

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)



March 2026 Newsletter

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



School Composting in Sun Prairie

School Composting in Sun Prairie

In partnership with the City of Sun Prairie, Green Box Compost, and Sun Prairie Area School District, we are continuing the composting pilot program this school semester. This month, Royal Oaks second graders took a field trip to Green Box Compost to see where their cafeteria food scraps go. During the trip, students participated in three interactive learning stations, plus a full tour of Green Box Compost:

- A sorting game to decide which items belong in compost, recycling, or trash, helping them better understand the waste in their cafeterias.
- Learned about worms’ role as decomposers with the opportunity to observe, hold, and named their worms such as DJ Wiggly, Yapertron, and Blueberry.
- Traced their lunch food items back to soil to learn about the importance of healthy soil. One student even discovered that gumballs can be traced back to soil with sugar coming from sugarcane which grows from soil.



Earth Month Bingo Cards

Looking for resources and ways to support employee sustainability efforts during Earth Month or as an individual try new sustainability actions? Sustain Dane has created two Earth Month bingo cards. These tools can be used to spark friendly competition, recognize individuals in a network with prizes, build awareness and excitement, and promote sustainability actions.

View Bingo Cards Here



SBS Podcast: Weather in a Changing Climate

Now available is our newly released podcast episode on the Sustainable Breakfast Series: Weather in a Changing Climate. Hear from Amanda Latham, Climate Outreach Specialist for the Wisconsin State Climatology Office, and gain a better understanding of the forces that are shaping Wisconsin's changing climate and how these shifts are affecting agriculture, local economics and community resilience across the state.

[Listen Here](#)



Sustainable Breakfast Series

Tues, April 14 at 8:30 AM

**Data Centers &
a Sustainable Future**



Data Centers & A Sustainable Future

Join us for our April Sustainable Breakfast Series: Data Centers & A Sustainable Future.

Data centers are rapidly expanding across Wisconsin, with numerous projects in various stages of planning, proposal, and construction. We will learn how data centers work, how they have changed over time, and gain a better understanding of the resources used by a data center. The panel will discuss how local communities can respond, university research and perspective, and what this growth could mean for Wisconsin.

Speakers include:

- Anna Haensch, Associate Research Professor at the Data Science Institute at UW-Madison
- Kathy Kuntz, Director of Dane County of Energy and Climate Change
- Paul Robbins, Dean of the Nelson Institute at UW-Madison

The Sustainable Breakfast Series will occur on Tuesday, April 14 at StartingBlock (821 East Washington Ave). Program from 8:30 – 9:30 AM. Networking starts at 8:00 AM.

Register Today



Join us! Accelerate Sustainability Workshop

4/17 Accelerate Sustainability Workshop

Our [Accelerate Sustainability Workshop](#) is a leadership opportunity designed to help achieve sustainability initiatives at your business and organization. The workshop will include ideas for action, tools to communicate sustainability in ways that resonate with leadership, and case studies from local businesses. Join us Friday, April 17 from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM to learn, connect, and turn ideas into action.

In addition to the workshop and discussion time, guest speakers include:

- Janelle Taylor, Housing and Sustainability Manager at Attic Angel Community will share about the organization's Trim the Trash initiative that aims to reduce waste and improve operational efficiency.
- Jackie Drake, Digital Media Strategist and Bryna Goeking, Digital Media Specialist at designCraft Advertising will share their transportation initiative at designCraft focused on reducing commuting-related emissions and employee engagement.
- Tim Walters, Senior Account Representative & Mark Lydon, Key Account Manager at MGE will share insights from their work with local businesses, highlighting common energy inefficiencies, conversations on electric vehicles, and MGE's shared solar program for businesses.

Learn More & Register



Home Efficiency & Energy 4-Part Course

Tuesdays 5:30–7:30 PM:
May 5, June 2, June 30, and September 22

StartingBlock (821 E Washinton Ave,
Madison, WI)



Home Efficiency & Electrification Four-Part Mini Course – Starts Tues, May 5

Are you interested in making your home more energy-efficient and fully electrified? Would you benefit from guidance from experts to create a plan for your home's unique needs? Join our [Four-Part Efficiency & Electrification Mini Course](#).

This course will help participants better understand their home energy use, explore efficiency and electrification options, and plan next steps—including rebates and contractor quotes. The course is practical, community-based, and led by Sustain Dane and an experienced Madison Gas and Electric engineer. Homeowners will identify ways to lower costs, increase comfort, and make a positive impact on the planet.

- When: Tuesdays – May 5, June 2, June 30, and Sept 22
 - 5:30 – 6 PM: Arrival & dinner (provided)
 - 6 – 7:30 PM: Class
- Where: StartingBlock Madison (821 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI)

Learn More & Register



Recycle Better – Wed, 5/6 & 5/13

Our popular recycling program is back for 2026. Become a recycling steward with our award-winning workshop in partnership with the City of Madison and WM. Learn the ins and outs of our local recycling system and get your recycling questions answered. The program will give you the tools you need to teach your family, neighbors, friends, and coworkers how to improve recycling and community sustainability.

Topics include: what makes recycling work and why we do it, local recycling how-tos, barriers to recycling, other waste streams, low-waste living, & championing recycling in your community. Join the Recycle Better community that has spread recycling knowledge to over 102,000 people!

We will meet online via Zoom in two parts on Wednesday, May 6 and Wednesday, May 13 from 12PM– 1:30PM. The session will be recorded and shared with registrants.

[Register Here](#)



Farmers Market Food Scrap Drop-Off Program

Farmers Market Food Scrap Drop-Off Program

We're happy to announce the return of the free Food Scraps Drop-Off program for its fifth season. Our first market begins collecting food scraps on April 11, and the other three markets start later this spring.

Over the past four years, the food scrap collection program has composted over 100,000 pounds (10,700 in 2022, 19,800 in 2023, 31,600 in 2024, and 40,400 in 2025). Join us this year to meet our goal to divert 48,000 pounds of food scraps, which is the equivalent to the weight of 24 giraffes.

According to the Wisconsin DNR, our landfills consist of 14.5% food that would be traditionally edible, and 6% food scraps that tend to be inedible like peels. Dropping off food scraps at composting sites can lower your environmental impact by transforming waste into nutrient-rich soil, diverting it from taking up space at the landfill, and reducing methane emissions.

[Westside Community Market](#)

- Dates: Saturday, April 11 – Saturday, October 31
- When: Saturdays, 7:00 AM – 12:30 PM
- Where: Research Park (505 S Rosa Rd)

[East Madison Market](#)

- Dates: Tuesday, April 28 – Tuesday, October 27
- When: Tuesdays, 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- Where: McPike Park (202 S. Ingersoll St. Madison)

[South Madison Market](#)

- Dates: Tuesday, May 19 – Tuesday, October 27

- When: Tuesdays, 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- Where: Madison Labor Temple (1602 S Park St. Madison)

Capitol View Market

- Dates: Wednesday, May 27 – Wednesday, October 14
- When: Tuesdays, 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- Where: City View Park (5901 Sharpsburg Dr)

[Learn More Here](#)



Apply Today – Powerful Teen Leader Participants

Do you know a teen looking for a meaningful summer job? Or are you a high school student interested in sustainability and the green economy?

Applications are now open for Powerful Teen Leaders (PTL). This program is a paid employment program designed for Northside teens ages 14-18 and runs from June 16 - July 30. Participants will gain hands-on experience, build leadership skills, and explore career pathways in sustainability and the growing green economy. PTL meets at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center and programming includes:

- Learning about the lakes and marine wildlife with UW-Madison Center for Limnology
- Solar panel installation course with Madison College
- Introduction to fusion energy with Realta Fusion

- Tour of the landfill with Dane County Waste + Renewables
- Nature journaling and tour of the Arboretum
- + Much more

Learn More & Apply Here



March Volunteer Event at River Food Pantry

River Food Pantry Volunteering Recap

This month, Sustain Dane led a volunteering event at The River Food Pantry's new building. River Food Pantry is a member of Sustain Dane and approaches their work with sustainability in mind. During this event, we volunteered in the pantry, helping with packing and distributing food packs and groceries to families and individuals. In one day alone, the River Food Pantry is estimated to serve over 350 families.

In 2025, The River Food Pantry:

- Provided 3,155,416 pounds of food and supplies
- Recovered 1,693,026 pounds of food
- Distributed 135,208 to-go meals and 90,918 mobile meals
- Served 21,326 people, and 8,471 households
- Worked with 2,889 volunteers for nearly 39,000 volunteer hours

Our volunteer group was able to connect with other volunteers, have conversations around food waste and redistribution, and see how food can be a great way to bring together a community. Learn more about River Food Pantry [here](#).



Earth Month Clean-Up: Volunteer Event

Earth Month Clean Up: Sat, April 18

Mark your calendar for the sixth year of our Garver/Starkweather trash cleanup on Saturday, April 18. Meet outside the south entrance of Garver Feed Mill at 10:00 AM. We will provide gloves, trash bags, and hand sanitizer. Bring your energy to make a positive impact on the environment. Last year, volunteers collected over 800 pounds of trash during the event.

We are happy to partner with Ian's Pizza and Delta Beer Lab. Delta will hand out a free pint certificate card. Ian's is generously offering a free pizza slice to each participating volunteer. Please RSVP here to join us so we can get an accurate headcount and send updates if the weather may need to reschedule the event.

[RSVP Here](#)



Remove Invasive Species: Thurs, May 21 Volunteer Event

Join Sustain Dane and Madison Parks on May 21st for invasive species removal. Together we will help protect Madison's natural areas by removing garlic mustard. Garlic mustard is an invasive plant that spreads quickly and often blocks sunlight, outcompeting native species for moisture and vital nutrients.

This hands-on volunteer opportunity supports the health of our woodlands and helps restore habitat for native plants and wildlife. No prior experience is needed, and staff or experienced volunteers will provide guidance on plant identification and removal techniques.

Join us on Thursday, May 21 at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park from 9AM-11AM.

[RSVP Here](#)



Home Energy Rebate Train-the-Trainer Program

Home Energy Rebate Train-the-Trainer Program

In partnership with Focus on Energy and Latino Academy of Workforce Development, Sustain Dane completed the second session of our Home Energy Rebate Train-the-Trainer Program this month. This program equips community members to help families save money, conserve energy, and create healthier and more comfortable homes.

In February, students dove into topics like weatherization, energy-saving home upgrades, Wisconsin rebate programs, and filled out applications for IRA rebates. In March, the new trainers put their skills to work, sharing what they learned with friends, co-workers, family, and neighbors to help more households benefit. The trainers were able to support community members in navigating rebate applications, ordering free energy-savings kits, and better understanding their energy bill.

"I'm ready to take next steps on the program as I'm about to begin my application process to insulate my house, I will be sharing more with the people I know from real experience" – 2026 Program Participant



Efficiency Navigator

Efficiency Navigator

Sustain Dane, in partnership with Elevate, hosted a press conference and celebration to share Efficiency Navigator's impacts and accomplishments across Madison and Fitchburg.

We heard about the importance and achievements of this program from city officials, program staff, and property owners. In 2025, Efficiency Navigator has worked across 128 units and made a positive impact on over 200 residents, including 28 children and 24 seniors. The carbon footprint of the buildings has gone down by 81,260/kg that is the equivalent of reducing car travel by 201,000 miles each year or driving around the earth eight times.

Applications are now open for Efficiency Navigator in 2026. This program aims to help small to medium-sized multifamily housing become more efficient, affordable, and resilient while reducing operating costs for owners and energy cost burden for residents.

Whether you are a property owner ready to apply or a resident wanting to recommend your building, [visit here](#) to learn more. Application review occurs on a rolling basis.

“Building upgrades provided by the Efficiency Navigator make it easier to stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer while also lowering energy bills... I’m grateful to our project partners and, especially, to program participants for showing that providing healthy, affordable housing and taking climate action can go hand in hand.”

- Madison Mayor, Satya Rhodes-Conway



The RoundTrip [Spring Roll Challenge](#) is celebrating sustainable choices for everyday trips this Earth Month. Log your trips by bike, bus, carpool, walking & rolling from April 1-30 for chances to win weekly and grand prize drawings. The Spring Roll Challenge is free and open to everyone ages 18+ in Dane County.

To participate, simply [register with Sustain Dane member RoundTrip](#) and log your eligible trips throughout the month. You'll get a chance to win prizes and help reach 10,000 green trips in Dane County this April.



Charge Up Dane County

Charge Up Dane County is a countywide initiative that expands public electric vehicle options with a focus on implementing chargers near multi-family housing, multi-modal areas, and rural communities.

The third and final request for proposals is due April 2. Businesses, nonprofits, municipalities, faith communities and multifamily property owners are invited to apply to host publicly accessible, free electric vehicle charging stations. [Apply & learn more here.](#)



Sun Prairie Earth Month Events

The City of Sun Prairie has many events and programs this Earth Month. Activities like a wastewater treatment plant tour, park clean-ups, a repair cafe, and so much more will be happening all month throughout April. [Learn more here.](#)

We appreciate you being part of our Sustain Dane community. Make a difference in local sustainability—support Sustain Dane today.

Donate to Sustain Dane

In the Community

April 1: [Caring for Our Waters](#) at Sun Prairie Public Library

April 1: [Café Con Energia](#) with Focus on Energy and MGE

April 2: [Sun Prairie Wastewater Treatment Plant Tour](#)

April 9: [Waubesa Wetlands Film Screening](#) at McFarland Performing Arts Center

April 9: [Native Rain Garden Workshop](#) at Sun Prairie Public Library

April 10: [Adult Swim: Green Vibes Only](#) at the Madison's Children Museum

April 14: [Sustainable Breakfast Series: Data Centers & a Sustainable Future](#) with Sustain Dane

April 14: [Ice Age Movie Screening](#) at Sun Prairie Public Library

April 15: [Repair Cafe](#) at Sun Prairie Public Library

April 17-23: [Earth Fest](#) with UW-Madison

April 17: [Accelerate Sustainability Workshop](#) with Sustain Dane

April 18: [Earth Month Cleanup](#) with Sustain Dane at Garver Feed Mill

April 18: [Community Clothing](#) Swap at the Overture Center

April 18: [The Wisdom of Water: From the Andes to the Great Lakes](#) with Mundo Esperanza

April 18: [Bilingual Conservation Fair](#) with Wisconsin EcoLatinos

April 20: [Earth Signals](#) with UW-Madison

April 21: [Earth Fest Forum](#) with UW-Madison

April 23: [Pollinator Water Station Workshop](#) at Sun Prairie Public Library

April 25: [Parks Friends Clean Up](#) at Sheehan Park

Sustain Dane Forest & Tree Members and Partners.
Join the Sustain Dane Membership at the Forest, Tree, or Leaf level.

Support organizations that value sustainability:





Copyright © 2026 Sustain Dane, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.