WORKING TOGETHER TOWARD A WORLD CLASS ECO-CITY OF HEALTHY AND STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS

Mayor Barrett, the Milwaukee Common Council, and The City of Milwaukee have a strong record of implementing eco-initiatives that improve Milwaukee’s environment and create jobs while helping to make all of our neighborhoods great places to live and raise a family.

Mayor Barrett is an advocate for strong neighborhoods and the environment. He has been honored twice for Climate Protection from the U.S. Conference of Mayors and is one of the region’s greatest champions of the Great Lakes. In 2006, Mayor Barrett created the Office of Environmental Sustainability, now the Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO). ECO, strives to make Milwaukee a world class eco-city. ECO collaborate with the community, offers award-winning programs, and implements the City’s Refresh Milwaukee sustainability plan.

This Eco-Neighborhoods Toolkit is a resource guide for neighborhood organizers. It is designed to connect residents with city and non-profit programs and help community organizers drive collective action in their communities. Together, we can make Milwaukee a world class eco-city on America’s Fresh Coast!

An electronic version of this document is available at bit.ly/EcoNeighborhoods
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Milwaukee Shines partners with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) and neighborhood associations to coordinate neighborhood solar group buys and solar financing in the City of Milwaukee!

**WHAT IS A SOLAR GROUP BUY?**
When community members form a group and use their collective buying power to save on the total cost of going solar. The advantage of a group buy is the power of volume/bulk purchasing of equipment/services. The more residents that participate, the lower the cost will be for everyone. Group buys are open to all Southeastern Wisconsin residents and business owners.

**HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?**

1. Coordinate a Solar Group Buy, which can unlock discounts on solar energy when you get enough neighbors to participate. Through the program, Milwaukee Shines and the MREA will work with you on neighborhood information session and marketing materials. Contact ECO's Elizabeth Hittman at (414) 286-5593 or visit the website for more information.
   

2. Check out the solar potential for homes in your neighborhood using Google Sunroof.
   
   [google.com/get/sunroof](google.com/get/sunroof)

3. Write to your utility, newspaper, and state legislators in support of solar energy purchasing options like community solar. Visit ECO's energy engagement page.
   
Me2 makes it easy and affordable to update your City of Milwaukee home to make energy-saving upgrades such as insulation, air sealing, furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters, air conditioners, and now, windows! By combining an accessible, low-interest loan with incentives from Focus on Energy, Me2 can help you decrease your costs and increase your savings. You will help your pocketbook, your family, the local economy, and the environment.

**HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?**

1. Hold informational group sessions to explain the program and gauge interest.

2. With help from ECO, organize a “house party” with energy efficiency contractors to discover the ways homes lose heat and energy using thermal imaging among other useful tools and skills. This Green Madison program provides a good example. [greenmadison.org/get-involved/energy-house-party/](http://greenmadison.org/get-involved/energy-house-party/)

3. For house party organizational materials and for other information concerning Me2, contact ECO’s Rose Buss at (414) 286-3351 or visit the website. [SmartEnergyPays.com/homeowners](http://SmartEnergyPays.com/homeowners)
REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE, AND REPAIR

REDUCE

The best way to manage waste is to not produce it. This can be accomplished in a number of ways.

AS CONSUMERS

1. Avoid disposable goods, such as plastic water bottles, paper plates, cups, napkins, razors, and lighters. Throwaways add unnecessary waste and cost more because they must be replaced again and again.

2. Buy durable goods—ones that are well-built or that carry good warranties. They will last longer, save money in the long run and save landfill space.

3. Buy in bulk and purchase things with minimal packaging.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Informational sessions outlining methods for smart consumption/buying techniques.


Plastic constitutes 90% of all trash floating in the world’s oceans.
REUSE

It makes economic and environmental sense to reuse products. Small steps like using a reusable water bottle or shopping bags can have a big impact.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Hold a community garage sale weekend so neighbors coordinate their sales to increase participation and community networking

2. Join the Milwaukee Freecycle Network to give and get items for free. 
groups.freecycle.org/MilwaukeeWIFreecycle/description

3. Promote a tool-lending network in your neighborhood and take advantage of Milwaukee’s very own Tool Loan Program.

4. Have a program to build, decorate, and stock your neighborhood’s own Little Free Library littlefreelibrary.org

TOOL LOAN PROGRAM
The Tool Loan Center stocks a variety of hand and power tools from screwdrivers, hammers and pipe wrenches to sanders, saws, ladders and wheelbarrows all of which are available to City of Milwaukee homeowners. Shared ownership of tools saves money and reduces the amount of tools that will eventually end up in landfills.

1. Membership is easy, just stop by and sign up. The annual fee is $35, or $25 for those 62 years and over.

2. List of items in inventory
hri-wi.org/home-owners/
RECYCLE

Recycling is when new products are made from old by reprocessing and remanufacturing. Recycling is good for the environment, supports local jobs, and saves the City money that defrays the costs associated with disposal. Recycling is the law in Wisconsin and City Ordinance. Paper, bottles, and cans must be recycled at home, at work, at school, at places of worship, and at public events. Learn more at MilwaukeeRecycles.com

RECYCLE CURBSIDE

- Metal & aluminum cans
- Pots & pans
- Cardboard
- Cereal boxes
- Paper towel tubes
- Paper
- Magazines & newspapers
- Cartons (milk, cream, etc)
- Plastic beverage bottles
- Plastic personal care bottles
- Plastic tubs
- Bulky plastics
- All plastics must be #1, #2, #4, or #5
- Glass bottles and jars

RECYCLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Recycle plastic bags and film at local retail drop off locations like grocery stores

Recycle scrap metal, appliances, antifreeze, car batteries, used motor oil and filters, tires, electronics, cooking oil, curbside recyclables, and large corrugated cardboard at City of Milwaukee Drop Off Centers.

Visit MilwaukeeRecycles.com or call 286-CITY for locations, hours, and restrictions.
Visit MilwaukeeRecycles.com/DirtyDozen or call (414) 286-CITY (2489) to learn more about what you CAN and CANNOT recycle!

**THE TOP 12**

Things you can recycle curbside:

- Metal & aluminum cans
- Pots & pans
- Cardboard
- Cereal boxes & paper towel tubes
- Paper
- Magazines & newspapers
- Plastic beverage bottles
- Plastic personal care bottles
- Plastic tubs
- Bulky plastics
- Glass bottles & jars
- Cartons (milk, cream, etc.)

**THE DIRTY DOZEN**

Things you can't recycle curbside:

- Plastic bags & wraps
- Fire hazards (Propane tanks & batteries)
- Tanglers (hoses, wires, cords, cables)
- Needles & sharps
- Scrap metal
- Styrofoam & plastic
- Window glass, mirrors, bulbs
- Wood, including furniture
- Hazardous chemicals
- Ceramics, including dishware & drinking glasses
- Food & yard waste
- Diapers

Let's make Milwaukee clean & green!

Visit MilwaukeeRecycles.com/DirtyDozen or call (414) 286-CITY (2489) to learn more about what you CAN and CANNOT recycle!
HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Start a recycling program at a school, business, apartment complex, or public event. Resources to get you started are available at MilwaukeeRecycles.com under “Learn More.”

2. Tour the MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) to see where your recyclables go. Adult tours are available twice a month and school group programs are also available. Visit kgmb.org to register.

3. Recycle outreach. Share information with neighbors about how to recycle. Flyers for distribution are available. This information can also be included in a “Welcome to the Neighborhood” packet from your Neighborhood Association.

4. Visit Earth911.com to find ways to recycle additional or unusual items.
REPAIR: FIX IT CLINICS

Instead of simply throwing away objects, host a fix it clinic where people can bring their broken appliances/objects to get repaired, saving money in the long run. Visitors bring things they want fixed and work with volunteers to repair them. The kinds of items that might be fixed at fix it clinics (repair cafés) includes computers, clothing, furniture, appliances, bicycles, toys, and more.

How can you organize?

1. Visit fixitclinic.blogspot.com for advice on how to start a clinic and for access to advertisement flyers.

2. Recruit local fix it coaches and volunteers who provide repair skills and services. They can be professionals with repair businesses or tinkerers. This can include local sewers to help repair fabric/textile items.

3. Get a venue like a public library, community center, maker spaces, museums, local repair shop, etc. to host the clinic

4. Set a date, schedule the clinic (carve out 3–4 hours for set up and clean up time)

5. The Wisconsin Bike Fed operates a mobile bike repair program, which provides free bike repair to the community.

   wisconsinbikefed.org/about/programs-campaigns/mobile-bike-repair/
Project Clean and Green is an annual spring City-wide program meant to foster neighborhood pride and ownership through coordinated clean ups, street and alley sweeping, graffiti removal, and neighborhood beautification activities sponsored by community organizations. As part of Project Clean and Green, City of Milwaukee trash collection will target a city neighborhood each week to collect resident’s extra items left from their garbage collection point (curb or alley) on their scheduled garbage collection day.

1. This is your opportunity to get rid of excess household debris at no cost. After your Project Clean and Green week, there will be a $50–$150 charge for all bulky pickup requests larger than 1 cubic yard (about the size of an easy chair).

2. Crews will not collect appliances, TVs, electronics, construction debris, paint, and grass clippings. These items should be taken to a City Drop Off Disposal Center (North—6660 N Industrial Road and South—3879 W Lincoln Avenue).

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Advertise Project Clean and Green in your neighborhood and contact neighboring community organizations for sponsored activities.

2. This is a great opportunity to involve young people in public art for rain barrels, trash bins, or compost, and for neighborhood clean up efforts.

3. Organize a neighborhood trash cleanup through Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful’s program, The Great American Cleanup, anytime between March 1 –May 31 every year. Visit their site for more information kgmb.org

4. For more information milwaukee.gov/mpw/divisions/operations/environmental/ProjectCleanAndGreen.htm
LAND AND GREEN SPACE

NATURAL LAWN CARE

Natural lawn care is growing a healthy lawn without the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. These products are dangerous to the environment, because after rain they flow into streams, rivers, and lakes creating pollution and damaging vital ecosystems. In addition, pesticides do not target only the pest species, but other insects like bees that are important for us. By using natural products, you are working with nature, not against it.

COMMON TIPS FOR NATURAL LAWN CARE

1. Only cut the top 1/3 of the total height of the grass per mowing.

2. Leave the grass clippings on your lawn to nourish the soil as fertilizer, compost them, or take them to a Drop Off Disposal Center.

3. Use a slow release fertilizer instead of fertilizer that dissolves in water (labeled “water-soluble”). Milorganite is a local environmental option. Only apply fertilizer when no rain is in the forecast to avoid runoff into the sewage system.

4. Most lawns require about 1 to 2 inches of water per week in summer. Water deeply in the morning and when it is not windy.

5. For more tips
   mmsd.com/what-we-do/green-infrastructure/soil-amendments

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Information sessions about non-natural lawn care vs natural.

2. Use only natural lawn care methods in shared spaces managed by your homeowner association.
TREE PLANTING

Trees are a good neighborhood investment. They increase property values for many homes, help lower energy bills by creating shade, block noise pollution, and have important health and social benefits. Trees also help take pollutants out of the air.

**Did you know?**
Milwaukee’s existing tree canopy cover:
- Reduces stormwater flow by 22% (savings of $15.4 million for the city)
- Takes 1,677 tons of carbon dioxide out of the air per year (estimated value $1.5 million)
- Provides direct summer energy savings (valued at $650,000)

**HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?**

1. Talk to community members and gauge interest for planting more trees!

2. If you are a Milwaukee homeowner, you can adopt a tree through Greening Milwaukee. You can receive one free tree per season if you have enough space.
   greeningmilwaukee.org

3. Rally your neighbors together (you’ll need at least 10 of them) to win a community orchard through the Victory Garden Initiative’s Fruity Nutty Five Contest. Visit the website victorygardeninitiative.org/FruityNutty to access the application. Each of the five winning neighborhoods will receive up to 30 fruit and nut producing plants and will get free admission to tree care classes.

**VICTORY GARDEN INITIATIVE**
COMPOSTING

Compost is an environmentally friendly way to get rid of yard waste and plant material to help create healthy soil, all while saving the City money. Compost is full of microorganisms and nutrients, which are important for plant growth and success. Wisconsin law prohibits disposal of yard materials in landfills. Yard materials (also called “yard waste”) includes leaves, grass clippings, brush and any pieces of wood (branches, sticks, etc.) under 6 inches in diameter. Composting is an easy, inexpensive alternative to landfills that puts these resources to use instead of simply throwing them away.

THREE WAYS TO COMPOST

1. Compost can be done by individual homeowners and apartment dwellers in individual composting bins.

2. Participate in the curbside collection pilot program in select neighborhoods.

3. Visit kompostkids.org for more resources, including public compost sites throughout Milwaukee

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Hold an informational session on the dos and don’ts of composting (including worm composting)

2. Create a workshop to create home composters. There are a number of home composting containers for sale or it is simple to create your own. For a complete composting and DIY guide, visit; dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/wa/wa182.pdf

3. Collaborate with other existing community gardens and organizations for workshops and demonstrations. For example, Milwaukee’s own Compost Crusader is a company aimed at increasing compost by getting local schools, businesses, community groups, etc. involved. For more information, visit compostcrusader.com/
MILWAUKEE’S DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAM
Is a twelve-month pilot program that, for a fee, provides a separate cart for organics collection. This is only available to a limited number of interested residents within the study zone.

Visit this website to see if your neighborhood is eligible for the program and for more information city.milwaukee.gov/Milwaukee-Recycles/Organics

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS TYPE OF SERVICE?
The collection of organic items in a separate cart has many benefits.

1. Convenience. Items like grass clippings that previously needed to be taken to a Drop Off Center can, with this system, be collected from your home.

2. Reduce waste sent to the landfill. Three households composting food waste for one year equals one ton of food waste that won’t go to the landfill.

3. Promote healthy soils. Compost is a wonderful, nutrient-rich soil amendment. Commercial composting allows more things to be easily composted than if you are composting in your back yard.
COMMUNITY GARDENS:
HOME GROWN

A community garden is “any use of land or a premises for the growing of crops, plants or other vegetation by a group of individuals or by a public or non-profit organization.” They are an excellent way to create community, provide fresh and free produce, and improve neighborhood health and aesthetic.

ON CITY OWNED LAND OR PRIVATE LAND

1. Complete a Community Garden permit application found at: milwaukee.gov/homegrownmilwaukee/Resources/CGS.htm. If you need assistance, contact ECO's Tim McCollow, (414) 286-3748 or tmccol@milwaukee.gov.

NEXT STEPS FOR PRIVATE AND CITY LAND

1. Email, mail or drop off the application with Yves LaPierre, Department of City Development (DCD), Real Estate; 809 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

2. City staff will forward the application to the alderperson representing the district where the garden is located. Consider contacting your alderperson before submitting an application so they are aware of your project. Find your alderperson city.milwaukee.gov/CommonCouncil
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension rents garden plots in many parts of the county and provides technical assistance to neighborhood groups that run their own community gardens.

Garden Rental Assistant
(414) 256-4606
garden.rentals@ces.uwex.edu
milwaukee.uwex.edu/agriculture/garden-rental/

2. Groundwork Milwaukee's Urban Garden Network (MUG) manages over 90 gardens throughout Milwaukee. The MUG Network builds community partnerships and streamlines the process for creating community gardens on city land.
groundworkmke.org/milwaukee-urban-gardens

3. Victory Garden Initiative’s BLITZ program gathers volunteers to install raised garden beds filled with Blue Ribbon Organic’s healthy, compost based soil. ANYONE can get a garden! Call VGI at (414) 431-0888 to see if your neighborhood qualifies for a discounted bed. For more information, visit victorygardeninitiative.org/blitzfaq

4. Victory Garden Initiative's Garden Mentor Program matches experienced volunteer Garden Mentors with new gardeners, emphasizing community-building and personal relationships. Register to become a Garden Mentor or be a mentee at victorygardeninitiative.org/garden-mentor

5. In addition to building new community gardens, we encourage neighborhoods to organize events to activate existing pocket parks. For information, contact Tim McCollow at (414) 286-3748 or tmccol@milwaukee.gov.

6. Many of these programs can be financed through the Community Improvement Project (CIP) reimbursable match grants. For more information, visit city.milwaukee.gov/CIPs and browse the “Housing Resources” section of this toolkit to learn about additional funding sources.
POLLINATOR FRIENDLY PRACTICES

Pollinators like bees and butterflies are vital to keeping fruits, nuts, and vegetables in our diets. Over the past few decades, there has been a significant loss of pollinators from the environment. These pollinators contribute more than 24 billion dollars to the United States economy, of which honeybees account for more than 15 billion dollars.

Mayor Barrett joined other mayors across the nation in the Mayor’s Monarch Pledge which supports the Pollinator Garden Challenge. Visit this resource for more information millionpollinatorgardens.org

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Host informational sessions on the importance of pollinating populations in your community and how to keep them safe.

2. Host events including native milkweed seed collections, milkweed plug giveaways, planting milkweeds in demonstration gardens, and showcasing native milkweed in local Certified Wildlife Habitat garden tours. The City of Milwaukee provides free seeds through Home GR/OWN. Call (414) 286-3748

3. This resource tells you the best types of milkweed to plant for your region nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/About_Native-Plants_Milkweed.aspx

4. Use products that target specific pests rather than broad spectrum ones. Avoid anything labeled toxic to bees or that kills “weedy” flowers (the ones pollinators visit). Specifically avoid products that include nenicotinoids. Only use organic or natural pest deterrents, and spray at night when it is dry, windless, and while flowers are not blooming.
30X30 NATURE CHALLENGE

It’s simple, spend 30 minutes outside for 30 days without your cell phone, tablet, radio, or other electronic devices. What you choose to do during that time is up to you! Go for a walk in the park, enjoy a great view, have a picnic, or participate in a great outdoor activity with a local nature center. Talk to your neighbors.

Participating in the challenge can result in greater understanding of your interaction with nature and the built environment, as well as build a greater appreciation for natural spaces in our communities. Taking time to spend in nature and having natural views can relieve stress, increase memory performance and creativity, and improve attention span.

The 30x30 Nature Challenge is supported by the US Green Building Council (USGC). At USGBC, we envision buildings and communities will regenerate and sustain the health and vitality of all life within a generation. We understand the way we decide to create spaces matters for our well-being and future of this planet. For more information and to organize your neighborhood or workplace visit usgbc.org/event/30x30-nature-challenge
Rain gardens are small, shallow areas filled with native plants that support local pollinators, protect our water supply, and save money by preventing flooding. Rain gardens capture and filter 30% more water than lawns from storms. This is important, because storm water runoff increases flooding; carries pollutants from streets, parking lots and even lawns into local streams and lakes; and leads to expensive municipal improvements in storm water treatment. Rain gardens are a great way for homeowners, schools, businesses, churches, and other organizations to help protect our lakes and streams.

**How Can You Organize?**

1. For resources on building a rain garden, including access to the Rain Garden Educator’s Kit.

2. Hold an informational session on rain gardens, using the workshop materials, potential speaker contacts, etc provided by the UW-Extension Natural Resources Education Program and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Rain Garden Educator’s Kit.
RAIN BARRELS

Rain barrels capture and store rainwater from your roof for later use in watering your garden, lawn, trees, washing your car, etc. Rain barrels help keep polluted storm water runoff out of the sewer system when it rains, which is the biggest remaining threat to clean rivers and lakes in the United States. You will save energy by lowering the amount of water that flows into sewage treatment plants and rain barrels save money by lowering your water bill.

Your barrel should be located close to a downspout, near the area you will use it, and on a solid and level surface.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Create a workshop for installing rain barrels. Visit MMSD’s website for how-to guides on purchasing and preparing your rain barrel. mmsd.com/what-we-do/green-infrastructure/rain-barrels

2. Hold an event for painting the rain barrels (e.g., during a block party). Encourage designs that represent your community.
DOWNSPOUT DISCONNECTION

Downspouts are the external pipes of a house that carry rainwater from the roof to a drain or the ground. During heavy rain, every downspout on your home can send 12 gallons of water a minute to the sewer system. This increases the risk of expensive basement backups and sewer overflows. Disconnecting downspouts helps keep extra water out of sewers. For detailed disconnection instructions by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District (MMSD) visit: mmsd.com/downspout-disconnection

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Talk to your neighbors and organize a disconnection day. Hook up the disconnection to rain barrels for extra savings.
Milwaukee is a water centric city located on Lake Michigan. We are fortunate to be part of the Great Lakes Basin, which contains 20% of the world’s fresh surface water supply. With climate change, water resources worldwide will become unstable, insecure, and unsustainable due to increased water demand and shrinking water supplies. We must use our water wisely to preserve this precious resource for future generations. Use some of the following tips, to save water and money!

Visit city.milwaukee.gov/WCC to learn more.

ANNUAL RIVER CLEANUP

The Milwaukee River Keeper organizes an Annual Spring River Cleanup! Volunteers join across the Milwaukee River Basin to pick up trash, get outdoors, and work towards our mission of swimmable, fishable rivers.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

You can organize by signing up volunteers individually and as groups. You are provided with gloves, bags, and FREE river cleanup t-shirts. Additionally, through the Milwaukee River Keeper website, you can become a volunteer water monitor and help monitor the water quality, aesthetic, road salt usage, or contaminants of our local rivers!

Visit milwaukeeriverkeeper.org/ for more information.
USE WATER WISELY

The Milwaukee Water Works offers practical solutions for homeowners and renters to save water in the home through leak detection and sustainable practices. Leaks take both an environmental and economic toll, for example: a toilet that runs all day and night will waste 200 gallons of water per day, adding an additional cost of about $400 per year.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Hold informational sessions concerning home and personal water savings. Get started by following these tips from the EPA at epa.gov/watersense/start-saving

2. For information about Milwaukee Water Works program to help customers find and solve leaks city.milwaukee.gov/water/usewaterwisely

3. To ask for a leak detection kit, contact (414) 286-2830. Use Water Wisely packages are available at fourteen MPL-Milwaukee Public Library branches, three Milwaukee Public Health Department community health centers, and by elected officials at town hall meetings, and upon request.
LEAD WATER SERVICE LINES AND WATER FILTERS

Milwaukee’s municipal water meets all EPA standards for water quality, is regularly tested, and safe to drink. However, 70,000 City of Milwaukee properties (44%) have lead service lines (LSLs), which can contaminate water in some situations. Milwaukee received $2.6 million in Safe Drinking Water Loan money from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources that will be used to replace lead service lines at 385 state-license child day care centers. The remaining $1 million from the loan will fund the city’s two-third share of private side replacements for 2017.

WATER FILTERS AND HOW YOU CAN ORGANIZE

The City of Milwaukee Health Department recommends that families who live in homes with lead service lines and who have children under the age of 6 or pregnant or breastfeeding women in the home take steps to reduce their risk of lead exposure, including using a drinking water filter certified to remove lead from water. This is especially important for infants who drink formula made with tap water. For additional information on ways to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water, please visit leadsafemke.com.

1. To find out if your home has a lead service line, visit leadsafemke.com or by call Milwaukee Water Works customer service at (414) 286-2830.

2. Additionally, call customer service to organize a speaker for an event that discusses Milwaukee’s drinking water and the role of Milwaukee Water Works.

3. For more information concerning lead service line replacement programs, visit city.milwaukee.gov/water.

4. Neighborhoods can organize on lead service line replacement by contacting a plumber and inquiring about bulk pricing.
ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

ADOPT-A-STORMDRAIN AND BLOCK PARTIES
Pollutants such as pet waste, plastic bottles, cigarette butts, motor oil, grocery bags, and more can pollute the water and the environment after being carried by stormwater into our storm drains. This water flows directly into our rivers and lakes untreated. Volunteers can work towards cleaning up these pollutants by adopting a storm drain today. As part of the Respect Our Waters program, Sweet Water and MMSD provide the tools necessary for you to host a neighborhood block party to help raise awareness about the program in your community. For more information, contact Jacob Fincher at fincher@swwtwater.org or (262) 716-2211.

ADOPT-A-RIVER
The Adopt-A-River Program coordinated by Milwaukee Riverkeeper enables individuals, companies, organizations, or groups to adopt sections of waterways in the Milwaukee River Basin, which includes reaches along the Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic Rivers, their tributaries, the Estuary, and near shore Lake Michigan. Adopters commit to cleaning their adopted section of the river two times per year. Getting outside, connecting with, and cleaning up our rivers is an important step in achieving swimmable, fishable rivers for future generations. For more information, call (414) 287-0207 or visit milwaukeeriverkeeper.org/adopt-a-river

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION PROGRAM
Drop off your unused household hazardous waste and help keep our land and water a little cleaner. Household hazardous waste collections take place at both permanent and mobile sites. For locations to drop off your household hazardous waste and for more information, visit mmsd.com/what-you-can-do/home-haz-mat-collection or call (414) 225-2066. Please note this program is only for Milwaukee County residents.

WATER DROP ALERT
Common Ground’s Watershed team issues Water Drop Alerts when heavy rainfall is forecast to remind people to delay washing dishes, clothes, and showers. To subscribe to Water Drop Alert reminders, text WATERDROP to 797979. For more information, visit watershedwi.org/how-you-can-help
REFLO
A nonprofit organization with the mission of becoming a leader in sustainable water use, green infrastructure and water management in urban environments. Reflo is grounded in strong client relationships, community, partnerships, and will provide cost effective and sustainable solutions for rainwater and greywater use. These objectives are accomplished through education, research, and the implementation of water projects. Visit refloh2o.com to get involved.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District has an ambitious goal of adding 740 million gallons of storage through green infrastructure to help reduce the risk of basement backups and sewer overflows. The Green Infrastructure Center of Excellence offers an array services and resources to promote green infrastructure. All services are FREE and open to the public.

These services include:
- Green infrastructure design services through tools, preliminary plans and specifications
- Workshops
- Grant funding opportunities
- Grant Writing Support
- Training for workforce development and certification
- Other services and advice, as needed

Green Infrastructure Center of Excellence is located at:
247 Freshwater Way, Suite 440, Milwaukee, WI 53204. For information, call (414) 225-2222 or email freshcoast740@mmsd.com.

GREEN SCHOOLS CONSORTIUM OF MILWAUKEE (GSCM)
This consortium is interested in improving Milwaukee-area schools and increasing eco-literacy to benefit the health of our communities and the environment. By developing a local network of green school practitioners, agencies, and funders we intend on sharing resources and implementing meaningful green infrastructure projects that improve the quality of our watersheds while providing students with access to green space and exciting educational opportunities. Green Schools Consortium has a rigorous selection process to ensure that schools are committed to excellence in environmental education and can support new green facilities. Visit gscn.refloh2o.com or email admin@refloh2o.com
MILWAUKEE WATER COMMONS WATER SCHOOL

Water School is an innovative program that educates community leaders of all ages on the water cycle, the watersheds of Lake Michigan and the Milwaukee River Basin, and how water moves through our city, our neighborhoods, and our communities. Each year the program trains neighborhood leaders from five partner sites, taking them through a process that includes water education, cross-community relationship building, art-making, and project development. Over the course of the program, we discuss community issues such as flooding, lack of access to water recreation, and lack of adequate water access for urban agriculture.

We introduce leaders to the green infrastructure plans and foster discussion of current water related issues and innovations. Leaders visit city water infrastructure, restoration projects, and the lakefront. Through this program Milwaukee Water Commons cultivates water leadership and stewardship throughout Milwaukee neighborhoods, and beyond. This program creates an on-ramp for broader participation and investment in Milwaukee’s water future.
RIDE SHARE

The ride share program is a free service provided by the State of Wisconsin, which saves individuals money by bringing commuters together. It serves individual commuters who drive, ride, or bike, as well as employers to help improve air quality, reduce congestion, and provide 'green' alternative commuting options and programs. The rideshare program also matches bicyclists together who bike the same route.

Vanpool is a transportation option for state and non-state employees commuting to Madison from outside communities. Participants can join a group that is already established or, if there are enough interested people, they can form a new vanpool. Riders enjoy low rates, comfortable vans, and the benefit of convenient pick up and drop off locations.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

1. Visit for access to information on all three programs for cars, bicycles, and vanpool. Become a member for free and register for the services you intend to use at:
   wisconsindot.gov/Pages/travel/road/rideshare/

2. On the above website you can track environmental/financial savings, run a match list for your commuting, update your profile, have the ease of a log in through Facebook, can use the High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes at on-ramps, and will save money on gas and save on air pollution

3. Additonally, organize your own workplace/neighborhood carpool.
BUBLR BIKES

Home to a densely-packed population with a thriving social life, Milwaukee represents the perfect environment for a successful bike share system. Bublr Bikes provides a fun and healthy way to get to work, zip around town, and explore the city. Bublr Bikes also connects residents to the City’s vibrant network of restaurants, boutiques, theaters, and beautiful parks. Bublr Bikes aims to be accessible and inclusive. The website and app are in both English and Spanish, a ride starts at $3, and subsidized and discounted passes will be provided to income qualified individuals. Riders must be 14 years old. Visit bublrbikes.com

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

1. Bublr Bike stations expand from central hubs into many neighborhoods. No Bublr Station will be more than 1/2 mile from another station.

2. Bublr Bikes has programs – including pass giveaways, safety education, and a Bublr mileage challenge – to encourage first-time riders to try Bublr. Get in contact with the organization to learn more and set up workshops within your community.

3. For access to Milwaukee’s bike trails and maps, visit: city.milwaukee.gov/Milwaukee-by-Bike/maps.htm

4. Visit wisconsinbikefed.org/ to get involved with bike rides, events, volunteering, etc.
ZIP CAR

Zipcar is a car sharing program in Milwaukee that allows you to rent cars throughout multiple locations within the city. This program allows for the convenience of a car when you need it, without having to pay a car bill, insurance, or gas (up to 180 miles a day). Sign up online, get the app, and a zipcard. Driving rates are $8–$10 an hour or about $80 for a full day. Visit zipcar.com or call (416) 558-7533 for more information.

SPEED BUMPS

The Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) offers help to residents who are dealing with traffic safety problems on residential side streets. At request, the Department of Public Works will assess the need for speed bumps/small traffic circles to slow traffic and create a safer community environment. This program is only for the local side street network.

city.milwaukee.gov/mpw/infrastructure/Neighborhood-Traffic-Management-1.htm

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Use the Neighborhood Signature Sheet to collect signatures from residents of your block. This confirms that other residents agree there is a traffic safety problem.

2. The Department of Public Works will perform a 48-hour speed study and traffic count at the location. Once the data is processed, DPW will contact you with the results and ways to fix the traffic problems on your street.

3. DPW will prepare an assessed cost for each property owner. As part of the usual public hearing process, each property owner gets to vote on the proposed traffic calming project.
BLOCK PARTIES

A block party is an outdoor public party put on by the residents of a city block or neighborhood. As such, a block party requires a (free) temporary permit. Call (414) 286-3329 or Fax: (414) 286-3953 or visit the Special Event Permit Office (841 North Broadway Room 501 Milwaukee, WI 53202) to obtain a block party permit application or download the Block Party Permit Application here.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. Permits are issued only with approval of the Alderperson. During June, July and August, applications are not accepted any later than two weeks before the event. You will receive your permit in the mail unless you would like to call the office to arrange for pickup. There are no fees for residential block parties.

2. Signatures of consent should be obtained from residents within the barricaded area to establish support for the event. Informational fliers should be distributed one week prior to the event to remind your neighbors of the upcoming block party.

3. Utilize the community presence during a block party to host any of the above mentioned workshops, rain barrel painting, informational stations, etc. to get neighbors involved and excited.

HOUSING RESOURCES

Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC) works with City departments, community-based agencies, financial institutions, developers, local foundations, and most importantly, residents, to improve Milwaukee’s neighborhoods. Visit city.milwaukee.gov/HousingHelp for an extensive list of programs available for current and prospective homeowners, investors, and non-profits

The programs listed below outline ways to utilize the below funding sources for efficient and sustainable home and neighborhood improvement. Visit city.milwaukee.gov/NIDC
TARGETED INVESTMENT NEIGHBORHOODS

This initiative is meant to increase owner-occupancy, provide high quality affordable rental housing, strengthen property values, and improve the physical appearance and quality of life of neighborhoods.

TINS focus resources for three years on a small neighborhood area of six to twelve city blocks.

HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE?

1. TIN resources are available only in certain neighborhoods per year. Visit the website for a complete list. city.milwaukee.gov/TINs

2. TIN has two loan programs, the Home Rehabilitation TIN Loan Program and the TIN Loan Program for Rental Rehabilitation. Both offer forgivable loans for rehabilitating properties, which includes; energy efficiency/conservation, window replacement, and plumbing, electoral, and heating projects.

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

The Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative works with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC). Each neighborhood creates their own programs to promote their neighborhood, engage residents around positive actions, improving neighborhood appearance, etc. Consider creating programs that encourage environmentally positive development; like solar installations, rain gardens, community farms, etc. The sky is the limit. Check out this website for a list of all participating neighborhoods and their projects. city.milwaukee.gov/HealthyNeighborhoods

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

CIP grants are reimbursable matching grants that should stimulate resident engagement and support sustainable projects within a small geographical area. CIP grants are available for up to $4,000 and require dollar-for-dollar match. For more information, visit city.milwaukee.gov/CIPs
ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

CITY OF MILWAUKEE PROGRAMS

ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION OFFICE
milwaukee.gov/eco

MILWAUKEE SHINES (ECO)
(414) 286-5593
milwaukee.gov/MilwaukeeShines/Get-Solar/Solar-Group-Buys

ME2 (ECO)
(414) 286-3351
SmartEnergyPays.com/homeowners

HOME GR/OWN (ECO)
(414) 286-3748
milwaukee.gov/homegrownmilwaukee.com

MILWAUKEE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
(414) 286-CITY
milwaukee.gov/mpw

PROJECT CLEAN AND GREEN
milwaukee.gov/mpw/divisions/operations/environmental/
ProjectCleanAndGreen.htm

MILWAUKEE WATER WORKS
(414) 286-2830
milwaukee.gov/water

CITY OF MILWAUKEE HEALTH DEPARTMENT
(414) 286-3521
milwaukee.gov/health

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(414) 286-5609
milwaukee.gov/NIDC

MILWAUKEE FREECYCLE NETWORK
freecycle.org
LITTLE FREE LIBRARY
littlefreelibrary.org

TOOL LOAN CENTER
hri-wi.org/home-owners/

GREENING MILWAUKEE
(414) 272-5462 ext. 103
greeningmilwaukee.org

VICTORY GARDEN INITIATIVE
(414) 431-0888
victorygardeninitiative.org

COMPOST CRUSADERS
(262) 394-6075
compostcrusader.org

GROUNDWORK MILWAUKEE
(414) 763-9947
groundworkmke.org

MILWAUKEE COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
(414) 256-4600
milwaukee.uwex.edu

MILLION MONARCHS POLLINATOR
millionpollinatorgardens.org

UW-EXTENSION
uwex.edu

MILWAUKEE METROPOLITAN SEWAGE DISTRICT
(414) 272-5100
mmsd.com

MILWAUKEE RIVER KEEPER
(414) 287-0207
milwaukeeriverkeeper.org

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
epa.gov
MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY
(414) 286-3000
m mpl.org

RIDE SHARE
wisconsindot.gov/pages/travel/road/rideshare/default

BUBLR BIKES
(414) 931-1121
bublrbikes.com

WISCONSIN BIKE FEDERATION
(414) 431-1798
bfw.org

KEEP GREATER MILWAUKEE BEAUTIFUL
(414) 272-5462
kgbm.org

ZIP CAR
1-899-4ZIPCAR
zipcar.com/milwaukee

SWEET WATER
(414) 382-1766
swwtwater.org

REFLO
(414) 949-7356
refloh20.com

GREEN SCHOOLS CONSORTIUM OF MILWAUKEE
gscm.refloh20.com

MILWAUKEE WATER COMMONS
(414) 507-2620
milwaukee watercommons.org
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