

In This Issue

1. [Happy Earth Month!](#)
2. [Drawdown EcoChallenge](#)
3. [Waterway Cleanups Help Beautify Fitchburg](#)
4. [Senior Center Reusable Bag Events](#)
5. [Street Sweeper Artwork Contest](#)
6. [Apply to Join the Resource Conservation Commission](#)
7. [What Size Is Your Footprint?](#)
8. [Additional April Observances](#)
9. [Upcoming Events](#)

Happy Earth Month!

<https://www.earthday.org/>



April is here, the annual celebration of Earth Day and Earth Month, when we try to focus awareness on our connection to the planet and how our decisions and actions impact its resources and all those who depend on them. Wisconsin has a particularly special connection to Earth Day, as our own former Governor and Senator, Gaylord Nelson, was instrumental in the creation of the first Earth Day, a teach-in conducted across the country in 1970.

Every year EarthDay.org sets a different theme for that year, and for 2021 the theme is “[Restore Our Earth](#),” with three days of online sessions and activities from April 20-22, culminating in its

Earth Day Live virtual event on the 22nd. Check out the website for information on groups to join, pledges to take, stories to read, and events happening near you.

The University of Wisconsin’s Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies also hosts an Earth Day Conference every year with numerous speakers and sessions. Like last year, the 2021 Nelson Institute Earth Day Conference will be a free online conference you can register for at the [Nelson Institute website](#). This year’s theme is “Nature at Work: Inspiring Just Responses for an Unruly World.”

However you do it, hopefully you take time this month to celebrate Earth Day and Earth Month in a way that you find meaningful, and that maintains a spark for your connection with the world.



Drawdown EcoChallenge

<https://earthmonth.ecochallenge.org/>

EcoChallenge.org is a website that hosts various eco-themed competitions, inviting individuals and teams to learn about and practice behavior changes that can have positive environmental impacts locally and more broadly. By pledging to take actions, explore online resources, and engage others in discussions, participants learn more about important issues and can work on creating new habits that reduce their environmental footprint.

This year for Earth Month, EcoChallenge.org is hosting a competition based on the proposals laid out in “[Drawdown](#),” a guide filled with recommendations for what we can do to forestall the worst projected impacts of global climate change. By participating in the challenge, you are invited to set actions you can take in your life to reduce your climate-related impacts from transportation, shopping, food, and more, marking your completed actions and tracking your impact throughout the month of April. As we’re not yet halfway through the month, you still have plenty of time to register, either alone or as a team, and see how great an impact your actions can have!



Waterway Cleanups Help Beautify Fitchburg

<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/2634/Waterway-Cleanups>

From Claudia Guy, City of Fitchburg Environmental Engineer

Thank you to the Resource Conservation Commission and volunteers who made the Waterway Cleanups this past weekend a huge success! We had a record turnout and were able to pick up countless bags of litter from Fitchburg waterways near Yarmouth Greenway, Swan Creek, Quarry Hill, and Dunn’s Marsh. We found a lot of the “usual suspects” including bottles, cans, plastic bags, and bubble wrap. Some of the more interesting finds included a submerged bike and headlights at Yarmouth, a soccer ball and baseballs at Quarry Hill, an old TV at Swan Creek, and a tire at Dunn’s Marsh!

If you’d like to help beautify our waterways at future Waterway Cleanups, we encourage you to sign up for the City’s “Waterway Cleanup” [Notify Me](#) list, so you can be the first to know about future volunteer opportunities!

See the FACTv video of this year’s waterway cleanups event at <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=503123677510265>

Senior Center Reusable Bag Events

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/621/Senior-Center>

This month Fitchburg’s Senior Center is the focus of two reusable-bag events:

- Drop off paper and plastic bags for recycling at the Senior Center, and have your name entered into a drawing to win one of 10 reusable bags from HyVee.
- Through the month of April, when you purchase a \$2.50 reusable bag from HyVee, \$1.00 of your purchase will go to the Friends of the Fitchburg Senior Center.

The Friends of the Fitchburg Senior Center

has been selected for the
HY-VEE REUSABLE BAG PROGRAM!

HyVee
EMPLOYEE OWNED



**HOW DOES
IT WORK?**

When you buy the \$2.50 red
My Heart Reusable Bag
during the month of APRIL,
we will receive a \$1 donation.

Plastic & Paper Bag Drop-off

When: Entire Month of April
Where: Senior Center (barrel lower level vestibule)
Time: 24/7

Drop off plastic/paper bags & enter your name
to win a reusable bag from HyVee!
(10 winners!)



Street Sweeper Artwork Contest

<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/2690/Street-Sweeper-Contest>

Did you know that by keeping our streets clean, we can prevent harmful pollutants such as litter, leaves, and dirt from entering our local waterbodies? In the urban area, water that flows onto our streets is collected in an underground system of pipes known as the “storm sewer system.” Unlike our sanitary sewer system, water that flows through the storm sewer system does not go to a treatment plant before entering our local waterbodies.

This year, the City is purchasing a new street sweeper. This will double our street sweeper fleet from one to two sweepers. To celebrate, we are asking Fitchburg students (grades K-12) to submit original artwork for consideration to be displayed on the side of the new sweeper (see the image below for inspiration from Marietta, Georgia). The drawings should focus on how our street sweepers keep our waterbodies clean. Artwork will be redrawn by an artist so that it is high enough quality to display on the street sweeper.



Apply to Join the Resource Conservation Commission

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/618/Resource-Conservation-Commission>

The Resource Conservation Commission is tasked with advising City of Fitchburg staff on policies, programs, and communications related to stormwater management, solid waste and recycling, erosion control, energy efficiency, and natural resource and environmental preservation. Beginning this May, the RCC has an opening for a citizen member; if you are interested in being considered for a mayoral appointment to this commission, see the list of criteria and submit your application at <https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/799/Boards-Commissions>.



What Size Is Your Footprint?

<https://www.footprintcalculator.org/>

The concept of an environmental “footprint” has been around for several decades now, and online tools allow you to calculate everything from your personal water, carbon, or ecological footprint, to that of your home or even your business. While calculations vary from one specific calculator to the next, and different tools may



elicit very different feelings when you see your results, the common theme across all these calculators is estimating our impact on the earth and looking for changes we can make—either individually or as communities—to reduce our demand for resources.

Central to the idea of an ecological footprint, is the understanding that the Earth’s resources are not infinite, and a human population nearly 8 billion strong (and still growing) has placed a tremendous strain on those resources, a strain likely to increase as we seek to lift up impoverished communities so that everyone’s basic needs are met and services made more accessible. By calculating your footprint, you can gain an idea of how many planets it would take for all people to live the way you do, or of how much greater (or less) is your demand for resources than the average person.

This Earth Month is a great time to either explore a footprint calculator for the first time, or to revisit one and see how your results compare to previous exercises. Most of us have multiple ways (some easier, some harder) we can reduce our impact on the Earth, and these calculators are a great way to explore those opportunities. Click any logo below to start!

Carbon Footprint Calculators:



CoolClimate Network
Smart Tools for a Cooler Planet



Water Footprint Calculators:



Ecological Footprint Calculator:



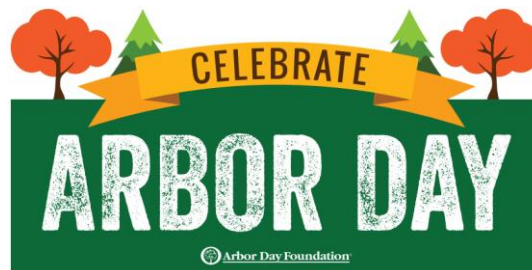
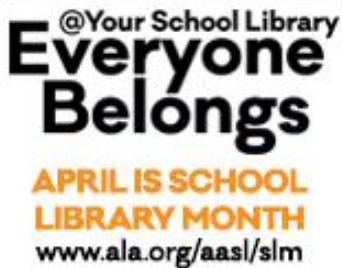
Additional April Observances



April 17-25



Friday April 30, 2021



Upcoming Events

Sustain Dane Earth Month Cleanup with Ian's Pizza

Join us at Garver Feed Mill for a physically distanced urban cleanup Saturday, April 17 (or participate remotely). We are partnering with Ian's Pizza to celebrate Earth Month 2021 with the Sustain Dane Community. Ian's is generously offering a free pizza slice for your hard work!

Sat. April 17, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/earth-month-clean-up-tickets-145963457631>

Earth Day EV Parade

Dane County has more electric vehicles on the road than any other county in Wisconsin. The Earth Day EV Parade, hosted by the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change, is an opportunity for EV owners--individuals as well as businesses--to show off their EVs.

Thursday April 22, 1:30 pm

<https://daneclimateaction.org/initiatives/Electric-Vehicles#EVParade>

Sustain Dane Master Recycling Courses

Take part in Sustain Dane's new Master Recycler course, by attending two 90-minute online sessions and then conducting an educational/outreach project that applies what you learned. Two more sessions are planned for July, and registration is free for Sustain Dane members or \$15 for members of the public (full and partial scholarships are available).

Tuesdays July 13 and 20, 6:30–8:00 pm

<https://sustaindane.org/sustain-dane-programs/#masterrecycler>

Earth Day Virtual Scavenger Hunt

This Earth Day, join a virtual scavenger hunt to support climate action and environmental justice initiatives across the state of Wisconsin. Play with family, friends, or alone, completing missions and answering trivia questions to climb the leaderboard!

April 22-25

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wisconsin-earth-day-virtual-scavenger-hunt-tickets-145993858561>

Share the News

Tell your friends to subscribe to Green Fitchburg on the city website
<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx> > Green Fitchburg

- a. Visit Fitchburg's "Notify Me®" web page:
<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx>
- b. Type your email address in the box and select "Sign In"
- c. To receive text messages enter your phone number and select "Save"
- d. Click (to subscribe/unsubscribe to emails) and/or (to subscribe/unsubscribe) next to the lists to which you wish to subscribe / unsubscribe (e.g. "Green Fitchburg" is the mailing list for environmentally friendly suggestions or events)

Please contact Phil Grupe, Sustainability Specialist, at phil.grupe@fitchburgwi.gov or 270-4259, if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions for future Green E-News topics.

