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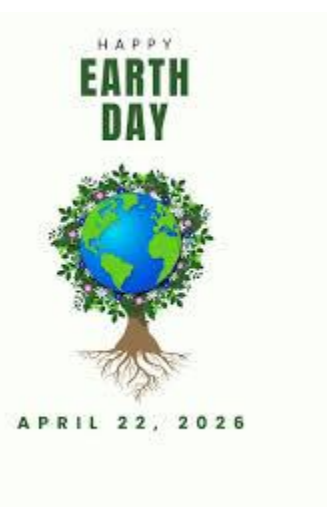
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Earth Day 2026: Our Power, Our Planet

<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2026/>

This April 22 marks the 56th annual Earth Day, and this year's theme — "Our Power, Our Planet" — is a call to accelerate the global transition to renewable energy. The organizing message is simple: the power to protect the planet is already in our hands, in the energy choices made by individuals, businesses, and governments every day. It's a fitting theme for a moment when clean energy tech is more accessible and affordable than it has ever been.

What makes this theme especially resonant here in Wisconsin is how much of the environmental movement's DNA traces back to this state. John Muir, who grew up on a farm near Portage, went on to become the father of the national park system and one of the most influential conservationists in American history. Aldo Leopold, who spent decades at UW-Madison, essentially invented the field of wildlife ecology and gave us the enduring idea of a "land ethic" — the notion that humans are members of, not masters over, the natural community. And it was Wisconsin's own Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator and former governor who studied and taught at UW-Madison, who co-founded Earth Day itself in 1970.



That legacy belongs to all of us who live in this region. One way to honor it: look at your own energy sources. Contact your utility to ask about green energy options, explore whether your home is a candidate for solar, and look into Focus on Energy rebates ([focusonenergy.com](https://www.focusonenergy.com)) that can offset the cost of efficiency upgrades. Our Power, Our Planet starts here.

Café Con Energía

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cafe-con-energia-tickets-1983790412526>

¡FOCUS ON ENERGY® Y MG&E los invita a CAFÉ CON ENERGIA! es una breve reunión matutina creada para apoyar a nuestra comunidad latina, ofreciendo un espacio seguro y acogedor para hablar sobre energía, hacer preguntas y aprender a ahorrar dinero, ahorrar energía y vivir con mayor comodidad. Los participantes disfrutarán de café, pasteles y una charla amena sobre pasos sencillos para mejorar la comodidad y la eficiencia del hogar, así como sobre los recursos para reducir el costo de las mejoras energéticas.

Si bien los inquilinos son bienvenidos, los propietarios se beneficiarán especialmente al conocer los programas de Focus on Energy para ahorrar energía.

1 de abril de 2026, 7:30–9 a.m.

FOCUS ON ENERGY® and MG&E invite you to Coffee with Energy! A brief morning meet and greet created to support OUR Latino community by offering a safe, welcoming space to talk about energy, ask questions, and learn how to save money, save energy, and live more comfortably.

Participants will enjoy coffee, pastries, and a friendly conversation about simple steps to improve home comfort and efficiency and resources to lower the cost of home energy upgrades. While renters are welcome to attend, homeowners will especially benefit in learning about Focus on Energy programs to save money on energy.

April 1, 2026 from 7:30-9 a.m.



Fitchburg Spring Recycling/Shred Event: April 11, 8am-11am

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/2717/Recycling-Day-Event>

Spring is a perfect time to clear out the closets and tackle the items that can't just go in the curbside bin — and Fitchburg is making it easy. The City's Spring Recycling Day Event is Saturday, April 11 from 8am to 11am at the City Hall Campus (5520 Lacy Road) and will include confidential paper shredding and electronics recycling.



Many electronics can be recycled at no cost, though items like TVs and microwaves will be recycled for a fee — check the event flyer on the city website for the full list of items with charges. For paper shredding, this is your chance to responsibly dispose of old tax records, financial statements, and other sensitive documents without worrying about identity theft. If you can't make the event but need to shred documents in the meantime, you can shred at home, place the shreds in a clear plastic bag, and put them in your curbside recycling cart — the clear bag is essential, since loose shredded paper is too small to be properly sorted at the recycling facility and will otherwise end up in the landfill.

This free community event is a great opportunity to responsibly retire old laptops, printers, phones, and monitors rather than letting them collect dust or, worse, end up in the trash. Check Fitchburg's [Recycling Event page](#) for the full flyer and fee schedule.

Spring Waterway Cleanups: April 18

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

Help keep our waterways in Fitchburg clean by volunteering for the annual Earth Month waterway cleanups, held around Fitchburg on Saturday, April 18 from 9am-11am. Go to the [Waterway Cleanups page](#) on Fitchburg's website and choose a location that works for you, then simply show up on that day, prepared based on the "preparation tips" on the page (and summarized below), and join in our efforts to reduce litter and keep our waterways clean!



Volunteers will be provided gloves, a safety vest, and bags for collecting trash and recyclables. Please wear sturdy shoes/boots, long pants, and work gloves if you have them; depending on the weather, also consider a hat, sunglasses, a rain jacket, and maybe bug spray. If you have a trash grabber, feel free to bring that as well!

Bilingual Conservation Fair / Día de la Tierra — April 18, 12pm-4pm

<https://www.wisconsincolatinos.org/bilingual-conservation-earth-day>

One of the most joyful Earth Day events in the area brings together environmental education, community, culture, and celebration all in one place. The Bilingual Conservation Fair — Día de la Tierra — hosted by Wisconsin EcoLatinos, takes place Saturday, April 18 from noon to 4pm at Hosto Hoci at 2220 Traceway Drive. The event features connections to resources on environmental conservation, sustainability, renewable energy, electric vehicles, and the health impacts of pollution, alongside music, free tree saplings, and raffles for water filters and kites.

The fair was created to address gaps in environmental education and engagement within Latino and underserved communities in Dane County, with three core goals: increasing access to bilingual, culturally relevant environmental education; strengthening community connections by bringing together approximately 30 local environmental organizations; and celebrating culture while advancing environmental justice by integrating music, dance, food, and art into the experience.

This is a family-friendly, fully bilingual (Spanish-English) event open to everyone in the community. Whether you're looking to connect with local environmental organizations, pick up a free tree sapling for your yard, or simply enjoy an afternoon of music and community, it's well worth the trip. Learn more at [wisconsincolatinos.org](https://www.wisconsincolatinos.org).



RoundTrip Spring Roll Challenge

<https://downtownmadison.org/the-roundtrip-spring-roll-challenge-2026/>

This April 1-30, RoundTrip Greater Madison will host its third annual Spring Roll Challenge celebrating green trips for Earth Month! The Spring Roll Challenge is free and open to everyone ages 18+ in Dane County. This year's goal is to reach 10,000 sustainable trips in Dane County during Earth Month.

To participate, [register with the RoundTrip program](#) and log your trips by bike, bus, carpool, walking & rolling throughout the month for chances to win 35+ weekly and grand prize drawings. Prize sponsors include Ian's Pizza, Willy Street Co-op, Forage Kitchen, Madison BCycle, and The Soap Opera.



Trips for work, school, errands and entertainment all count—anything you might otherwise drive alone but can swap for something greener. You'll save money, feel great, and make a difference in Dane County!

Learn more at bit.ly/SpringRoll2026.

Sustain Dane Accelerate Sustainability Workshop

<https://sustaindane.org/accelerate-sustainability-workshop/>

If your workplace or organization has been wanting to make real progress on sustainability but isn't sure where to start — or how to make the case to leadership — this workshop is built for exactly that moment. Sustain Dane's Accelerate Sustainability Workshop is a half-day professional development gathering designed to connect participants to the tools, people, and case studies needed to prioritize and act on sustainability. The 2026 workshop takes place Friday, April 17.



Topics covered include how to communicate sustainability in ways that resonate with leadership during a time of shifting priorities, local business case studies featuring implemented initiatives in energy efficiency, renewables, food, and alternative transportation, and strategies for building an internal sustainability team — including framing the work within Dane County's Climate Action Plan. Networking with peers working toward similar goals in the county is also a key part of the day.

Register at sustaindane.org/accelerate-sustainability-workshop — and consider bringing a colleague so the momentum continues after the workshop ends.

EarthFest at UW Madison

<https://earthfest.wisc.edu/>

Every April, UW-Madison transforms into one of the region's richest spaces for environmental learning, connection, and community — and this year's Earth Fest will be no different. Earth Fest 2026 runs April 17–23, organized by the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies and the UW Office of Sustainability. Events are free and open to students, alumni, faculty, and members of the broader community — meaning anyone curious and willing to make the trip to campus.

Highlights include Climate Games Day on April 17, where participants can play environment-focused games like Catan: New Energies and Daybreak; a talk on April 20 by MIT's Kate Brown on how urban gardeners are reclaiming vacant spaces; and a Water@UW Symposium



on April 22 — Earth Day itself — exploring how emerging technologies and policy are shaping the future of water systems. The centerpiece Earth Fest Forum on April 21 features a keynote by environmental educator Isaias Hernandez, along with an exhibit hall with art and T-shirt printing.

This week-long festival is a wonderful reminder that Wisconsin's tradition of environmental stewardship — from Muir and Leopold to Gaylord Nelson — is alive and thriving right here. Check the full schedule at earthfest.wisc.edu and make your plans to join now!



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Please contact Phil Grupe, Sustainability Specialist, at phil.grupe@fitchburgwi.gov or (608) 270-4259, if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions for future Green E-News topics.

