



EARTHWAYS CENTER

a division of the  MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

We promote sustainability through environmental education and improving the built environment.

Vol. 4, No. 1 – Winter 2009

Greetings! This year we celebrate the [Garden's 150th Anniversary!](#) We're so pleased that MBG continues to lead much of the sustainability efforts in the region. Join us in celebrating this fabulous time - Missouri Botanical Garden – green for **150** years!

2009 is already shaping up to be a year in which we provide the community with unprecedented knowledge-based opportunities ranging from residential tax credit & home building updates to teacher professional development & eco-friendly field trips.

We understand homeowners are facing economical challenges so we highlight low to no-cost weatherization programs and new tax credits and incentives related to energy efficiency. And with the huge popularity of classes like Home Plate: Backyard Chickens, we clearly see that the public is hungry for more hands-on learning experiences and behind-the-scenes tours. We plan to deliver. We hope you enjoy our 1st quarter eNews and would enjoy hearing your feedback. – EWC Staff

EarthWays Provides Sustainability Education

EWC's education programs explore sustainability through the investigation of energy efficiency and conservation, renewable energy sources, solid waste reduction and recycling, green building, water conservation and air quality.



*"Let's Go Out to Dinner and See a Farm" field trip features pizza from home-grown veggies.
Photo: Hope Breidenbach*

EarthWays announces 2009 classes, field trips, summer camps

The EarthWays team loves to share practical skills for sustainable living. Come learn with us in 2009! Adult evening classes cover how-to topics that range from building high-performance into your home to harvesting rainwater to "putting up" your garden harvest for great eating year-round. Our "**Sustainability 101**" discussion forum series continues, exploring emerging technologies for using renewable energy, community-wide compost collection, plus other red-hot and eco-minded ideas. Our popular "**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**" series helps you aim for zero-waste living through composting and mingling recycling with art. **Five field trip choices** will showcase local waste-handling and energy-generating facilities plus an urban farm.

New learning-intensive options: **hands-on building of an actual house using ancient cordwood construction techniques**, and two weeks of **Camp EarthWays-Young Green Builders**, featuring an advanced "Green Dream Home" project and career exploration for returning campers.

There is much more! For complete class listings and registration, [click here](#).



Two teachers cooperate during a science related exercise. Photo: Tracie Cain

Calling all Teachers!

Investigate Green Schools: Thanks to funding from the **US EPA**, the EarthWays Center is now recruiting educators and their students to take part in an opportunity during either the spring or fall 2009 semester to promote healthier learning environments. During the *Investigate Green Schools* program, students and teachers will participate in hands-on activities to study energy and energy consumption at their schools and then become **Green School Ambassadors** to promote district-wide adoption of energy-efficient policies and upgrades.

The Power of Energy: The **Missouri Botanical Garden** has partnered with **Webster University** to offer a new credit course in June 2009 focusing on energy production and usage in the Midwest. This Master's-level course, primarily targeted to current and pre-service teachers, will have an online component as well as a week-long **Energy Institute** incorporating field trips throughout Missouri and Illinois

to power generation facilities using nuclear, water, wind, biomass, coal, petroleum, and methane. Final work for the class will include an action plan project for school or home. The week long field trip will also be available as a noncredit option for community educators.

To learn more about how you can be involved in either of these programs, contact Kim Petzing at (314) 577-0281 or email at kim.petzing@mobot.org.

EarthWays Improves the Built Environment



Solar panels power EarthWays Center's kitchen appliances and outdoor lighting. Photo: Dale Dufer

EWC programs focus on improving all aspects of our living and working environments. EWC is home to the USGBC – St. Louis Regional Chapter.

St. Louis Area Energy Incentives for 2009

St. Louis area homeowners can now use a variety of tax credit and rebate options to boost home energy efficiency, family comfort – cut costs and protect the planet!

Options are provided through Missouri and Illinois state agencies, federal legislation and utility company programs. Though by no means comprehensive as yet, our region's incentives are important first steps to help residents save energy and money, address climate-change and related energy security issues by cutting energy consumption, and convert to renewable energy sources from costly and limited fossil fuels.

We believe making buildings energy efficient makes sound fiscal and environmental sense. Even more in these tight economic times. Incentives help make these efforts immediate, doable and even more impactful. Protecting our economic and environmental future through energy conservation should be a priority.

[Click here](#) and bookmark for incentive details and updates.

Save the date!

[Green Homes & Renewable Energy Festival](#) SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2009

Upcoming Programs - Adult Classes and Field Trips at EarthWays Center



Arrows denote air leaking into or out of a house. Image: U.S. EPA

Cashing In on Home Comfort

Tuesday, February 17 or Thursday, March 19 · 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Make your existing home energy efficient, healthy, and comfortable! We'll discuss simple changes and the benefits of a whole-house energy assessment. Covers Greater St. Louis Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program.

(previously called *Improving Energy & Comfort at Home*)

Instructor: Korey Hart & Glenda Abney / **Fee:** \$12 MBG member, \$15 nonmember (pizza and drinks provided), *Program is offered multiple times, attend one.*

Planning Your New Green Home – No “Greenwashing” Allowed!

Thursday, March 26 · 5:30 to 9 p.m.

Leave this class an informed consumer of nationally-established rating systems, ready to apply eco-logic to your planning & construction processes while avoiding unsubstantiated claims. Includes print resources covering homebuilding elements.

Instructor: Jean Ponzi / **Fee:** \$16 MBG member, \$20 nonmember (pizza and drinks provided)

Sustainability 101: Water Conservation – Even with Spring Rains

Wednesday, February 11 · 6 to 8 p.m.

Conservation and efficiency aren't associated only with energy – we need to conserve water, too. Even with spring rains some areas struggle to have enough drinking/cooking water, much less water for lawns and pools.

Instructor: Jean Ponzi / **Fee:** \$12 MBG member, \$15 nonmember

Sustainability 101: Green Bins in St. Louis?

Wednesday, March 11 · 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Join local composting & recycling experts as we discuss if a “Green Bin” program of curbside pickup of food scraps alongside recyclables is possible in St. Louis.

Instructor: Katy Mike Smaistrila and guest speakers / **Fee:** FREE!



Driving compactors flatten trash dumped in a local landfill. Photo: Robert Longyear



Using EWC's outdoor bins and kitchen worm bin to demonstrate composting options.
Photo: Dale Dufer

Field Trip: Where Is "Away"- Leaving for the Landfill

Saturday, March 28 · 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Take this popular adult outing to see where it actually goes when you throw your trash "away." We'll tour a local landfill and see one of the biggest compost heaps in town.

Instructor: Katy Mike Smaistrila / **Fee:** \$12 MBG member, \$15 nonmember (morning munchies provided)

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!: Composting Completely

Saturday, March 28 or Saturday, April 11 · 1 to 3:30 p.m.

We begin with the first step: picking a composting bin that works for you by discussing the basics. Each participant will leave with a simple outdoor bin to begin composting right away.

Instructor: Katy Mike Smaistrila and Hwei-Yiing Johnson, Lincoln University Cooperative Extension / **Fee:** \$24 MBG member, \$30 nonmember
Program is offered twice, attend one.



What does a high-performance certified-green home look? Like any handsome new home!
Photo: Applied Energy Systems

Field Trip: Small-Scale Renewable Energy Systems

Saturday, April 4 · 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

See local installations of solar and wind power and talk with building owners about the capability and maintenance needs of their systems.

Instructor: Jean Ponzi / **Fee:** \$12 MBG member, \$15 nonmember

Sustainability 101: Hot Topics and Trends / Tuesday, April 7 · 6 to 8 p.m.

Participants in this quarterly class will discuss sustainability updates with legislation, businesses, new benefits for homeowners & communities, national trends and more. Come prepared to share!

Instructor: Glenda Abney / **Fee:** \$12 MBG member, \$15 nonmember

What Makes a Home Green? / Thursday, April 9 · 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Overview of sustainable homebuilding and improvement options will focus on integrating high performance building elements and balancing the "triple bottom line" of people-planet-profit. Brief introduction to green home certification systems.

Instructor: Jean Ponzi / **Fee:** \$12 MBG member, \$15 nonmember

How to Register: [Download a registration form](#), call (314) 577-0220 or email earthways.center@mobot.org to register.

Reservations required! All classes listed above will take place at the EarthWays Center located at 3617 Grandel Square, St. Louis. Field trips will meet at EWC then carpool. Parking is on the street at meters, bring some quarters. For information on all of our youth/adult classes visit our [website](#).

Featured Organizations

Renters and Homeowners: Low to no-cost weatherization programs for STL City and County residents!



Assistance for St. Louis City Residents: The **Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc.** offers free Weatherization Assistance to qualifying city residents at 150% of the poverty level or below. Once an application is approved workers perform an energy audit of the property to determine the most cost effective measures to bring the largest energy savings. Two main areas of the review are infiltration and combustion systems.

Next a scope of work is designed to assign the work to contractors. Work may include insulation or a new furnace but is determined by the audit. Once work is completed staff inspects and test improvements to make sure the work was completed properly.

Interested parties may apply by calling April Reid at (314) 615-3600 to request an application. Click [here](#) to visit their website.



Assistance for St. Louis County Residents: The **Community Action Agency of St. Louis County, Inc.** (CAASTLC, Inc.) is part of a national network of federally funded Community Action Agencies (CAA's) created by the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. CAA's administer various programs to assist low-income people out of poverty conditions.

The CAASTLC Weatherization Assistance Program is designed to reduce the impact of high home energy costs for low-income residents by implementing energy-efficient measures that may include reducing air infiltration, installing insulation, heating system replacement, water heater upgrade and minimal building envelope repairs.

Homes are prioritized for service based on winter energy consumption, elderly or disabled household members and other factors. Nationally, CAA's assist more than 11 million people toward self-sufficiency. Contact CAASTLC at (314) 863-0015 or visit their [website](#).

Funding for both Urban League and CAASTLC weatherization programs is financed by the **US Department of Energy** and also supported by **AmerenUE** and **Laclede Gas**.

EarthWays Center Volunteer Opportunities



Volunteer Anthony Tainter begins a tour in the living room of the EarthWays home to get people engaged in "How To's" for their own home.
Photo: EWC Staff

EarthWays Center Seeks Volunteers to Learn and Teach GREEN

Think you're green? Spread your Eco-centric attitude & enthusiasm! This is a wonderful way to become even more knowledgeable about sustainable living – and to spread the good green word!

We have opportunities for volunteers to help with tours and special events on a monthly basis. The only requirement is a minimum of four hours of your time every three months - we'll teach you the rest! We need help during the week, on weekends and an occasional evening.

An EarthWays shirt and name badge will be provided for regular volunteers when one-day training is completed. Come help make a difference!

Currently, we are taking volunteer applications for all times, but have a special need for several individuals, including:

- Weekday tour guides
- Public Tour Weekend tour guides and hosts
- Performers to develop our "Detox Your Domicile" troupe

Contact Information: If you think you might like to lend a hand, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Katy Mike Smaistrila, at katymike.smaistrila@mobot.org or (314) 577-0207 for more information and to sign-up as a volunteer.

EarthWays Center Public Tours



3rd Saturday & Sunday each month / 11 a.m. • Noon • 1 p.m. • 2 p.m.

Upcoming tour weekends: February 21-22 • March 21-22 • April 18-19

Admission: \$3 per person. Missouri Botanical Garden Members and Children age 12 & under Free. No reservations or advance ticket purchase needed for public tour weekends.

For more information on the EarthWays Home Public Tour Days and examples of things you can see here go to: [EarthWays Home Public Tour Days](#)

Note: This historic building is not wheelchair accessible. EarthWays Center is located in the Grand Center arts district of midtown St. Louis, not on the grounds of Missouri Botanical Garden. For a map to EWC, [click here](#). For directions during the I-64/Hwy 40 reconstruction, visit www.thenewi64.org.

EarthWays Center - 3617 Grandel Square - St. Louis, MO 63108 - (314) 577-0220

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