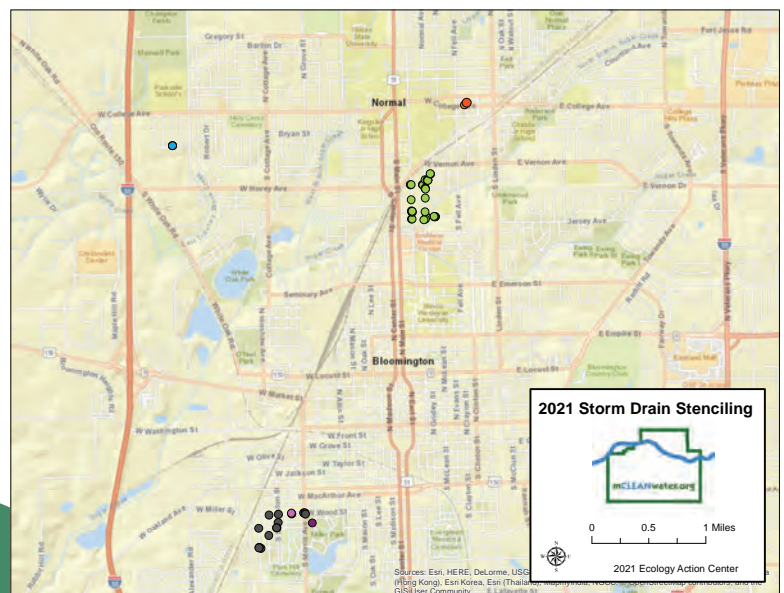
Typically, the clean up is held along the trail from Tipton Trails to the Audubon Gardens. This year we expanded our efforts to clean up portions of the trail in west Bloomington near the Habitat ReStore. Volunteer numbers were capped to continue COVID-19 safety measures. 27 volunteers gathered at two locations and cleaned up a half ton of garbage.



# STORM DRAIN STENCILING

The Ecology Action Center welcomes groups of volunteers to participate in storm drain stenciling in the community. Volunteers spray stencils next to storm drains that say “Drains to Stream, Keep it Clean”, marking every stenciled drain with a GPS tracker, and distributing door hangers in the neighborhood that educate residents on what storm water pollution is and ways households can reduce their contributions to it.

- Held a stenciling workday in Normal with SLiCE, a volunteer organization at Heartland Community College, where five volunteers distributed 175 flyers to homes and stenciled 60 storm drains.
- Held a stenciling workday in Bloomington, west of Miller Park with the Youth Conservation Conference. Thirteen volunteers, distributed flyers to 87 homes, stenciled 20 storm drains.
- Held a stenciling workday in Normal in the neighborhood around Advocate BroMenn hospital with a group of eight high-school volunteers. Volunteers distributed door hangers to 75 homes, and stenciled 35 storm drains.





# ENERGY

BN Energy Bright is a community energy program designed to increase energy efficiency for homes and businesses in Bloomington-Normal through professional low-cost energy assessments, personalized assessment reports for participants, and through a variety of educational information in the form of presentations, outreach events and a comprehensive website.

BN Energy Bright is in partnership with the Town of Normal and the City of Bloomington, in conjunction with their municipal aggregation programs, to help further reduce the community's overall energy demand. Due to continued risks



associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the EAC offered virtual energy audits at the beginning of the year, and offered some in-person audits in the latter part of the year. In 2021, we completed 9 virtual home energy audits in Bloomington and Normal, and 8 in-person home energy audits. Additionally the EAC provided 41 detailed energy





**58**  
home energy  
consultations



**\$9,435**  
total estimated  
energy savings  
of participating  
households in the first  
year



**634**  
people reached through  
presentations, events,  
and phone inquiries



**207,842**  
interactions through  
media coverage, ads,  
social media and the  
EAC website

“ **BN Energy Bright is a community energy program designed to increase energy efficiency for homes and businesses in Bloomington-Normal.** ”

efficiency consultations via phone and email for residents with specific questions.

Based on figures from the Department of Energy, if residents implement the majority of the easier to accomplish efficiency recommendations (sealing air leaks, setting their thermostat back 7-10° for 8 hours a day, replacing frequently used light fixtures with LED bulbs, lower water heating temperature,

insulating hot water pipes) they can save a low estimate of \$555 annually on energy costs. Using these figures, participating households cumulatively saved as much as \$9,435 in energy savings in the first year after implementation. The average Illinois household uses 129 million BTUs of energy per year. Based on the energy equivalents of the monetary savings estimates above, implementing the basic

efficiency recommendations means a savings of 34.6 million BTU per household. This is the equivalent to removing 3.7 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions per household.

BN Energy Bright has reached over 634 members of the community through presentations, events and phone inquiries, and had an additional 207,842 interactions through media coverage, advertisements, social media, and our website.



## ILLINOIS SOLAR FOR ALL

In 2021, the Ecology Action Center finished the second half of its second year and was awarded a contract to begin a third year as a grassroots educator. The Ecology Action Center was one of ten non-profits in the state to serve as grassroots educators for the Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) program. ILSFA is part of the state's Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) designed to increase access to solar energy for low-income residents, environmental justice communities, and non-profits and public facilities that serve low-income communities. Grassroots education program years run from June through May.

The EAC gave informational presentations about ILSFA to Habitat residents, Bloomington Township staff, the County Board Property Committee, Boys and Girls Club, and Tazwood Community Center. We



also sent out a newsletter outlining opportunities to 3,000 west Bloomington residents. We connected four residents with approved installers for potential single-family solar projects for their homes, and helped 21 residents sign up for ILSFA community solar subscriptions.

# AMEREN-NICOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY PILOT PROGRAM

The EAC was selected to help with community outreach to promote the Ameren-Nicor energy efficiency pilot program. The program aims to provide free energy efficiency kits to income qualifying (80% Area Median Income) residents in Bloomington-Normal that are serviced by Ameren and Nicor, and to provide free full energy assessments with weatherization services for up to 80 eligible homes.

In 2021 the program completed a total of 107 energy efficiency projects for residents in Bloomington-Normal. 37 projects included a comprehensive energy assessment and direct installs of LED bulbs, water-saving equipment, hot water pipe insulation, window and door weather stripping, and smart plug strips. 70 projects included a comprehensive energy assessment, direct installs like the ones listed above, and additional retrofit measures such as air sealing, added insulation and/or upgrades or replacement of water heating or furnace mechanicals. 493 households also received energy savings kits in the mail. All of these services were free for participating residents.



25

members of the community Interfaith Green Team learned about solar options from EAC staff

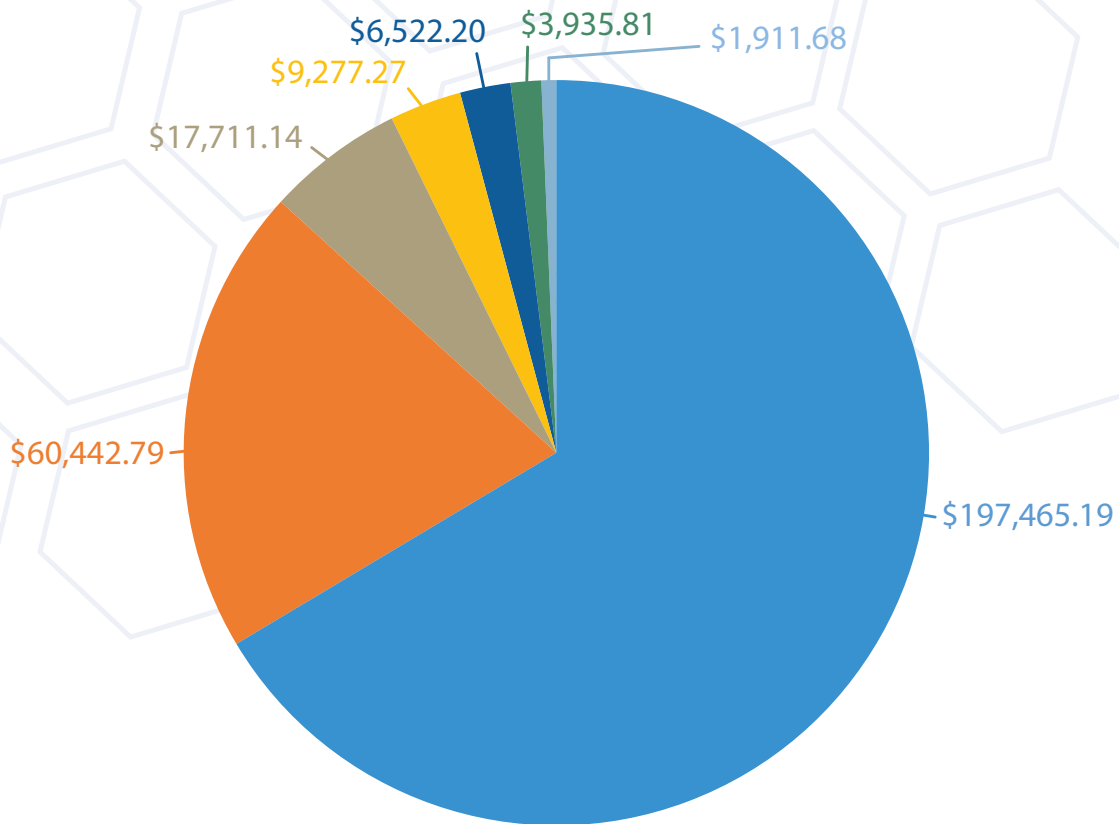
114

individuals attended the EAC hosted, virtual evening with Dr. Sandra Steingraber in honor of the EAC's 50th anniversary. The event was titled, "Toward a fossil-fuel free future: food, farming, fracking, climate, & justice"

30

attendees, consisting largely of area church members considering similar projects, came to an event celebrating the solar installation on the Moses Montefiore Temple. The EAC assisted the temple with its solar process through the BN Energy Bright program.

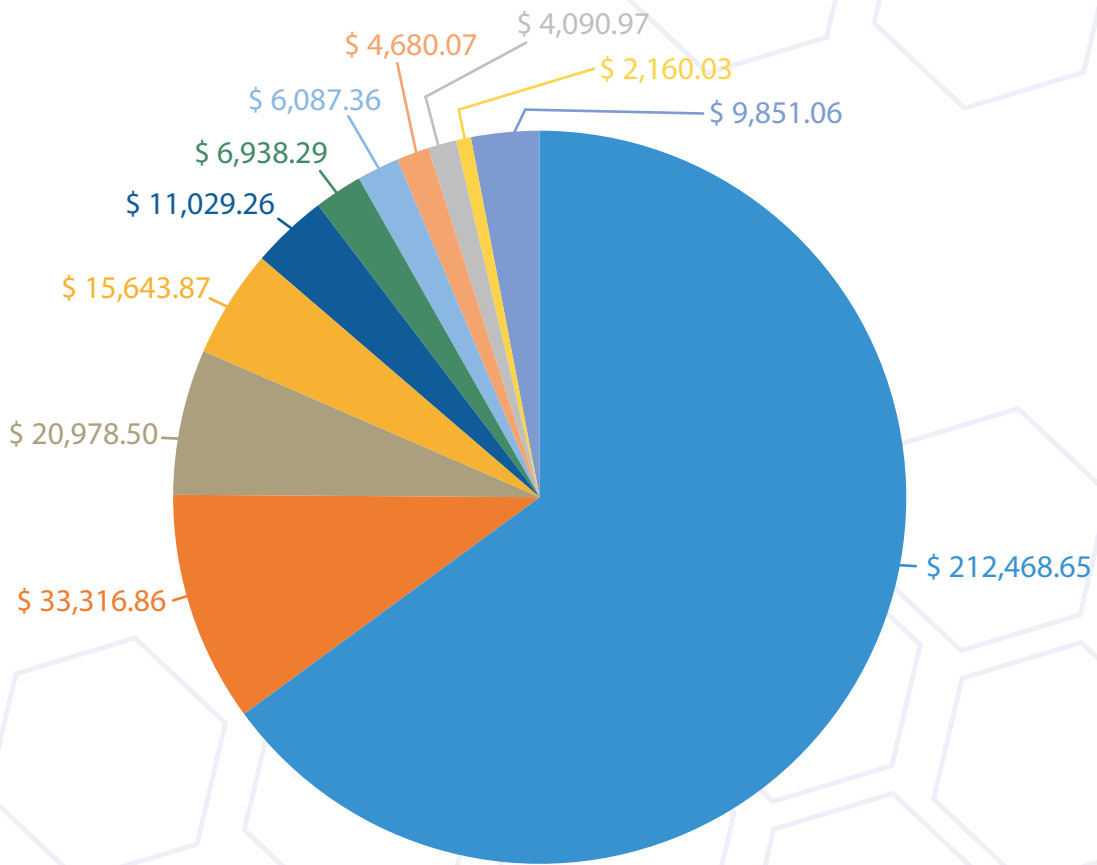
# 2021 FINANCIAL SUMMARY: REVENUE



- Program fees
- Contributions
- Annual Giving
- Merchandise/Food Sales
- Sponsorships
- Reimbursement Income
- Other Income

**Total revenue for 2021**  
**\$297,266.08**

# 2021 FINANCIAL SUMMARY: EXPENSES



- payroll expenses    ● professional fees    ● supplies    ● marketing    ● insurance
- utilities    ● web/it services    ● dues and subscriptions    ● merchandise
- printing and reproduction    ● other

**Total expenses for 2021**  
**\$327,277.65**

# 2021 FUNDERS & SPONSORS

## PUBLIC AGENCIES

- Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District
- City of Bloomington
- McLean County
- Town of Normal
- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

## BUSINESS & PRIVATE SUPPORTERS

- AB Hatchery
- StraightUp Solar
- Normandy Village
- Zimmerman & Armstrong Investment Advisors
- Myra & George Gordon
- Resource Innovations
- Better Earth Logistics
- State Farm Foundation
- Koala Center for Sleep and TMJ Disorders
- Country Financial
- Republic Service

## NON-PROFIT SPONSORS & PARTNERS

- Bloomington-Normal NAACP
- Habitat for Humanity
- West Bloomington Revitalization Project
- ParkLands Foundation
- Midwest Renewable Energy Association
- Illinois Prairie Wild Ones
- The Nature Conservancy
- Elevate
- YWCA McLean County
- Friends of the Constitution Trail
- U of I Extension Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners
- Trees Forever
- Living Lands and Waters
- Illinois Prairie Community Foundation
- New Covenant Community Church
- First Presbyterian Church

## 2021 TREE TEAMS

- Re/Max Rising
- Normal First United Methodist Green Team
- First Christian Church
- Community Health Care Clinic
- Clerkin Family
- BN Daybreak Rotary
- NexSTEM
- Lieschen's Ladies
- StraightUP Solar Says...Mohr Trees, Please!
- Compeer Financial
- United Brotherhood of Carpenters
- Livingston and McLean County Building Trades
- Tipple Clowns!
- Ecology Action Center Board of Directors Tree Team
- Normal Future Farmers of America
- Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington Normal
- First United Methodist Church
- Paul and Kathy Packard
- Drake Zimmerman
- Dennis Killian
- Bloomington Spice Works
- Bloomington Rotary Foundation

# ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER STAFF



**Michael Brown**  
Executive Director



**Larissa Armstrong**  
Assistant Director



**Jen Gravley**  
Education Coordinator



**Eric Marshall**  
Program Assistant



**Gary Kamplain**  
Program Assistant



**Riley Francis**  
Program Assistant



**Angela Bossard**  
Administrative  
Assistant



**Nate Bair**  
Stewardship  
Coordinator

## 2021-2022 Board of Directors

Mike O'Grady  
President and Ex-officio  
McLean County

Jay Ivers - Vice President

Carl Teichman - Past President

Nancy Armstrong - Treasurer

Charles Bristow - Secretary

Jason Comfort  
Ex-officio Normal

Kevin Koethe  
Ex-officio Bloomington

Myra Gordon

Kari Sandhaas

Joan Brehm

Julie Emig

Steve Kowalski

Vince Allen

Elisabeth Reed

Ben Ryburn

Tim Golliday

George Gordon

Wayne Aldrich

Goverdhan Galpalli

Rachael Lund

Laurie Wollrab



**ECOLOGY**  
ACTION CENTER

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