

LIVING GREEN: Muskegon Area Sustainability Coalition

What does it mean to be “living green”? Sustainability initiatives have become increasingly popular at home and in the workplace. The sustainability concept revolves around the three principles of economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental integrity. Sustainability strives to meet today’s needs without compromising our future generations.

Reducing waste and re-using material are two ways to practice green living. In many regards, we tend to use more than is required or throw away what still has some sort of use. In a natural world, nothing gets wasted. There are many products currently offered in the marketplace that can significantly reduce the negative impact on the environment. Here are five things you can always buy green:

1. Paint – Always look for low or non VOC paint.
2. Paper – Use paper products made with high post-consumer recycled content.
3. Light Bulbs – Begin using compact fluorescents lights (cfl)
4. Appliances – Look for the energy star label
5. Fruits and Vegetables – Local food is fresh and benefits the local economy

TAKE ACTION FOR CLEAN WATER:

Rainfall has been plentiful this year in West Michigan providing essential amounts for our local food producers and for those who prefer to allow Mother Nature to water their lawns. However, there is one aspect of significant rainfall that the public sometimes fails to consider. Where does the rainwater go when it leaves your property? Does it soak into the ground or does it run across your lawn and driveway into the street storm drain which then discharges into a local body of water?

When the rainwater runs from your property into the street drain it is more than likely carrying a contingent of pollutants that are the result of lawn chemicals, oil or gas leaks from vehicles, and pet waste to name a few. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that up to 70% of the pollution found in large bodies of water is the result of storm water runoff. So if you frequently use lawn fertilizers and miracle-grow products please do so in moderation. And if your vehicle is constantly leaking fluids have it repaired and always remember to pickup after your pet.

A study completed by the Center for Watershed Protection and the U.S. Forest Service found that a medium sized tree can intercept as much as 2,400 gallons of rainfall per year through its root system all the way to the tips of the leaves. That is a lot of water! So consider planting a few native trees on your landscape this fall to do your part in creating a sustainable City.

In addition to these storm water benefits, trees are great for improving the air quality and reducing heating/cooling costs as well. The Muskegon Conservation District can provide

suggestions for appropriate native trees in Michigan for urban areas and information about their annual fall tree seedling sale. For this and more tips regarding clean water contact the local Muskegon Conservation District at 773-0008 or at their website www.muskegoncd.org.

We can make simple changes that will prevent polluted runoff from contaminating our water resources. Although individual action may seem small, the collective impact from each resident committing to making a few of these easy changes will surely go a long way in preserving our beautiful waters that make the Muskegon lakeshore a great place to call home.



WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

Water usage is expensive and we all should do everything we can to reduce consumption that will shrink our water bills. Here are some useful tips that may lower your water bill.

1. Do not allow the water to run continuously while hand washing dishes, shaving, or brushing your teeth.
2. Periodically adjust your sprinkler heads so only your lawn is being watered and not the street or the house next door.
3. Do only a full load of clothes in the washer and wait until the dishwasher is full before running a cycle.
4. Keep a cold pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap until water is cold.
5. Use efficient shower heads. Your shower should not fill a one gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds. And shorten your shower by at least one to two minutes.
6. Collect and re-use rain water on your garden and house plants.
7. Teach the children how to turn the water off after themselves.
8. Use a commercial car wash that recycles water.

You can save over 1,000 gallons per month just by applying these tips to your daily routine. For more ways to save water go to www.wateruseitwisely.com

GRASS/LEAVES/YARD WASTE

Curbside yard waste is picked up on the same day as your regular garbage collection. All yard waste materials must be placed in recyclable bags and set by the curb. Please remember to put some distance between your garbage bin and your yard waste bags. City Hall does have a supply of bags for sale. Pricing for the bags will continue to be 5 bags (1 bundle) for \$2 or 15 bags (3 bundles) for \$5. These recyclable bags can be purchased at City Hall during normal business hours 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. The final day for yard waste pick up will be **Tuesday, November 30th**. We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining the grass and leaves on your property and your efforts are vital towards keeping Roosevelt Park an attractive place to live.

The City now offers a recycling container specifically for compact fluorescent light (cfl) bulbs. The container is a five gallon bucket located inside the front door of City Hall. If you have cfl bulbs to discard please feel free to utilize the container for that purpose.

Did you know The City of Roosevelt Park has a Facebook page? Social media outlets have become a useful tool for getting out information in addition to receiving feedback from residents and the business community. If you would like to become a “friend” then check out our page at www.facebook.com and search for Roosevelt Park Michigan.

HALLOWEEN – 2010

This year Roosevelt Park will observe Halloween “trick or treat” on **Saturday, October 30th** from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Please enjoy yourself but always remember to be careful! The general safety of the participants and residents is always our top concern. If you are going out for Halloween, please be mindful of the increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the neighborhoods during trick or treat hours.



HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

The Consumer Product Safety Commission offers the following Safety Alerts for Halloween:

- Treats should not be consumed until an adult has examined them for potential tampering.
- Purchase costumes and materials that are flame resistant. Look for the label that specifies that the product is flame resistant.
- Make costumes and accessories that are light weight and bright. Use reflective tape and have children carry a flashlight or some other source of light.
- Small children should always be accompanied by an adult or older child and please remember to walk to and from your destination. No Running!
- Children should only visit homes that have the outside light on as a welcome sign.
- Do not eat anything that is not commercially wrapped.
- Feed the children before they go trick or treating so they won't snack on candy.

FLU CLINIC

Monday, October 25th

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the Community Center, 3106 Roosevelt Road.

CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED

September 7 – Labor Day

November 25 & 26 – Thanksgiving Holiday

[Sorry We Are...](#)

CLOSED

LOCAL STREETS

We frequently hear the comment, “My property taxes are high. Why aren’t you doing more about the bad roads in my neighborhood?” The answer to this question is a little complicated. The first part of that answer is that the City has been as aggressive as fiscally possible in upgrading the roads in Roosevelt Park. Recent years have seen improvements to Glenside, Summit, Greenwich and Oak Ridge, as well as Post Road, which is currently under construction. Much of this work has been accomplished with funding help from either the Michigan Department of Transportation or the Federal Highway Administration, because road reconstruction is very expensive. And, most of this work has been on Major Streets and not the Local Streets within subdivisions. The second part of that answer is that local property taxes in Roosevelt Park **do not** go towards street maintenance. Every time you purchase gas, \$.19 per gallon (\$.15 per gallon of diesel) goes into the Michigan Transportation Fund. A portion of this tax goes to maintain State Trunk Lines, like M-46 or M-120 and bridges. A portion of this gas tax supports transit and pays the debt costs of the larger State highway projects. And, a portion is funneled down to local street agencies like Roosevelt Park. The majority of the streets in Roosevelt Park...some 68% of all road mileage, are designated as Local Streets. As is indicated in the following table, funding for Local Streets continues to decline every year and by 2009 is down some 16% from its peak in 2003.

GAS TAX FUNDS FOR LOCAL STREETS – ROOSEVELT PARK

2003 - \$64,887
2004 - \$64,127
2005 - \$59,214
2006 - \$59,369
2007 - \$58,266
2008 - \$56,359
2009 - \$54,723



Not only is the revenue available for Local Streets in decline, but the costs of all materials and services continues to rise. In 2008, 98% of the Local Streets budget was spent on snowplowing, trimming street trees and fixing potholes. In 2009 these very same activities consumed 99% of the annual budget for Local Streets. It is virtually impossible to fund street construction when nearly the entire annual budget for Local Streets is dedicated to routine maintenance.