

# The Detroit **SUN** Project's Little *“Green”* Guide

Tips and resources for protecting the environment,  
increasing your home's efficiency, and saving money on  
utility costs.



This guide was produced by the Detroit Sustainable Urban Neighborhood Project. The project was developed by a group of graduate students from the School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan. The resources and tips in this guide are based on a series of workshops held in the Morningside community during the summer of 2010.

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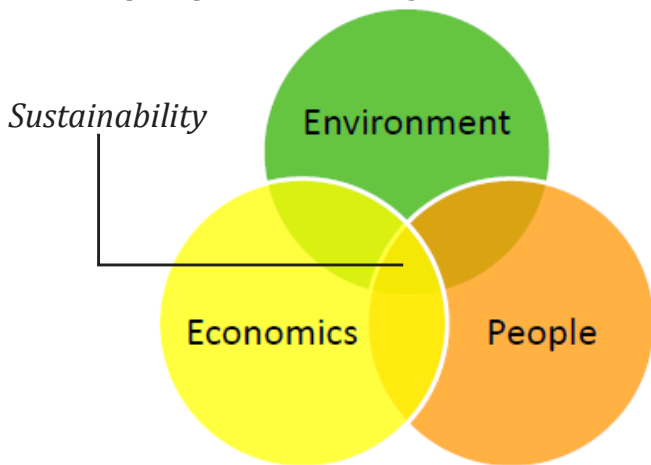
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## *How to use this booklet*

This booklet is a quick reference guide for facilitating positive environmental change in your home and in your community. Each section pertains to a topic discussed during the Detroit SUN Project's summer 2010 workshop series. Information presented at these workshops is compiled into this easy-to-use guide for quick reference. Contact information for local resources, services, and organizations for each topic is included at the end of each section. For example, in the "Home Weatherization" section, you will find a list of simple actions for making your home more energy-efficient and saving you money on utility costs, as well as contact information for organizations that offer free home weatherization. You can flip between sections to get to the information you need.

## *Introduction*





Sustainable urban neighborhoods are those that respect the environment, are economically viable, and foster a sense of community among their residents. We present the following list of sustainability principles and actions as a guide for cultivating sustainable urban communities. The information presented on the following pages is not meant to provide a one-size-fits-all solution to the environmental, economic, and social issues experienced in your community. Instead, it offers a list of individual actions and local city programs that have the potential to improve quality of life within your community. The diagram below represents the three main principles behind creating sustainable communities:



## *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

The recent increase in vacant land and abandoned homes is a significant problem for the city of Detroit and its residents. With little community or city oversight, these areas quickly transform into havens for illegal activity or illegal dumpsites. These sites typically lead to increased neighborhood blight resulting in lowered property values, and increased crime resulting in reduced community security. One way to address illegal dumping is to encourage the adoption of a city-wide recycling program. This starts with you and your neighbors recycling as much of your household waste as possible.

### *Things you can do:*

-  Immediately report any violations of city code (grass height too high, unsecured buildings) to city officials.
-  Immediately report instances of criminal activity in abandoned homes to your local police department.
  - Failure to report illegal activities encourages them, resulting in reduced community security.
-  Notify local authorities (county or city public works department) of illegal dump sites.
-  Report delinquent property owners.
  - Homeowners of abandoned homes are still required to maintain the surrounding property.

## *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

- ♻️ Reduce waste by recycling paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, glass, and plastic.
  - Check your local recycling center for a list of specific items that can be recycled in your area.
- ♻️ Keep your eyes on vacant lots near your home and immediately report acts of illegal dumping to the proper authorities.
  - Reporting issues increases the level of response provided by the authorities.
- ♻️ Hold a community clean-up day to clean up dumpsites in your community.
  - Events like these strengthen communication between community residents and create a sense of ownership for those who live near the sites.
- ♻️ Use local recycling drop-off sites (if curbside recycling is not available in your area).
  - Increased participation in local programs puts pressure on city officials to adopt a city-wide curbside recycling program.
  - Recycling plastics, glass, paper, and other items may lead to the reduction in the cost of your trash hauling services.
- ♻️ Properly dispose of hazardous waste (medical, chemical, etc.)
  - This reduces pollution in the environment.
  - It also helps to prevent theft and abuse of unused medications.

## *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

- 👉 Form a group with your neighbors and work together to make abandoned properties look occupied.
  - Homes that appear occupied are less likely to attract criminal activity.

- 👉 Maintain landscaping in front of abandoned homes located near your property.

### *Additional Resources:*

#### **For recycling:**

#### **City of Detroit Department of Public Works Drop-off Locations**

Davison Yard • 8221 West Davison

Southfield Yard • 12255 Southfield Service Drive

State Fair Yard • 19715 John R

5840 Anthon between Cavalry and Campbell

Kemeny Recreation Center • 2260 S. Fort

Heilmann Recreation Center • 19601 Crusade

Materials accepted: Unsoiled Paper and Boxes, Clean Plastic Containers #1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and Plastic Bags (Grocery, Dry Cleaning, and Newspaper), Metals (cans should be free from food debris).

#### Hours:

Summer (April-October) 10:30am - 6:00pm, Tuesday - Saturday

Winter (November-March) 8:30am - 4pm, Tuesday - Saturday

## *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

Additional information:

The Southfield Yard is open Monday - Saturday. All locations are closed from 2:30pm - 3:30pm. These drop-off locations are open to Detroit residents only with proper identification. At this time, the City is not recycling glass at these locations. Residents also can take recyclable items to 1331 Holden, which is open on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. excluding holidays.

### **Recycle Here!**

Main Location:

Wednesday: 10AM-6PM

Saturday: 9AM-3PM

1331 Holden

Detroit, MI 48202

Phone: (313) 871-4000

[www.recyclehere.net](http://www.recyclehere.net)



# *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

Mobile Locations:

EASTERN MARKET

First Saturday 10AM-2PM  
Corner of Wilkins & Russell

ROSEDALE PARK

Third Saturday 10AM-2PM  
Christ the King Church

INDIAN VILLAGE

Second Saturday 9AM-1PM  
Waldorf School parking lot /  
Charlevoix & Burns

CREEKSIDE

Fourth Saturday 10AM-2PM  
Jefferson & Chalmers

PALMER PARK

Third Saturday 8AM-12PM  
Swimming pool parking lot

CLARK PARK

Fourth Saturday 8AM-12PM  
Se Habla Español

Materials accepted: Unsoiled Paper and Boxes, Clean Plastic Containers #1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and Plastic Bags (Grocery, Dry Cleaning, and Newspaper), Metals (cans free from food debris), Glass (separate by color), Styrofoam beverage containers, Batteries, and Light Bulbs

**For code enforcement or to report violations:**

**Community Action Center**

East District

7737 Kercheval

Detroit, MI 48214

Office: (313) 628-2170

Fax: (313) 579-7135

TTY: 311 or (313) 224-INFO

## *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

### **Detroit Vacant Property Campaign**

<http://detroitvacantproperty.org/default.htm>

Community Legal Resources

615 Griswold, Suite 1400

Detroit, MI 48226

Phone: (313) 962-3171

Fax: (313) 964-1192

### **To clean up dump sites:**

#### **Wayne County C.L.E.A.N. (County Lending Environmental Assistance to Neighbors)**

Phone: (734) 326-4437

[pcullen@co.wayne.mi.us](mailto:pcullen@co.wayne.mi.us)

[http://www.waynecounty.com/doe\\_lrm\\_prog\\_cidp.htm](http://www.waynecounty.com/doe_lrm_prog_cidp.htm)

### **For Reducing Harmful Wastes:**

For information on local household hazardous waste collection: (734) 326-3936

Sharps disposal: [www.safeneededisposal.org](http://www.safeneededisposal.org)

Impacts of pharmaceuticals: [www.epa.gov/esd/chemistry/pharma/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/esd/chemistry/pharma/index.htm)

Impacts of toxic chemicals: <http://toxics.usgs.gov/regional/emc>

### **Information on reuse, recycling, and disposal:**

Wayne County Resource Recovery Coordinator

Phone: (734) 326-3963

[www.waynecounty.com](http://www.waynecounty.com)

# *Recycling, Illegal Dumping, and City Services*

## **GreenSafe Products**

Eco-friendly dishes, food containers, cutlery, toilet paper, and more:

1331 Holden St.

Detroit, MI 48202

Phone: (313) 871-4000

Fax: (313) 871-5329

[www.MichiganGreenSafeProducts.com](http://www.MichiganGreenSafeProducts.com)

Online store: [GreenSafeStore.com](http://GreenSafeStore.com)

## **Hazardous Household Waste (HHW) Receiving Facility:**

2000 E. Ferry (near the 1-75 and 1-94 freeways)

Phone: (313) 923-2240 or (313) 976-0148

Call to schedule a time to bring materials. Services are free and for Detroit residents only.

M-F 8:30am - 3:30pm

Examples of materials accepted: poisons, solvents, heavy metals, batteries, office equipment, electronics, car equipment( batteries, brake fluid, fuel, kerosene, motor oil, filters, etc.), mercury thermometers, household cleansers and polishes, fertilizers, pesticides, weed killers, fluorescent light bulbs, and other products.

Will not accept: unknown or unlabeled wastes, commercial wastes, smoke detectors, radioactive materials, explosives, shock-sensitive materials

## *Home Water Efficiency*

Detroit has access to abundant, high-quality freshwater resources from the Great Lakes; consequently, the City has lower water and sewer rates compared to water-limited cities. Water rates are based on the amount of water that comes out of the tap and the amount of waste that goes down the drain. Although resources are abundant and cheap, reducing household water consumption can still improve the quality of life for your family.

### *Things you can do:*

- 💧 Check for leaks in your home (the average dripping faucet wastes 3,000-gallons of water per year).
  - Fixing leaky faucets and toilets can have a huge impact in reducing the cost of your water bills.
- 💧 Place a brick inside the toilet tank to reduce water use when flushing your toilet.
- 💧 Avoid letting the water run when washing dishes or brushing your teeth.
  - Every drop of water that goes down your drain adds to your water bill!
- 💧 Do only full loads of laundry or be sure to use proper washing machine settings.
  - Choosing the correct load size on your machine reduces the amount of water that would otherwise be wasted.

## *Home Water Efficiency*

- 💧 Water your lawn and garden in the early morning or evening.
  - Evaporation is greatest during the hottest part of the day making it harder for your lawn or garden to absorb water.
- 💧 Install low-flow aerators in all indoor faucets.
  - Low-flow aerators (1.5-gallons/minute) reduce water consumption without sacrificing performance, leading to an average savings of over 500-gallons per year.
- 💧 Install water-efficient low-flow showerheads (Look for the EPA's "WaterSense" label).
  - Products with the WaterSense label are 20% more water efficient than the average product in their category.
- 💧 Install a rain barrel to collect rainwater for future lawn and garden use.
- 💧 Use native plant species in outdoor landscaping.
  - Native species are better adapted to Michigan's climate and typically require less water than non-native plant species.
- 💧 Purchase a high-efficiency washing machine.
  - High-efficiency washing machines save you money by reducing water consumption, electricity, and detergent used for during each load of laundry.

# *Home Water Efficiency*

*Additional Resources:*

**General information from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Water Sense Program:**

<http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/index.html>

**How to check for and fix leaks:**

[http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/water\\_efficiency/howto.html](http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/water_efficiency/howto.html)

**Additional information on conserving water:**

**Sierra Club, Michigan Chapter**

Melissa Damaschke

Phone: (313) 965-0055

[melissa.damaschke@sierraclub.org](mailto:melissa.damaschke@sierraclub.org)

<http://michigan.sierraclub.org/index.html>

**Sierra Club Detroit Office**

2727 2nd Ave., Metropolitan Center for High Technology,  
Detroit, MI 48201

Rhonda Anderson, Environmental Justice Organizer: (313)  
965-0052

Melissa Damaschke, Great Lakes Regional Representative:  
(313) 965-0055

Michelle Martinez, Clean Energy Solutions Organizer: (313)  
974-6547

## *Home Water Efficiency*

### **Sierra Club Great Lakes Program**

2727 Second Ave, Suite 318

Detroit, MI 48201

Phone: (313) 965-0055

[sierraclubgreatlakes@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubgreatlakes@gmail.com)




[www.sierraclub.org/greatlakes](http://www.sierraclub.org/greatlakes)

[www.sierraclubgreatlakes.blogspot.com](http://www.sierraclubgreatlakes.blogspot.com)

## *Water Resource Health*

The Detroit metropolitan area has abundant freshwater resources. However, increased runoff from roofs, roads, and other impervious surfaces, is increasingly threatening the quality of these resources. Runoff from buildings and roadways can include toxic substances such as tar, gasoline, oil, and other chemicals such as phosphorus and nitrate from lawn fertilizers. During rain events, these substances are flushed downstream and create environmental problems such as algae blooms in lakes and rivers; this leads to decreased water quality that negatively affects wildlife (fish, birds, mammals).

### *Things you can do:*

-  Disconnect your home's downspouts from footing drains.
  - This reduces the amount roof runoff from directly entering storm drains and allows water to percolate through the soil naturally.
  
-  Clean up after your pets.
  - Pick up after your pets and dispose of waste properly; this reduces the amount of harmful bacteria in the environment and reduces pollution in downstream ecosystems.
  
-  Properly dispose of household chemicals.
  - Avoid putting paint and other household chemicals down the drain; this helps to reduce the amount of chemicals entering downstream ecosystems.



## *Water Resource Health*

- 💧 Properly dispose of unused or expired medications
  - Flushing pills down the drain increases the amount of chemicals entering the water supply; this increases the cost of treatment for wastewater and leads to increased water and sewer rates.
  - Traces of chemicals used in certain medications can end up in your drinking water.
- 💧 Use natural fertilizers (manure, compost).
  - Natural fertilizers are typically less expensive and free of chemicals; runoff containing these fertilizers is typically less harmful than fertilizers made from chemicals.
- 💧 Make a rain barrel and attach it to your downspout.
  - Rain barrels reduce the amount of runoff entering the storm sewer and allow you to store water for watering your garden or washing your car.
- 💧 Create a rain garden on your property
  - Rain gardens contain native plants and have deeper roots than grass; deeper roots help to reduce erosion and help to store water during rain events to reduce runoff.
  - Rain gardens are one way to add low-cost landscaping to your property.

## *Water Resource Health*

*Additional Resources:*

**Information on preserving water resources:**

**Sierra Club, Michigan Chapter**

Melissa Damaschke

Phone: (313) 965-0055

[melissa.damaschke@sierraclub.org](mailto:melissa.damaschke@sierraclub.org)

<http://michigan.sierraclub.org/index.html>

**Sierra Club Great Lakes Program**

2727 Second Ave., Suite 318

Detroit, MI 48201

Phone: (313) 965-0055

[sierraclubgratlakes@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubgratlakes@gmail.com)

[www.sierraclub.org/greatlakes](http://www.sierraclub.org/greatlakes)

[www.sierraclubgreatlakes.blogspot.com](http://www.sierraclubgreatlakes.blogspot.com)

**Wayne County Department of Environment**

[www.waynecounty.com/doe.htm](http://www.waynecounty.com/doe.htm)

## *Home Weatherization and Energy Efficiency*

The Detroit area experiences cold winters and warm to hot summers. This vast range in temperatures creates significant heating requirements for winter months and cooling requirements for summer months, resulting in costly energy bills. In addition to the natural gas and electricity used to operate home heating and cooling appliances, behaviors such as leaving the lights on when no one is in the room or leaving electrical devices (television or computer) on when no one is using them can drastically increase the cost of your energy bill. In most cases, utility- or government- based rebates can drastically reduce the economic burden of purchasing a new energy-efficient appliance or home weatherization materials.

### *Things you can do:*



Turn off lights and unplug electronic devices when not in use.



Unplug or turn off plug strips for electronic devices that are not in use.

- Some electronic devices continue to use electricity even when they are turned off; this is called “parasitic power loss” or “vampire energy.” Why pay for energy you are not using?




Avoid using the “Heated Dry” cycle on your dishwasher.

- Simply opening the door and letting the dishes air dry reduces your energy consumption.

## *Home Weatherization and Energy Efficiency*

 Check your energy bills.

- Call your utility provider if your bills are based on “estimated” charges; make sure you are paying for what you actually use rather than what the utility company estimates.

 Contact your local energy provider and ask if there are any residential home weatherization programs available in your area.

 Unblock cold-air return vents.

- This helps to reduce the amount of time the blower runs in your furnace helping to reduce your electricity consumption.

 Keep the attic door closed in winter and the front- and back door closed in summer.

- This prevents hot air from escaping through your attic in the winter months and cooler air from escaping out your front or back door in the warmer months.

 Close vents and doors in unused rooms.

- Heating unused rooms is both costly and unnecessary; closing vents and doors to unused rooms reduces the amount of space your furnace needs to heat resulting in lower energy bills.

# Home Weatherization and Energy Efficiency

 Lower your water heater temperature to 120°F.

- Keeping your water heater at this temperature does not affect the quality of your hot water. In the long run, it can save you hundreds of dollars annually.

 Caulk around windows and doors to reduce drafts.

Install weather stripping around doors and windows.


- This reduces cold drafts from entering the home and keeps heat from escaping.

 Install door sweeps on the inside-facing, bottom of all doors used to enter your home.

- This reduces cold drafts from entering the home and keeps heat from escaping.


 Insulate the pipe that feeds hot water from your water heater to your home's faucets.

- Adding insulation to the pipe reduces heat losses and reduces the energy consumed by your water heater.

 Change the air filter in your furnace approximately every three months.

- Replacing the air filter helps to increase air flow through the system and reduces the amount of energy required to run the system.

# *Home Weatherization and Energy Efficiency*

 Replace older incandescent light bulbs with newer compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).


- CFL's use 75% less energy and last 10 times longer than the average incandescent bulb.
- CFL's also produce 75% less heat resulting in lower home cooling costs.

 Install storm windows in the winter months.

- This reduces heat losses resulting in lower heating bills. You can also use a piece of corrugated card board to insulate basement windows.
- Bubble wrap can also be used to insulate windows in the winter months.

 Install a programmable thermostat.

- This type of thermostat helps to reduce temperature fluctuations within the home and can save you approximately \$180 per year in energy costs.

 Seal and insulate heating ducts to prevent heat loss.

- Insulating your ducts improves the efficiency of your furnace and reduces your furnace's energy consumption.

 Seal and insulate the area where the home meets the foundation.

- This prevents heat losses by helping to stop colder air from entering the basement.

## *Home Weatherization and Energy Efficiency*



Replace aging or broken appliances with EnergyStar-labeled appliances.

- In some cases, this can drastically reduce your energy consumption resulting in huge savings.

### *Additional Resources:*

**For information on home weatherization, free energy audits, and free weatherization kits:**

#### **WARM Training Center**

4835 Michigan Avenue

Detroit, MI 48210

Phone: (313) 894-1030

[www.warmtraining.org](http://www.warmtraining.org)

#### **DTE Energy**

Phone: (866) 796-0512

<http://www.dteenergy.com/residentialCustomers/saveEnergy/rebates/homeAudit/resEnergyAudit.html>

#### **City of Detroit Human Services Department**

5031 Grandy

Detroit, MI 48211

General Number: (313) 852-5609




General Fax: (313) 852-4837

TTY: 311 or (313) 224-INFO (4636)

## *Human Health and the Environment*

Lack of access to grocery stores is a common problem for most Detroit residents. Many residents, especially those living in poverty, are forced to purchase their groceries from corner convenience stores or gas stations. Typically, these stores have limited offerings of fresh fruits or vegetables. This lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables is one of the factors that contribute to high rates of obesity and diseases such as diabetes.

### *Things you can do:*

-  Exercise at least 30-minutes per day.
  - Go for a walk, run or bike ride if physically possible; this can lead to weight loss and may reduce the risk of certain diseases.
  
-  Participate in or start a community garden.
  - This increases communication between community residents and provides educational opportunities for children (positive interactions between community residents can improve the stability and security of a community).
  
-  Purchase food that has been produced locally (Look for the “Made in Michigan” logo or visit a local urban farm).
  - Purchase food grown locally; it keeps your money in the local economy and helps to create jobs and build stronger communities.



# *Human Health and the Environment*

 Plant your own vegetable garden.

- Grow your own food; it increases your access to fresh vegetables and allows you to take control of your diet (5-7 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables per day are recommended).

## *Additional Resources:*

**For information on gardening and community gardens:**

**Capuchin Soup Kitchen Earthworks Urban Farm**

1264 Meldrum

Detroit, MI 48207

Phone: (313) 579-2100 x 204

[earthworks@cskdetroit.org](mailto:earthworks@cskdetroit.org)

[www.cskdetroit.org/earthworks](http://www.cskdetroit.org/earthworks)

## **Garden Resource Program**

Lindsay Turpin

Phone: (313) 285-1249

[Lindsay\\_detroitagriculture@yahoo.com](mailto:Lindsay_detroitagriculture@yahoo.com)

[www.detroitagriculture.org](http://www.detroitagriculture.org)

Youth Volunteering: (313) 579-2100 x 200 (ask for Kad)

# *Human Health and the Environment*

**For information and volunteering for tree planting in  
Detroit:**

## **Greening of Detroit**

1418 Michigan Ave.

Detroit, MI 48216

Phone: (313) 237-8733

Fax: (313) 237-8737

[info@greeningofdetroit.com](mailto:info@greeningofdetroit.com)

[www.greeningofdetroit.com](http://www.greeningofdetroit.com)

## *Additional Resources*

### **Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice**

4750 Woodward Ave.

Detroit, MI 48201

Phone: (313) 833-3935

Fax: (313) 833-3955

[www.dwej.org](http://www.dwej.org)

**Wayne County Environmental Hotline:** (888) 223-2363

### **City of Detroit Department of Public Works**

Solid Waste, Environmental Enforcement, Street Maintenance,  
City Engineering, Traffic engineering,

Phone: 311 or (313) 224-INFO (4636)

[www.detroitmi.gov](http://www.detroitmi.gov)

### **Wayne County Department of Public Services**

Land Resource Management Division

3600 Commerce Court, Bldg. E

Wayne, MI 48184

Phone: (734) 326-3963

[www.waynecounty.com](http://www.waynecounty.com)

Facilities Management Division Director: (313) 224-7679

Water Quality Management Division

415 Clifford St

Detroit, MI 48226

Direct calls to Environmental Hotline, (888) 223-2363