

News from the MCSEEP Director

December 2011

Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays!



We are excited about our new Green Career lesson that we are offering to high schools upon request.* Our objectives are to understand the importance of shifting our dependence on fossil fuels to renewable, alternative energy sources.

We will introduce Green Career options in renewable energy and automotive fields. We will identify the traits and qualities necessary to succeed in a career and identify the steps students can take now to prepare for their future. Call our office to arrange a date to have this high school lesson, as well as get details about the lesson fees. . 815-334-4054. **The Green Career lessons were sponsored by the McHenry County Cooperative for Employment Education (MCCEE). Funding was provided through the State of Illinois, CTEI Grant.*

School Principals and Recycling Coordinators:

We do read and take into consideration all the comments that you make on the Lesson Evaluation Form that our teachers leave with each of your school teachers when they do one of our presentations in their classrooms. I'd like for you to send those to me when they are completed. It helps me evaluate how our teachers are doing; if your teachers liked the lesson; and if your students are learning from our presentations. Thank you!

I hope that each of you will enjoy the time off with family and friends during the upcoming holidays. When you return to school, why not take a look at our "Lesson Library Units" and see if there is something that you would like to check out for your students. This is just a sampling of what we have. We have so much more!

Current Events

Green Drinks –gathers the first Wednesday of every month up-stairs 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!

IDNR Publications Webpage—You can find a variety of posters, activity books, books and other publications available about the state's diverse natural resources at: <http://dnr.state.il.us/teachkids>.

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.

Pioneer Tree Farm - Defenders Annual Fundraiser—Come out and cut down your own organically-grown Christmas tree for \$40.00 at Alice and Bill Howenstine's Pioneer Tree Farm located at 4614 Pioneer Road in McHenry. (815) 385-8512. A portion of the tree sales will go to support the Defender's. The dates for tree cutting are Nov. 25, 26, 27 and Dec. 3 and 4. Come out and enjoy a fun family experience!

Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant: Can provide funding for you and your students to visit the natural wonders of our state. Teachers may apply for up to \$500. Application deadline is Jan. 31, 2012. Instructions and application form at: <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/grants.htm>

"Bag It"-Free Movie Screening: 7 p.m. MCC Conference Center on December 8. "Bag It" follows Jeb Berrier as he navigates our plastic world. He will take a look at our cultural love affair with plastics. He will cover questions like: "Are plastic bags really necessary?" "What are plastic bags made from?" "What happens to plastic bags after they are discarded?"

Elgin Recycling—recycles holiday lights. They will drop off a 4'x4' container for a village to collect lights to be recycled. Accepted lights would be: mini-lights, C7 lights, C9 lights, rope lights, LED lights, extension cords, etc. It runs from October through March and each village will customize dates and locations that work for them. Why not have your village sign up and stay GREEN. Call Brittany Conroy at 847-741-4100 to participate in this worthwhile event. I'm sure residents would appreciate having a place to take their non-working lights and it will keep them out of the landfill!

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!

We will 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 website and filling out and returning the lending agreement. If your school currently has MCSEEP lessons, you can start using our Lesson Library, as payment is included in the lesson fee that your school has to pay.

We already have schools ordering resources from the library this school year and hope that your school will place your order too. Don't miss out on the wonderful resources you can get from us. 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 and order your Lesson Library resources today! Email: mcseep@co.mchenry.il.us



Green Guide –This publication has a wealth of information on where to recycle items, and much more. This publication was recently published as an insert in the Northwest Herald. To get an online version of this guide you can go to: <http://www.mchenry.edu/recycling/greenguide.pdf>



SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Has your school done something or is planning to do something this year to “go green”? If so, we want to know about it! Give MCSEEP's Sue Burke a call at 815-334-4054 or email her at: slburke@co.mchenry.il.us so your school can get recognized in the next “School Spotlight” newsletter column.



Green Lighting

Incandescent Bulb Phase-Out: You may have heard that incandescent light bulbs are going to start disappearing from store shelves in 2012. While all incandescent bulbs are not going to totally disappear from store shelves next year, a phase-out will begin on January 1, 2012, in accordance with the Energy Independence and Security Act. This act is designed to help protect our natural resources, save energy and reduce our dependency on foreign oil. The act requires new minimum efficiency standards for the 40 watt, 60 watt, 75 watt and 100 watt medium screw-in incandescent bulbs. This means that the effected bulbs cannot be imported or manufactured per today's standards, but you may still find some on store shelves until they sell out. The transition period for incandescent bulbs will start with 100 watt bulbs in 2012, 75 watt in 2013, and will be complete with 40 and 60 watt bulbs in 2014. LED bulbs use about 80% less energy and compact fluorescents use about 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs. They also last longer!

Many of you will be decorating your home for the holidays. One tradition you may want to change this year is the type of lighting you use. LEDs use 75% less energy than traditional incandescent light strings and they last up to 10 times longer than regular holiday lights. LEDs are also cool to the touch, which reduces the risk of fire. To find out a better idea of how LED lights can save you money, check out the LED Holiday Lights Calculator. Visit powerthinkers.com and click on “Tools and Calculators” and then “LED Holiday Lights Calculator”.

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