

STORM WATER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL & MCLEAN COUNTY SECOND QUARTER 2018 REPORT

THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING TASKS AS PART OF THE STORM WATER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF FEBRUARY 1, 2016.



EDUCATION PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS

Classroom Programs

- Bloomington
 - Irving Elementary School; 3 classes, 70 students
 - Stevenson Elementary School; 3 classes, 76 students
- Normal
 - Colene Hoose Elementary; 3 classes, 62 students
- McLean County
 - Tri-Valley 6th grade – Watershed Health presentation; 3 classes, 81 students

Other Educational Programs, Presentations & Information Booths

- Bloomington
 - Presentation to Illinois Wesleyan University May term Environmental Health class – 15 students
 - Information booth promoting clean water protection, Yard Smart and storm water runoff pollution prevention at David Davis Mansion Glorious Gardens Festival – 47 attendees
 - Information booth promoting clean water protection, Yard Smart and storm water runoff pollution prevention at Pantagraph's Girls World Expo – 53 Attendees.
- Normal
 - Northpoint girl scout group – 10 attendees
 - Information booth promoting clean water protection, Yard Smart and storm water runoff pollution prevention at ISU sustainability fair – 55 attendees
 - Information booth promoting clean water protection, Yard Smart and storm water runoff pollution prevention at Advocate BroMenn earth day fair – 82 attendees
 - Information booth promoting clean water protection, Yard Smart and storm water runoff pollution prevention at ISU Fell Arboretum Plant Sale – 10 attendees
 - Information booth promoting clean water protection, Yard Smart and storm water runoff pollution prevention at Heartland Community College Illinois Prairie Wild Ones speaker event – 46 attendees

SUGAR CREEK STEWARDS

The Sugar Creek Stewards project is designed to raise awareness about Sugar Creek as an important community storm water system and ecosystem and improve the beneficial functions of stream buffers along the creek. The EAC works with volunteers at

designated sites to improve the quality and aesthetics of stream buffers through invasive species control and removal, while also working to increase beneficial native vegetation.



- Normal
 - Held a workday at the Fairview Park site in April in conjunction with ISU's Bring it Back to Normal volunteer day
 - 20 volunteers
 - Held a workday at the Fairview Park site in June with 4 volunteers
 - Planted about 6,000 square feet of native seed at Fairview Park

- Bloomington
 - Held workdays in May and March at Ewing Park with a total of 13 volunteers
 - Planted around 40 liatris corms along the creek near Tipton Park

YARD SMART PROGRAM

- Held successful Yard Smart Garden Walk on Saturday, June 23, 2018. The event had 55 attendees from Bloomington and Normal and featured 4 gardens in Normal that do not use chemical pesticides or herbicides and all have a diversity of native plants and rain water catchment systems. Dr. Ben Sadd from the Illinois State University Department of Biological Sciences gave an engaging presentation about native pollinator health.

- Rain Barrel Workshops – held multiple workshops where attendees build their own rain barrels to take home. Workshops also contain an educational presentation about storm water runoff pollution and prevention, and rain barrel use best practices.
 - April 25 – 8 attendees
 - April 28 – 6 attendees
 - June 3 – 3 attendees

STORM DRAIN STENCILING

Ongoing Storm Drain Stenciling initiative--labeling storm water inlets with clean water messaging ("Drains to Stream, Keep it Clean") and distributing storm water pollution prevention information to area households via informational door hanger.

- Normal
 - Heartland Community College volunteers – 24 volunteers stenciled 77 storm drains and gave information to 305 households
- Bloomington
 - Paul Mitchell Green Team volunteers – 14 volunteers stenciled 64 storm drains and gave information to 257 households
 - Illinois Wesleyan Environmental Health students – 2 volunteers stenciled 26 storm drains and gave information to 193 households



COMMUNITY-WIDE MARKETING AND OTHER OUTREACH EFFORTS

- Special Events
 - Coordinated annual Sugar Creek and Constitution Trail Clean-up Day with area partners, Friends of the Constitution Trail, Bike BloNo, and McLean County Wheelers. 85 volunteers collected approximately 1000 pounds of trash out of the creek and along the Constitution Trail from Tipton Park to the Audubon Garden at Vernon.
- Radio Promotions
 - Ran clean water ads on WJBC, WBNQ and WBWN reaching 78,900 listeners
- Social Media
 - Weekly Facebook #WatershedWednesday posts with 14,239 views
 - Weekly Twitter #WatershedWednesday posts engaging 3,594 people
 - Facebook ad promoting Yard Smart Garden Walk reaching 7,216 people
- Newsletters
 - Produced and distributed quarterly EAC annual supporter newsletter to 291 households with information on storm water issues.
 - Sent EAC Action News email newsletter in April and May to 880 email subscribers with information about rain barrel workshops, watershed issues, and Yard Smart topics.
- Website Traffic
 - Promoted clean water issues and strategies for protection through resource-rich websites— 3,281



visits to water-related pages and posts on ecologyactioncenter.org and visits to pages about clean water content on mCLEANwater.org

- Direct Inquiries – 29 calls, emails, and visitors inquiring about clean water issues, rain barrels,

MCLEAN COUNTY SOLID WASTE PROGRAM

2018 FIRST QUARTER REPORT



THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN FULFILLMENT OF THE SOLID WASTE AND WASTE REDUCTION EDUCATION PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF JANUARY 1, 2017.

LEADING INDICATORS: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS¹

Goal: Visit **70%** of eligible classrooms in McLean County, Bloomington, and Normal for elementary school recycling and waste reduction education programs. Reaching this target means directly engaging with approximately 1,500 students.

- Year to date: zero. There are 85 Fourth grade classrooms in McLean County, which includes all public and private schools. This is a predominately fall program; presentations are scheduled for August through December.

Goal: Visit **60%** of public libraries within McLean County, Bloomington and Normal and provide a summer reading program on recycling and waste reduction topics. Reaching this target means directly engaging with approximately 300 library patrons.

- Year to date: There are 14 public libraries in McLean County. In June EAC made 9 library visits and met 228 people. This represents 64% of local libraries, which exceeds our annual goal.

Goal: Provide recycling and waste reduction presentations for **25** local groups or approximately 750 individuals including civic groups, scouts, preschools, non-target school groups, university classes.²

- Year to date: 32 programs, which reached 656 people, which exceeds our annual goal.

Goal: Promote recycling and sustainable practices to direct audiences utilizing social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube with a target of **30,000** interactions annually.

- Year to date: 55,302 interactions, which exceeds our annual goal.

Goal: Provide and promote comprehensive online resources on recycling and waste disposal for Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County with a target of **12,000** visits to these pages annually.

- Year to date: In the first two quarters of 2018, our online waste and recycling resources were visited 13,777 times --115% of our goal.

¹ The totals below represent Year-To-Date numbers. Specific details of this Quarter's activities are described on the pages that follow.

² In practice, the EAC provides these programs for nearly 100% of those requesting the services.

COUNTY WASTE GENERATION & RECYCLING RATE

Despite an increase in waste generated, McLean County's recycling rate increased for the third year in a row in 2017. The Ecology Action Center's annual calculation of community-wide waste generation and recycling shows that the County reached a recycling rate of nearly 42% with an increase of just over 1% from 2016. As a result, the County maintained progress made in 2016 in breaking the 40% community-wide recycling goal set in 2007 but is still a significant distance from the new community-wide recycling rate goal of 50%.

Minor fluctuations across the board in all material streams resulted in a relatively minor but yet positive change to the overall community-wide recycling rate for calendar year 2017. No single category of recyclable materials saw significant fluctuations from the year prior.

	2013	2014	2015*	2016*	2017
Total MSW Recycled (tons)	73,833	85,196	81,302	83,335	88,459
Total MSW Landfilled (tons)	121,991	141,068	154,662	120,815	124,364
Total Municipal Solid Waste Generated (tons)	195,824	226,264	235,964	204,150	211,230
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	<i>6.96%</i>	<i>15.54%</i>	<i>4.29%</i>	<i>-13.48%</i>	<i>3.47%</i>
Recycling Rate	37.70%	37.65%	34.46%	40.82%	41.88%
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	<i>3.43%</i>	<i>-0.13%</i>	<i>-8.49%</i>	<i>18.47%</i>	<i>2.59%</i>

* Updated numbers due to corrected information from waste/recycling haulers.

As the capacity of the McLean County Landfill continues to decrease, the Ecology Action Center is focusing on new waste management priorities as outlined in the recently approved Twenty-Year Materials Recovery and Resource Management Plan for McLean County, Bloomington, and Normal, Illinois.

SOLID WASTE COORDINATOR ACTIVITIES

- EAC applied for and received full funding from the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation- *IPCF Annual Campaign Fund Green Endowment* for a program titled "Reducing Barriers for Sustainable Recycling." The pilot program aims to increase the convenience of recycling and provide extended education on recycling options in the Bloomington- Normal community through two separate programs. The goal is to help eliminate existing barriers in McLean County that reduce residents' ability to recycle.

In Normal, the program seeks to increase participation in single-stream curbside recycling by making 82 curbside 65-gallon recycling carts available at no cost to low-income households. Each participating household will receive additional educational content on local programs that cater to the proper disposal of non-traditional recycling items in the community.

In Bloomington, grant funding will allow for four permanent recycling bins to be installed in the downtown commercial district. By providing permanent bins in an area of high pedestrian traffic, residents and visitors alike will have increased accessibility to recycling options. The four bins will accept conventional recyclable items like those that are accepted in Bloomington's single-stream residential recycling program. The EAC will collect data on use of both the Normal and Bloomington programs to determine the effectiveness of reducing barriers to recycling program participation.

- EAC staff coordinated a pilot textile pickup program for students living in multi-unit apartment complexes near the Illinois State campus in partnership with Home Sweet Home Ministries (HSHM) and area rental companies. The intent of the program was to increase the convenience of textile recycling for Normal's student population during student move-out, a period when waste generation is typically high.

The effort was well received initially by apartment managers and students that received information at the ISU Sustainability Fair. Despite some complications limiting the scope of the program, HSHM managed to collect donated textiles at multiple apartment complexes. Awareness of this campaign even then prompted students at inaccessible complexes to voluntarily collect textiles to be dropped off at HSHM.

- Assisted the Town of Normal staff with developing program for addressing multi-family housing recycling.
- Initial planning and site coordination for fall 2019 Household Hazardous Waste Collection initiated.
- Ongoing updates to RecycleCoach smartphone/browser recycling listing application.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- In-house composting overview including setup and best practices (3 attendees)
- Presentation for Homes of Hope Inc. staff and residents on proper composting and best practices (15 attendees)
- Presentation for Northpoint Ecology Club on ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle for a zero waste lunch (60 students)
- Information table at ISU Sustainability Fair promoting EAC programs and mission (55 interactions)
- Information table at Girls World Expo promoting EAC programs and mission (53 interactions)
- Presentation for Park Jr. High on solid waste, recycling, and composting (1 class, 11 students)
- Presentation at McLean County SWCD Conservation Day on composting (6 classes, 150 students)
- Presentation for Chesterbrook Academy students on recycling and composting (2 classes, 20 students)

- Information table at District 87 Summer Feeding Program locations promoting recycling and vermicomposting:
 - Irving Elementary (11 interactions)
 - Stevenson Elementary (18 interactions)
 - Bent Elementary (15 interactions)
 - Sheridan Elementary (10 interactions)
- Presentation for Fairview Elementary Girl Scout Group on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (10 students)
- Class on Zero Waste Lunch options for students 6 to 10 years of age (16 students)
- Lunch & Learn presentation on zero waste concepts for GROWMARK Inc. Green Team (8 employees)
- Presentation on Mulberry School students on recycling and composting (58 students)
- Information booth at Advocate Bromenn Earth Day Fair promoting EAC programs including recycling (82 interactions)
- Presentation for Heartland Community College Child Development Lab on recycling and composting (19 students)
- Summer Reading Program at area libraries “Adventures of a Plastic Water Bottle”:
 - Danvers Public Library – 25 attendees
 - Normal Public Library – 60 attendees
 - Chenoa Township Library– 13 attendees
 - McLean Mt. Hope – Funks Grove Library – 50 attendees
 - Bloomington Public Library – 70 attendees
 - Colfax Martin Township Library – 5 attendees

MARKETING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Radio Promotions:
 - Recycle Coach promotions on WGLT for two week run (approximately 14,100 listeners)
 - EAC staff was interviewed on Cities 92.9 about Earth Day clean-up event and recycling
 - EAC staff was interviewed on WBNO about Earth Day and clean-up event (approximately 2,100 listeners)
- Featured story on Household Hazardous Waste results from 2017 in Pantagraph

- Co-coordinated the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo (ISLWE) at IWU with an estimated 2,250 participants. This event is purposefully designed to model “zero-waste” event planning: much of the literature was presented electronically instead of paper hand-outs, and vendors were encouraged to not distribute extraneous trinkets. Event was publicized in the Pantagraph, on social media, on WJBC and WGLT, with advertisements and interviews, reaching nearly 50,000 area residents.



- Held Mega Recycling event in conjunction with the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo at IWU in April. Two hundred fifteen households recycled electronics, textiles, Terracycle items, and corrugated plastic signs; participants were given information about recycling these items in our community throughout the year.

- Coordinated annual Constitution Trail and Sugar Creek clean up event in April, removing trash from a 1.6 mile stretch of Sugar Creek from Tipton Park to Audubon Gardens; Eighty-five citizens volunteered with this effort and helped collect 1,000 pounds (1/2 ton) of trash.



- Assisted with coordination and promotion of Bloomington-Normal Clean-Up Week; promotions included WGLT interview, social media post,s and paid advertisements.

- Social Media:

- Promoted waste reduction, recycling, composting and proper disposal of household hazardous wastes through social media. EAC posted messages on its Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube accounts on solid waste topics, with a resulting 39,381 views of these posts.

- Newsletters:

- Produced quarterly EAC paper newsletters featuring solid waste updates including promotion of the EAC’s summer reading presentation as part of area libraries’ summer reading programs. Mailed to 291 households in June.

- Sent monthly issues of the EAC Action News email newsletters to over 880 email addresses to promote general recycling and waste reduction.
- Answered 285 phone calls and other inquiries about the disposal of household hazardous waste and recycling.
- Website Traffic:
 - Received 10,011 visits to solid waste, recycling, and hazardous waste related pages within EAC's website.
- Administration and promotion of McFreecycle, a free listserv on the internet for the free exchange of materials in McLean County to avoid disposal of useable items. 1,909 current members with an average of 70 messages exchanged monthly.
- Promotion and oversight of Recycle Coach, a web and mobile based app that serves as an educational resource for McLean County residents with questions regarding local recycling programs and waste collection services. 4,115 total users with 11,558 interactions during this quarter.
- Placed full page ad in The Pantagraph on Earth Day listing the many resources the EAC provides to our community, including information about solid waste, recycling, and household hazardous waste. Circulation: 35,000 households.