

## News from the MCSEEP Director



### Attention All High School

Science Teachers: We were able to pilot our new high school Green Careers lesson at Crystal Lake Central HS.

We thought it went very well and are now ready to teach the lesson in all McHenry County high schools. A memo went out to all high school principals recently offering grant money to fund the lesson to the first 5 schools that sign up.

This lesson would be perfect to target the sophomore/junior age group, so they still have time to pursue a career path in one of the many green career sectors. We introduce them to a few, and give them other resources to explore. Call our office to schedule a class/classes at 815-334-4054.

Earth Day -To date, I have 4 schools signed up to get Earth Day book awards at the annual Earth Day event being held at Prairieview Nature Center in Crystal Lake on April 21st. The ceremony will take place in the barn at 1 p.m. Looking forward to seeing you all out there for a fun day. Our teachers will once again be entertaining the children with environmental crafts in the main building downstairs.

What's so special about ENERGY STAR? - (excerpts taken from Alliant Energy News, Vol. 16, Issue 3) You've probably seen the familiar blue ENERGY STAR label on appliances and electronics, but what exactly does it mean and why is it important? If you remember nothing else, remember this: the little blue star label equals lower electricity bills. The EPA only awards the ENERGY STAR to the most energy-efficient appliances and electronics in their class. Curious to see which appliances and electronics have earned the ENERGY STAR before you start shopping? Visit [energystar.org](http://energystar.org) and click on "Find ENERGY STAR Products". While in the store, you'll notice that the blue ENERGY STAR label will also be featured prominently on the product itself, as well as on the packaging. These products will save you money every month on your energy bill. Some of these products will qualify for rebates from your energy company.

### Current Events

- Earth Day at MCCC—reserve the date of Sat., Apr. 21st, from 11 a.m.– 4 p.m. for a fun filled day with your family at the Prairieview Education Center, 2112 Behan Rd, Crystal Lake.
- Coral Woods, Marengo—April 29th, from 12 p.m.-4 p.m. will be a celebration of wildflowers and art. There will be children's outdoor art studio, wildflower seed planting, build a flower craft station, hikes, storytelling, food, music and more.
- McHenry/Woodstock Recycling Drives— Woodstock drives are held the 2nd Sat. of each EVEN numbered month and is held in front of the Farm Bureau, 1102 McConnell Rd. from 9 a.m.-noon. The McHenry drives take place on the 2nd Sat. of ODD numbered months at the Metra Station Parking lot, 4005 Main St. from 9 a.m.-noon. McHenry site will pay for aluminum, brass and copper. Items collected are: fluorescent tubes, rechargeable batteries, car batteries, button batteries, and block white Styrofoam. Packing peanuts and reusable bubble wrap may be dropped off for no charge. Certain items require a donation to the Defenders. Call to check.
- Styrofoam Drop-off—The Village of Lakewood is taking Styrofoam at their Village Hall and Public Works garage.
- Register for ENTICE workshops from IDNR: These workshops offer background information, hands-on activities, lessons, supplemental resources, CPDU's and opportunity to work with natural resource professionals. Check website for workshop titles and dates: <https://www.enticeworkshops.com>
- Erase the Waste Contest for Schools—April 2-30th, Behr Iron & Metal is offering a \$1,000 to the school that brings in the most aluminum cans during the month of April! Behr Woodstock, 13914 Washington St., Woodstock, IL, 815-206-5511., [www.behrim.com](http://www.behrim.com)
- Chicago Green Fest at Navy Pier—May 5 and 6, keynote presentations, workshops, demonstrations, extensive green marketplace and interactive fun. For more detailed information about this event, visit: [www.greenfestivals.org](http://www.greenfestivals.org).
- Natural Lawn Care & Sustainable Landscapes Workshop: April 13, co-sponsored by the Defenders. For Landscape companies, turf managers, homeowner associations and municipalities. Topics include: Implementing a natural lawn care program; What to look for in lawn care contracts; Greening your ordinances; Creating a sustainable landscape; and New fertilizer and pesticide regulations. The public is invited to attend. Cost is \$25.00.
- Earth Day in the Parks-held at state parks throughout Illinois. Students plant native trees and wildflowers, build and install nesting/roosting boxes and removes invasive exotic plant species. Volo Bog—April 19 (morning still available) go to <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITPinstruct.htm> for more details and application.

## LESSON LIBRARY

Our library continues to grow as we add articles and an assortment of unique environmental resources. The feedback from teachers who used our library in the past has been so positive—thank you for your support!

Next year we will be also be offering the Lesson Library to any school in McHenry County and you can join by clicking on the link on the main page of our [MCSEEP.com](http://MCSEEP.com) website and filling out and returning the lending agreement. If your school currently has MCSEEP lessons, you can use our Lesson Library, as payment is included in the lesson fee that your school pays. Check out the website to see some samples of lesson units that are available for check out.

Remember, we're here for you—please keep us busy! Email: [mcseep@co.mchenry.il.us](mailto:mcseep@co.mchenry.il.us) with your order or if you have any questions about the Lesson Library.

### News from the MCSEEP Director (cont. from page 1)

**Give your big energy users a vacation:** *It is a good idea to give your big energy users a vacation by unplugging them before you leave for a trip. Taking time to unplug things (like computers, phone chargers, toasters, coffee makers, and cable boxes) saves you money –and it's more than you might think. These items often draw electricity even when they are not turned on. Phantom energy loss accounts for 5 to 10% of your energy bill (source: Science News). Unplugging and plugging in items over and over can be a pain. Here is a tip to make it easy: plug known energy hogs (cable TV box, satellite TV box, DVD player, TV, receiver and computer) into a smart power strip. These devices detect when you are not using your electronics and automatically cuts off power. These power strips also have several "always on" slots for those devices that need to stay powered on to function properly, such as a DVR. Smart power strips and surge protectors are not the same. Smart strips cost around \$25-\$30 and cut power to appliances and electronics when they are not being used.*

...Sue

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### Current Events (cont.)

- **Habitat for Humanity ReStore** - ReStore is a re-use center for building materials located at 800 North State St. in Elgin. Their hours are Wed.-Fri. from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sat. from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Homeowners can donate surplus items (tax deductible). Call first before delivering items that may not be acceptable. (847) 742-9905.
- **Green Drinks** –gathers the first Wednesday of every month upstairs at Duke's Alehouse and Kitchen, 110 N. Main St., Crystal Lake, IL from 5 -7 p.m. Come talk about “greening” the future with others. Bring any information about your green products and services to share. A new topic each month!
- **Ace Hardware and Home Depot recycle CFL bulbs** –compact only, no tubes. No charge.
- **Free State Parks Magazine**: This publication is free and available in cases of 100 copies. Shipping is free also. Visit the Publications page at: <http://dnr.state.il.us/educationSmartBoardintro.htm>.
- **MCCD Lost Valley Visitor Center**—located in Glacial Park, has family exploration program including a nature lesson, game & activity based around the month's topic. This program is for families but you can call 815-479-5779 if you have a youth group that would like to schedule a program. Topic for April=Life in a Log and May=Frogs.
- **Rain barrels and composters for sale**: The Village Of Algonquin's ECO Community along with The Land Conservancy of McHenry Co. will sell these items. Residents can purchase an item by visiting: [www.conservemc.org](http://www.conservemc.org). Orders must be placed by April 27. Call Katie Parkhurst for more information at 847-658-4184.
- **MCCD's Summer Programs**: Learn to canoe, explore wetlands, camp under the stars and more. 9 summer day camps for ages 6-15. Early bird registration with discounts are available through Apr. 30. Camp info. and registration is online at [www.MCCDistrict.org](http://www.MCCDistrict.org) or by calling 815-479-5779.
- **Vendors Needed at Cary Farmers Market, Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.-June 3-Sept. 30**: For more information, contact the Cary Grove Chamber of Commerce at 847-639-2800.
- **Well-water testing at reduced rates**: The McHenry Co. Dept. of Health will offer reduced-fee water testing for individual well-water users during April (\$18) Contact the Environmental Health Division at 815-334-4585 or visit [www.mcdh.info](http://www.mcdh.info).
- **Marengo Township Highway Dept. recycles household paint**—April 28, June 23, and Sept. 22. Residents of Marengo Township will not be charged. For more info. Call 815-568-8636.