

STORMWATER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL & MCLEAN COUNTY 2014 ANNUAL REPORT ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER



THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING TASKS AS PART OF THE STORMWATER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF FEBRUARY 1, 2013.

2014 TOTAL REACH: 365,612 INTERACTIONS
DIRECT (PROGRAMS, EVENTS, PHONE INQUIRIES): 7,535
MEDIA (NEWSPAPER, RADIO, SOCIAL MEDIA, WEB): 358,077



EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Clean Water Programs for 3rd grade classes at Benjamin, Calvary Christian, Cedar Ridge, Colene Hoose, Cornerstone Christian, Epiphany, Fox Creek, Glenn, Grove, Hudson, Irving, Northpoint, Oakdale, Oakland, Parkside, Pepper Ridge, Prairieland, St. Mary's, Sheridan, Sugar Creek and Trinity Lutheran, Washington Elementary (66 classes, 1701 students)
- Presentation for Sunrise Rotary Club including stormwater issues (1 presentation, 55 participants)
- Presentations for ISU Environmental students including stormwater issues (1 presentation, 60 students)
- Presentation for Girl Scouts at Cedar Ridge Elementary targeting water issues (1 presentation, 21 scouts)



- Presentation about environmental stewardship for Northpoint School Cub Scouts who were doing a hike and clean up at Evergreen Lake (28 participants)
- Clean water Presentation for Scribbles Learning Center (15 students)

INFORMATIONAL EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Co-sponsored Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo with Illinois Wesleyan University including exhibitors on clean water topics (3,200 participants).
- Mahomet Aquifer presentation for Young Men’s Club (60 people)
- Hosted Green Drinks presentation by The Nature Conservancy about the Mackinaw River watershed project.
- Information booth at Sugar Creek Arts Festival, Sweet Corn Blues Festival, & the Bloomington Cultural Fest (5 days, 1503 people)
- Informational booths including clean water protection, Yard Smart and stormwater runoff at
 - Festival ISU stormdrain volunteer recruiting (30 participants)
 - Earth Day Events at State Farm (3 events, 190 participants);
 - Downtown Bloomington Farmer’s Market (60 people)
 - Employee Event at AFNI (8 people)
 - Friends of EverBloom Lakes Fest (20 people)
 - Wellness Fair at ISU (62 participants);
 - Wellness Fair at Mitsubishi (150 participants)

YARD SMART PROGRAM

- Hosted Annual Yard Smart Garden Walk on June 28 showcasing area yards that utilize practices that reduce impact on clean water (62 participants). This year’s event featured homes and gardens on Bloomington’s west side.
- Held 11 rain barrel making workshops with focus on stormwater runoff issues resulting in construction of 55 rain barrels and 275-gallon mega rain harvesters.
- Provided Master Gardener’s Home Lawn and Garden Day information booth on Yard Smart program, rain barrels, and stormwater runoff (75 participants)



- Gave presentation on Yard Smart and correlation between pesticide use and declining pollinator populations at Master Gardener’s Home Lawn & Garden Day (25 participants)
- Rain Barrel class for Stanford 4H (18 participants)
- Yard Smart information booth at Fell Arboretum Plant Sale including rain barrels (25 participants).
- Yard Smart consultation for Marriott Hotel in Uptown Normal.
- Yard Smart information booth at Glorious Garden Tour (60 participants).
- Answered 139 inquiries from visitors and callers about the YardSmart program, rain barrels, and stormwater issues.
- Implemented complete redesign of EAC landscaping to demonstrate Yard Smart principles with financial assistance from a grant through the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation. New landscaping includes a demonstration rain garden, extensive usage of native plants and cultivars, composting demonstration area, rain barrels, reduced turf grass, native trees and shrubs, winter cover crops, garden boxes, and interpretive signage to explain these strategies and how they help protect clean water. This new landscaping will be one of the stops on the 2015 Yard Smart Garden Walk.

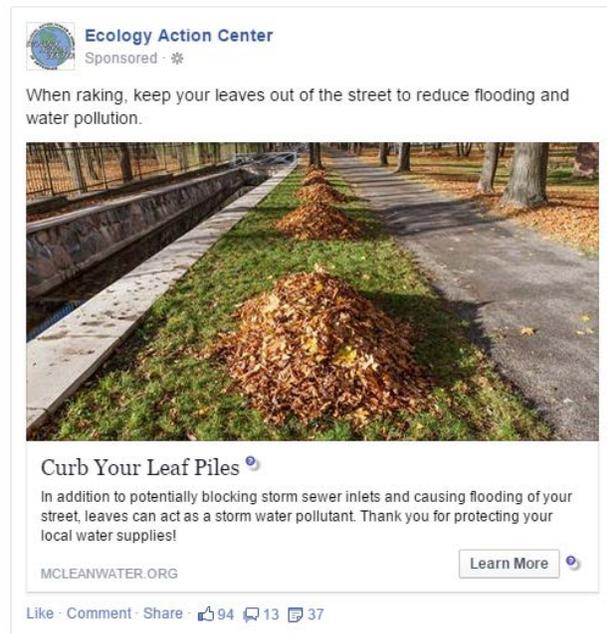


OTHER OUTREACH EFFORTS

- Coordinated Sugar Creek and Constitution Trail Clean Up Event with other nonprofit partners as part of Bloomington-Normal Clean Up Week. Thirty-five volunteers removed approximately one ton of trash from the creek and trail in one day.
- Promoted clean water protection through multi-media campaign:
 - Sponsored Radio spots encouraging clean water protective practices aired on four local radio stations--WGLT, WJBC, WBNO, and WBWN, reaching approximately 71,000 area listeners.
 - Developed educational postcard on proper septic system maintenance mailed to 334 McLean County households in the lake watersheds.
 - Successful Septic system maintenance postcard mailing from earlier in the year also distributed to all lake households via the Lake Bloomington Breeze Newsletter and reprinted as a handout for distribution at events.
- Developed and implemented social media marketing campaign for mCLEANwater.org watershed clearinghouse website—weekly #WaterWednesday social media posts on Facebook and Twitter promote practices that help protect local water supplies and direct people to the watershed website as an additional resource. These posts resulted in over 3,000 impressions on Facebook and approximately 10,000 on Twitter.
- Storm drain stenciling: a total of 47 volunteers spent 115 hours painting 229 stormwater inlets and distributing information on stormwater runoff pollution and ways to reduce this pollution to 1014 homes in Normal and Bloomington (see attached map).
- Formed focus group for ISU Stevenson Center watershed issues study. Promoted resulting report through mCLEANwater.org watershed website and social media channels.
- Promoted the Illinois Green Office Challenge, which encourages businesses to take action to minimize waste and water use, among other sustainable behaviors.



- Certified as a green business by the Illinois Green Business Association, which includes meeting standards to conserve water and reduce storm water runoff pollution.
- Ongoing participation in Watershed Plan Implementation Committee and Urban Subcommittee including field work efforts to identify suitable water sample station locations.
- Facilitation of McLean County Greenways Committee as Chair.
- Fall “Curb Your Leaves” Awareness Campaign encouraged proper management of leaves by residents instead of raking them into the street. Outreach included radio spots on WGLT and WJBC, social media posts and paid advertisements on Facebook, and a press release resulting in coverage in the Pantagraph and a live interview on WGLT’s Sound Ideas program. Total reach of this campaign was approximately 85,000 impressions through traditional media (radio and print) and 16,015 targeted interactions through social media (Facebook).



- Produced and aired Earth Day awareness radio spots on WBNQ.
- Used targeted Facebook advertising to promote rainbarrel workshops and Clean Up Day reaching local residents 74,339 times.
- Produced and distributed quarterly EAC newsletter to 270 member households with information on stormwater issues, plus made content available on EAC website.
- Promotion of clean water issues and strategies for protection through resource-rich websites—6,996 visits to 85 water-related pages and posts on ecologyactioncenter.org and 1,512 visits to pages about clean water content on mCLEANwater.org.
- Promotion of clean water and watershed awareness through social media channels. EAC made 119 water-related posts on Facebook and Twitter reaching a total of 76,627 individuals.

- Sent monthly EAC Action News email newsletter to over 930 email subscribers with information about rainbarrel workshops, watershed issues, pesticides and Yard Smart topics.

Septic System Maintenance

It saves you money & protects clean water!



Septic System Maintenance Tips

- There are many reasons to keep a maintained septic system; most importantly it saves you money. Maintenance will cost \$300-\$500 every 3 to 5 years but replacing a system costs \$5,000-\$15,000.
- Pump your septic tank every 3 to 5 years - pumping the tank on a periodic basis is one of the best ways to keep a system functioning the maximum length of time.
- Don't build on top of or drive across any part of your septic system.
- If you have a sand filter, be sure use the correct type of chlorine tablet (not swimming pool tablets!) and maintain proper chlorine levels in the chlorinator (see other side for list of suppliers).
- Avoid using any special additives to your septic system - they generally don't work and can deteriorate your system instead.
- Don't pour grease, fats, or chemicals like paints and solvents down your sink.
- Avoid garbage disposal usage - it can shorten the life of your septic system.
- For a list of licensed septic system installers and pumpers and more detailed information on septic system maintenance, contact the McLean County Health Department at 309-888-5482 or consult their website at health.mcleancountyil.gov.



