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## April 2024 Newsletter

*[Sustain Dane](#) is the sustainability organization of Dane County. [Join us](#) and get involved in accelerating community well-being.*



### *Farmers Market Food Scrap Drop-Off Program*

We're happy to announce the return of our free [Food Scraps Drop-Off program](#). Over the past two years, this program has composted over 30,000 pounds. Join us this season!

According to the Wisconsin DNR, our landfills consist of 14.5% food that would be traditionally edible, and 6% "food scraps" (like peels). Take action and bring your food scraps to one of our farmers' market drop-off sites:

- [East Madison Market](#)
  - Start Day: Today! Tuesday, April 30

- When: Tuesdays, 4:00 PM -7:00 PM
- Where: McPike Park (202 S. Ingersoll St. Madison)
- [South Madison Market](#)
  - Start Day: Tuesday, May 21
  - When: Tuesdays, 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
  - Where: Madison Labor Temple (1602 S Park St. Madison)
- A third-weekend market location will be added this summer. Stay tuned!

This free program is in partnership with the City of Madison and Neighborhood Food Solutions. Learn more about what materials are accepted [here](#).

[Learn More](#)

# Welcome New Members!

 Agrace

 Agrace Thrift Store



Overture  
CENTER

 Toril Livingston-Jha

MIDVALE  
COMMUNITY  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

+ 4 new individual members

**SUSTAIN DANE MEMBERSHIP**

*New Member Recognition*

We are excited to welcome our newest members to the Sustain Dane community:

- [Agrace Thrift Store](#)
- [Overture Center](#)
- [TLJ Coaching and Consulting](#)
- [Midvale Community Church Lutheran Church](#)
- +4 individual members

We appreciate all of our members and the work they do to move sustainability forward in our community. [Support](#) local organizations and businesses that value sustainability.

Interested in becoming a member? [Learn more and sign up online.](#) Members receive complimentary access to Sustain Dane programs and other benefits.



### *5/17 Recycle Better*

Join us next month for the first in-person offering of our award-winning [Recycle Better](#) program. This program will give you the tools you need to teach your family, neighbors, friends, and coworkers how to improve recycling and community sustainability.

When: Friday, May 17, 8:30 AM-12:00 PM

Where: StartingBlock Madison (821 E Washington Ave, Madison)

Participants will learn:

- What makes recycling work and why we do it
- Local recycling facts and tips
- Recycling challenges
- How to reduce landfill waste and low-waste living

If you can't attend this session, we will also have a virtual session in two parts on the evenings of July 11 and 18. Register for the in-person session [here](#) and the virtual program [here](#).

**Register**



## **April Sustainable Breakfast Series**

### **Fashion with a Purpose**

#### *4/23 Sustainable Breakfast Series: Fashion with a Purpose*

Clothing is essential to our lives; it provides an outlet to express yourself, increases self-confidence, and helps meet basic needs. We also acknowledge that fashion requires materials for fabrics, labor to make it, and transportation for shipping. Fashion is responsible for 10% of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and uses more energy than the aviation and shipping sectors combined. A garbage truck of our discarded clothing is dumped in a landfill or incinerated every second. Our [April Sustainable Breakfast Series](#) on fashion provided solutions to reducing this impact.

We all wear clothes and can dress to impress Mother Nature with some of the following considerations:



- 1. Conscious Buying-** Choose high-quality garments made of lower-impact materials. Consider vintage, clothing swaps, and used options before buying new clothing.
- 2. Maintenance-** Increase clothing longevity by washing less often, on a delicate cycle, and in cool water. Mend clothes when possible and wear until they are worn out.
- 3. Responsible Disposal-** Sell online, gift to friends/family or donate clothes to resale shops. Clothing should not be put into the at-home recycling cart.

Thank you to our wonderful speakers: Carolyn Pieper Benforado ([The Sewing Project](#)), Robert Behnke ([Fair Indigo](#)), Julie Bennett ([St. Vincent de Paul — Madison](#)), and Marianne Fairbanks ([UW School of Human Ecology](#) & [Wisconsin Hemp by Hand](#)).

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### *We're Hiring Compost Interns*

Join our dynamic team! Working with Sustain Dane is a meaningful opportunity to grow professionally and support holistic sustainability. We are hiring for multiple part-time LTE [Compost Intern](#) positions.

Compost Interns will assist with operations related to collecting, weighing, tracking, and sorting food scraps from community members at a free [farmers' market food scrap drop-off](#) stand.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis starting Tuesday, May 7, and

go until the position is filled, with an anticipated start date of May 21. Full job description available [here](#).

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### *4/12 Accelerate Sustainability Workshop*

This month, we welcomed the latest cohort of Accelerate Sustainability Workshop participants. Forty-two businesses and organizations from Dane County came together to launch their 2024 sustainability projects.

It was inspiring to hear the attendees talk about their energy and solar projects, environmental justice initiatives, waste reduction goals, and how they plan on maximizing their use of Inflation Reduction Act funds.

Sustain Dane offers sustainability project ideas and resources for [individuals](#) and [organizations](#). Reach out if you were unable to attend the workshop and would like to connect with Sustain Dane on moving a project forward.

"This was my first Sustain Dane event and I found it useful, informative, and engaging." -2024 Accelerate Sustainability Workshop Attendee

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## Earth Month Cleanup

### *4/13 Earth Month Cleanup*

Over 80 volunteers joined us for our fourth annual litter cleanup with [Ian's Pizza Madison](#) at [Garver Feed Mill](#). We weighed each trash bag collected by the volunteers. At the end of the day, over 1,200 pounds of trash were removed from the area!

Some noteworthy items included a new set of Ray Band sunglasses, a twin bed frame, and a whole jar of pickles. View video news coverage of the event [here](#).



## Earth Day Bags

*Earth Day Bags*



Sustain Dane and [Metcalf's Market](#) Earth Day program commemorates the holiday by bagging groceries in student-decorated reusable shopping bags. Seventeen schools from across Dane County decorated 4,000 reusable bags with images of what Earth Day means to them and how they care for the Earth and community. This project encourages us all to recognize the importance of Earth Day through the words and images of children.

"So proud to be part of this initiative every year! Thank you, Sustain Dane and Metcalfe's Market for making it possible. Scholars completed a mini research project during library classes by asking the question 'How can I help the Earth?' followed by researching Earth Day and sustainability facts."

-Participating School



**RECYCLE BETTER**

### *Recycle Better Q & A- Plastic Cutlery*

**Question:** This fork is plastic; can I recycle it?

**Answer:** No, plastic cutlery is not recyclable.

Plastic knives, forks, and spoons are too flat and will get lost during recycling sorting. Check out [this video](#) of the local Pellitteri recycling facility to understand how the sorting takes place. They also have little to no value in the plastics market.

While the best practice is reusable silverware, there are creative ways to find new life for plastic utensils. Upcycle them into [plant ID markers](#) or an art project. If wrapped and unused, donate them to a food pantry.

Check out answers to common recycling questions and see local guidelines at [sustaindane.org/better](https://sustaindane.org/better) and on social media [#recyclebetter](#).

Do you have a recycling question? Email [lorenza@sustaindane.org](mailto:lorenza@sustaindane.org) or check the [2023 Recyclopeda](#).

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## Ask Lorenza



Sustain Dane is a resource for your sustainability-related questions. Feel free to send your question to [hello@sustaindane.org](mailto:hello@sustaindane.org)

**Question:** How can I know that my investments aren't supporting climate change?

**Answer:** Many don't know that 401(k)s and similar retirement plans are still mostly invested in funds that support fossil fuel companies. You can read my full recommendation in our latest [blog post](#) or the highlights below.

Our 2022 Sustainable Breakfast Series featured Andrew Behar, CEO of [As You Sow](#), a nonprofit focusing on shareholder engagement. Listen to the program [recording](#) or use their tool [Invest Your Values](#) to find out what businesses your investments support. In addition to divesting from fossil fuels in your retirement accounts and other investments, here are some other tips to make your investments more sustainable:

- Invest in more sustainable products like ESG funds.
  - Research your credit cards and bank accounts to choose companies that invest responsibly.
  - Purchase goods and services from local businesses that represent the diversity in our community.
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## *No Mow May*

As spring sets in and grass starts to grow, keep in mind No/Low Mow May! This initiative to not mow in May can help pollinators find substantial food sources as opposed to monoculture grass lawns. Clover, dandelion, creeping Charlie, and violet are common lawn flowering plants. They can provide food for pollinators, especially while other flowers are not yet blooming.

Each community is different. Check your local guidelines to see if your area is participating.



## *Middleton Efficiency Navigator Press Event*

At this month's [Efficiency Navigator](#) press event, the room was packed with supporting community members to celebrate energy efficiency and the preservation of affordable housing.

The [Efficiency Navigator](#) program has made significant strides, impacting more than 130 units of affordable housing. Through its efforts, an impressive annual reduction of 70,000 kilograms of CO2 has been achieved.

We honored the first cohort of our Middleton Efficiency Navigator program and heard remarks from the

[City of Middleton, Wisconsin](#),  
[Elevate](#), a participating owner,  
[Madison Metropolitan Sewerage  
District](#), and the [City of Madison](#),  
[Wisconsin Government](#).

We are now accepting new  
applications for [Efficiency Navigator](#)  
properties in Middleton and Madison.  
Watch news coverage of the press  
event [here](#).



### *In the community*

**May 4** [Our Changing Climate With Bob Lindmeier](#) from  
the Linda & Gene Farley Center

**May 7** [Farmers' Market Food Scrap Drop Off \(Eastside  
Market only\)](#), from Sustain Dane \*Every Tuesday

**May 9** [What To Do About PFAS](#) from the League of  
Women Voters

**May 10** [Floristic Quality Benchmarks for Rare and  
Unique Wetland Plant Communities](#) from Wisconsin  
Wetlands

**May 11** [McFarland Bird Festival](#) from McFarland Public  
Library

**May 17** [Recycle Better](#) from Sustain Dane

**May 18** [Native Plant Sale](#) from Friends of the Arboretum

**May 19** [Kids on the Prairie](#) from Holy Wisdom  
Monastery

**May 21** [South Madison Farmers' Market Food Scrap  
Drop-Off Start](#) from Sustain Dane

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climate action

climate action

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