

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

## FOURTH QUARTER 2018 REPORT

THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2018 IN FULFILLMENT OF THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF DECEMBER 11, 2017.



### ENERGY ASSESSMENTS

**In the fourth quarter of 2018, the EAC continued ongoing efforts in conducting energy audits for Bloomington and Normal residents and small businesses.**

Bloomington-Normal Residents:

- Completed 12 home energy audits - 8 in Bloomington, 2 in Normal
  - Two audits were in McLean County, as part of the Solar Bloomington-Normal program, and were paid for using the private sponsorship the Ecology Action Center received to temporarily expand services to the entire county for Solar Bloomington-Normal participants.
- One of the 12 audits took advantage of additional blower door services.

Bloomington-Normal Small Businesses:

- Completed 1 small business energy audit in Bloomington at the West Bloomington Revitalization Project building



### PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS AND EXPANSION

**The EAC continued to leverage the Solar Bloomington-Normal group-purchasing program to increase home energy audits.**

- Solar Bloomington-Normal 2.0
  - The Solar Bloomington-Normal program concluded on October 31, 2018 with 430kW of new solar development in McLean County.
  - During the third quarter, EAC staff led two final Solar Power Hour presentations to inform residents about the benefits of solar energy, including details about the group-buy program, pricing, and available incentives. This presentation also informed participants about the BN

Energy Bright program and the importance of energy efficiency - 22 total presentation participants.

- In partnership with StraightUp Solar and sponsorship from First Allied Securities, the EAC offered no-cost energy audits to all Solar Bloomington-Normal 2.0 program participants, including those in McLean County outside Bloomington-Normal, who are not normally eligible for this program. Five of thirteen total energy audits this quarter were booked through the Solar Bloomington-Normal program.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY MARKETING, OUTREACH, EDUCATION

**The EAC continued to promote the energy efficiency program and efficiency concepts and strategies through public media campaigns, weekly social media posts, paid social media ads, and community engagement activities.**

- Social Media advertising and promotion
  - Weekly Facebook #EnergyTipTuesdays energy posts with 10,018 views
  - Weekly Twitter #EnergyTipTuesday energy posts engaging 2,863 people
- Website Traffic
  - BNenergyBright.org website pages with energy efficiency information and resources received 428 visits.
- Radio Bloomington advertisements promoting energy efficiency
  - Ran ads on WJBC, WBNQ, and WBWN, reaching 78,900 listeners.

*“Looking for unique gift ideas this holiday season? Give the gift of energy savings, and buy your friends or family a low-cost energy audit from the Ecology Action Center. You don't have to spend a lot to help your loved ones save a lot! The EAC's comprehensive energy audits will help people find easy ways to save energy and money by identifying energy waste issues, and recommending simple solutions! All Bloomington-Normal residents and small businesses are eligible. Buy your gift today at [BNenergyBright.org](http://BNenergyBright.org)*

- Pantagraph advertisement promoting energy efficiency
  - Ran a strip ad in the Pantagraph in early December reaching 81,000 readers



#### WINTER IS COMING...

Prepare your home or small business for the howling winds and driving snow with a low-cost energy audit from the Ecology Action Center. Warm your home more efficiently and warm your heart with lower energy bills! Visit [BNenergybright.org](http://BNenergybright.org) or call 309-454-3169 to register

- Community Engagement
  - Performed two Solar Bloomington-Normal 2.0 Solar Power Hour presentations – 22 total attendees
  - Provided information booth at the Unitarian Universalist Church Social Justice Fair – 21 visitors
  - Offered information booth at the City of Bloomington's Energy Efficiency Day – 25 visitors
  - Gave presentation to group of Vietnamese exchange students with the IWU Environmental Studies department – 15 attendees
- EAC Newsletter
  - EAC's October electronic newsletter with information on Solar and Energy Efficiency programs was sent to 869 people
  - December's EAC supporter newsletter with information on Solar and Energy Efficiency programs was sent to 291 people
- Direct Inquiries
  - Responded to 15 phone calls, emails, and visitor inquires about energy efficiency and renewable energy issues.



# STORM WATER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR BLOOMINGTON- NORMAL & MCLEAN COUNTY FOURTH 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 FEBURARY 1, 2016.

## EDUCATION PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS

### Other Educational Programs, Presentations & Information Booths

- For community-wide audiences
  - Provided information booth at Unitarian Universalist Church Social Justice Fair (21 visitors )
  - Gave presentation to Vietnamese exchange students with Environmental Studies department (15 students)
  - Offered presentation on water conservation to Girl Scout troop (9 students )
- Third grade clean water programs are currently being scheduled for January through May.

## 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 November workday behind the Juvenile Detention Center - 3 volunteers removed honeysuckle
- Bloomington
  - Held October workday near Ewing Park III – 6 volunteers removed shrub honeysuckle
  - Held December workday near Ewing Park III – 6 volunteers removed honeysuckle

## COMMUNITY-WIDE MARKETING AND OTHER OUTREACH EFFORTS

- Rain barrel workshops are seasonal and historically scheduled in April through October. Changes in the past year with available storage space for materials and limited workshop space has hindered the ability to hold larger workshops to schedule workshop dates later in the fall season. The EAC is working to secure additional storage space with workshops set to resume in Spring 2019.

- Social Media
  - Weekly Facebook #WatershedWednesday posts educating the public about clean water issues with 8,753 views
  - Weekly Twitter #WatershedWednesday posts educating the public about clean water issues engaging 587 people
- EAC Newsletters
  - October electronic newsletter with a "Curb Your Leaves" article with information on how to reduce individual contributions to storm water runoff pollution sent to 869 recipients.
  - November electronic newsletter with information about how to properly winterize rain barrels sent to 869 recipients.
- Website Traffic
  - Promoted clean water issues and strategies for protection through resource-rich websites. Received 627 visits to water-related pages and posts on [ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org) and visits to pages about clean water content on [mCLEANwater.org](http://mCLEANwater.org)
- Ongoing participation in McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee, assisting with coordination of progress update to McLean County Greenways Plan.
- Direct Inquiries - 32 calls, emails, and visitors inquiring about clean water issues, rain barrels, and related topics.

# MCLEAN COUNTY SOLID WASTE PROGRAM

## 2018 FOURTH 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 PROGRESS<sup>1</sup>

**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: There are 84 Fourth grade classrooms in McLean County, which includes all public and private schools. In 2018, EAC made 53 classroom visits and met 1,153 students. This represents 63% of our goal.<sup>2</sup>

**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 and July, EAC made 11 library visits and reached 294 people. This represents 79% 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.<sup>3</sup>

- Year to date: 45 programs, which reached 960 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: 150,489 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 2018, our online waste and recycling resources were visited 82,118 times, which exceeds our annual goal.

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

<sup>2</sup> Personnel changes in the Education Coordinator position in 2018 has temporarily impacted this minimal decline from 2017 to 2018. There are 7 schools, representing 16 classrooms, that have historically declined program invitations. One school, representing 3 classrooms, opted to schedule their program in Spring 2019. So the true decline is limited to the following: 2 schools, representing 7 classrooms, stated that they did not have time to schedule a program this year. Two additional schools, representing 5 classrooms visited in 2017, declined EAC program invitations in 2018. In order to help rectify this decline, EAC staff are working on the development of a supplemental classroom program with new content relevant to the fourth grade science curriculum standards to be offered as an additional option beginning in Fall 2019.

<sup>3</sup> In practice, the EAC provides these programs for nearly 100% of those requesting the services.

## SOLID WASTE COORDINATOR ACTIVITIES

- Participated in a state-wide effort to reduce contamination using a new standardized recycling flyer with simplified messaging for Town of Normal and City of Bloomington residents. Distribution has already begun, with plans to utilize the simplified messaging in the updating of all recycling educational materials in the community including new materials for multifamily housing in Normal to assist with the transition to universal recycling availability in August 2019.
- Initiated planning for fall 2019 McLean County Household Hazardous Waste Collection.
- Ongoing updates to Recycle Coach recycling directory application.
- Attended the annual Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Association Conference to review recycling education efforts and receive updates on the amended Commercial Electronics Recycling Act of Illinois.
- Collaborated with Peoria and Tazewell County on future solid waste planning initiatives for Central Illinois.
- Participated in video campaign marketing simplified recycling guidelines for apartment-dwelling students produced by the Student Environment Action Coalition at Illinois State University.
- Continued efforts to develop educational materials and plans to assistance with implementation of multi-family housing recycling in the Town of Normal.

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- Information booth for ISU TCH223 Exploring Disciplinary Literacy Playground Night (15 interactions)
- Presentation at Minonk Filger Library on solid waste and recycling (7 attendees)
- Presentation for First United Methodist Church Vesper Group on solid waste and recycling (18 attendees)
- Presentation for ISU Student Environmental Action Coalition on EAC programs (12 attendees)
- Video call presentation for elementary robotics team on vermicomposting (8 students)
- Presentation for McLean County Women's Group on solid waste and recycling (8 attendees)
- Presentation for AFSCME Retiree group on solid waste and recycling (12 attendees)
- Presentation for University High Interact Student Organization on EAC programs and volunteer opportunities (14 students)
- Presentation for Hudson Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> graders on recycling process and remanufacturing of paper goods (24 students)
- Presentation for Boy Scout members and parents on composting (16 attendees)
- Presentation for Girl Scout members on water and energy conservation (9 attendees)
- Recycling and Waste Reduction fourth grade presentations:
  - Carlock Elementary (1 class, 18 students)
  - Fox Creek Elementary (2 classes, 45 students)



- Parkside Elementary (2 classes, 49 students)
- Pepper Ridge Elementary (3 classes, 62 students)
- Tri-Valley Elementary (4 classes, 80 students)
- Sugar Creek Elementary (2 classes, 40 students)
- Oakland Elementary (3 classes, 65 students)
- LeRoy Elementary (3 classes, 75 students)
- Hudson Elementary (2 classes, 47 students)
- Oakdale Elementary (3 classes, 68 students)
- Epiphany Catholic School (1 class, 33 students)
- Ridgeview Elementary (3 classes, 55 students)
- Lexington Elementary (2 classes, 30 students)
- Cornerstone Christian Academy (1 class, 21 students)

## MARKETING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Awarded the annual McLean County Green Awards at the EAC's Sustainable Gourmet event in November. The McLean County Waste Reduction and Recycling Award recognized Julie McCoy, the School Nutrition Director at District 87 for significant district-wide recycling and food composting efforts.
- Coordinated a social marketing campaign celebrating America Recycles Day on November 15. Alternative programs for nontraditional recycling were highlighted to increase awareness and promote recycling. Over 3,000 interactions, 168 shares, and an approximate potential reach of over 43,000 viewers were generated from the campaign.
- Collaborated with District 87 employees to develop a composting and recycling training protocol for junior high students at Bloomington Junior High School. The goal of the program was to reduce the amount of wasted food and recyclable products during the lunch period, while providing students with the knowledge to empower them to partake in more sustainable behaviors through adulthood.
- Assisted in the planning for a zero-waste lunch and designed educational materials on local recycling and composting programs to be utilized at the 2019 Home, Lawn & Garden Day held by the local Master Gardeners.
- Continued efforts to collect data from both the Bloomington and Normal "Reducing Barriers for Sustainable Recycling" programs funded in part by a grant from Illinois Prairie Community Foundation. Bloomington Public Works continues to record the volume of waste in the grant-funded receptacles upon each collection. Four additional recycling receptacles leveraged through sponsorships from local waste haulers and recyclers were installed near downtown Bloomington in the late fall. At this time, over 1,800 pounds of



waste has been diverted through the use of the receptacles. In Normal, thirty-nine 65-gallon recycling carts have been delivered to qualifying households as part of the Normal program. Participants continue to receive periodic mailings with information on alternative options for non-traditional recyclables while tracking their recycling behavior.

- Traditional Media:
  - December Pantagraph advertisements promoting Holiday Recycling, reaching 20,411 online readers
  - December Pantagraph advertisements reminding residents of likely 2019 HHW collection reaching 17,886 online readers
  - December Pantagraph advertisements promoting new statewide recycling guidelines reaching approximately 34,515 residents
  - October anti-contamination advertisements run twice in Bloomington Pantagraph reaching approximately 34,515 residents each time
  
- Social Media:
  - Promoted waste reduction, recycling, composting and proper disposal of household hazardous wastes through social media. EAC posted messages on its Facebook, Twitter, accounts on solid waste topics, with a resulting 52,655 views of these posts.
  
- Newsletters:
  - Produced quarterly EAC paper newsletters featuring solid waste updates including information on the four new recycling receptacles installed in downtown Bloomington through the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation grant-funded project. Mailed to 291 households in September.
  - Sent monthly issues of the EAC Action News email newsletters to over 880 email addresses to promote general recycling and waste reduction.
  
- Answered 240 phone calls and other inquiries about the disposal of household hazardous waste and recycling.
  
- Recycling & Waste website interactions:
  - Received approximately 13,348 visits to solid waste, recycling, and hazardous waste related pages within EAC's website.
  - Recycle Coach recycling information web/phone app: there were over 6,026 users and over 23,943 interactions during the fourth quarter period.
  
- 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. 1,939 current members with an average of 21.5 messages exchanged monthly. While membership continues to increase, usage of the service appears to be declining. This is likely due to redundant "free items" services now available as a part of social media platforms like Facebook and Nextdoor.com.