

Save the Planet. Save Money. Get Certified



Beyond the Office

Volunteer for the Smarter Discards Project



The City of Dubuque is partnering with IBM Research in a project called Smarter Discards to track changes in residential waste diversion. The “actionable data” collected through this pilot will be used in the City’s decision-making related to policies, staffing, and equipment related to improving discard (trash/recycling) management and diversion to beneficial use.

A goal of this project is to

Employee Engagement

“In a prosperous society, you really have only two assets: people—their creativity and skills—and the ecosystem around them. Both need to be carefully tended.” –Mats Lederhausen, former senior executive of McDonald’s Corporation

Hunter Lovins of SustainableBrands.com writes that employee engagement around sustainability results in increased productivity and profitability. In the article "Employee Engagement and the Bottom Line" she highlights several engagement success stories. Stonyfield Farm, an organic yogurt producer, challenged employees to save energy at work, and even connected energy savings directly to employee bonuses. Burt's Bees empowers employees to conserve resources through 30-hour-per-year training courses that cover actionable environmental stewardship, social outreach, natural wellness, and leadership. Engaged employees who have a positive perception of their employer explicitly or inadvertently “sell” the company for which they work, the products it produces, and its sustainability platform. Proper employee engagement around sustainability can help retain employees and customers for the years to come.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

assist and incentivize our customers to improve diversion toward curbside recycling and composting to help achieve Dubuque's sustainability commitments.

Up to 400 volunteers are being recruited to participate in the project by allowing their weekly trash, recycling, and food scraps/yard debris setout weights to be collected in anonymized form. IBM Research will make a website portal available to the volunteers to provide functionalities that include diversion tips for beneficial use, household goal challenges, available incentives, visualization of data over a period of time, insights into household discard patterns, and analytics that compare discard generation with other households with similar profiles. Access to the portal will be provided for 9 months.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Green Ribbon Cutting at Unified Therapy Services

Unified Therapy Services is Petal Certified! Please join in congratulating them at their green ribbon cutting Friday, July 26th at 8:30am. The ceremony will be held at 4121 Pennsylvania Avenue, Dubuque. The public is encouraged to attend.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Unison Solutions is Petal Certified

On June 26th the Petal Project team hosted an internal green ribbon cutting to congratulate Unison for completing all of the certification criteria and becoming the eighth Petal Certified business in Dubuque County.

Implementing sustainable practices throughout their business has yielded many benefits. Leaders at Unison have found that employees like working in a “green” workplace. They have also seen a reduction in overhead costs resulting from energy efficiency upgrades. Additionally, incorporating sustainable practices into the everyday operations of Unison aligned with the product line offered by Unison. Jan M. Scott, President of Unison Solutions, Inc., commented: “being environmentally friendly is the standard for the entire company at Unison Solutions Inc. Our customers operate wastewater treatment plants, food digesters and landfills around the world, turning biogas into energy and vehicle fuel. As Unison products are providing a green solution for communities, our team can now highlight our business practices of striving to be as environmentally conscious as possible. The Petal Project provides the guidelines of an independent group to show we are working hard to reduce waste and conserve our natural resources.”

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Growing Sustainable Communities Conference

Hosted by the City of Dubuque and the Sustainable City Network, the Growing Sustainable Communities Conference will be held at the Grand River Center on September 24-25, 2013. The 6th annual conference is a two-day educational opportunity for municipal professionals, elected officials and business leaders who have a common interest in sustainability and resource management. Three women who have helped community leaders and some of the world's most successful companies plot a course toward a more sustainable future will deliver the keynote address. For more information about the conference or to register, [click here](#).

Sustainable Dubuque Community Grants

Round two of the Sustainable Dubuque Community Grant is now available for community organizations and passionate residents. Grant maximum is \$2,500. The grant application is intended to be simple: (1) Pick a sustainability principle(s), (2) Make project educational and/or engaging, and (3) Tell the story of how you are impacting the community.

In Fiscal Year 2013, the City Council approved \$25,000 to fund a new Sustainable Dubuque Community Grant program. The intentions of the grant program as defined by the Sustainable Dubuque Collaboration are to demonstrate that anyone can be involved in the Sustainable Dubuque initiative and to reach out to a diverse set of community partners, including nonprofits, businesses, neighborhood associations and individuals to impact the community.

Twelve out of twenty-seven applications were approved in the first round of grant funding in May 2013.

Any group of individuals (or businesses) located within Dubuque city limits is eligible to apply. Groups who received funding during the May 2013 round will not be eligible until June 2014. Groups who were unsuccessful in previous applications may compete in future rounds with the project originally proposed, or with new projects. To apply for the grant, [click here](#). Applications are due August 1, 2013. For more information please contact Cori Burbach, Sustainable Community Coordinator for the City of Dubuque at (563)-589-4110 or Anderson Sainci, Americorps VISTA for the City of Dubuque at (563) 690-6058.

Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

The Energy Efficiency Loan Fund (EELF) is a revolving loan fund established through funds from the U.S. Department of Energy. Its purpose is to help finance energy improvements in buildings owned or leased by commercial businesses, non-profits, and multi-tenant facility management groups. The projects that receive loans will be those seeking to fund innovative energy efficiency projects that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[Click here for more information.](#)

New Portfolio Manager Interface

On July 17, EPA will release the upgraded Portfolio Manager tool, providing users with a new interface, streamlined functionality, and improved usability! To get you up to speed on the new tool, they are offering a number of trainings, as well as “office hours,” during the month of July. [Click here](#) for the latest print training resources to get you prepared for the launch. Register for a training by [clicking here](#).

Bittersweet and Sweets

1 Mississippi and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation will be hosting an event at the Mines of Spain on August 24th. They will be working on clearing oriental bittersweet (an invasive species) followed by an ice cream social. They are looking for volunteers to help with the event. Participation would count as a community service activity under the Staff Education petal. Contact Natalie Busta at ia1mississippi@biodiverse.org for more details.

Food Scrap Recycling Expansion Announced

The City of Dubuque recently expanded the food scraps program. This is big news for businesses because more of you will be able to participate in this composting program. Contact your current waste hauler to get started. Contact Kelsey at kmcelroy@ecia.org if you have questions.

Mud Lake Osprey Project

Join the Dubuque County Conservation Board, IDNR, Friends of DCCB, University of Dubuque-Web of Life, Table Mound School, Audubon and the public for an amazing opportunity to witness the reintroduction of Osprey. The organizations and sponsors listed above are proud to announce the arrival of 4-5 osprey

chicks to Mud Lake Park. The osprey (aka: fish hawks) are indicators of good water quality and an outstanding example of a raptor.

Young Osprey from Wisconsin and Minnesota are being relocated to areas with suitable habitat in southern Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Ohio. Projects are designed to place young in areas where ospreys do not currently nest. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has assisted with many osprey projects; MacBride Raptor Project at Coralville Reservoir, Black Hawk County Conservation Board at Hartman Reserve Nature Center, Polk County Conservation Board at Jester Park, Boone CCB at Don Williams Lake, Clear Lake, Linn CCB at Wickiup Hill, Marion CCB at Elk Rock State Park, SOAR (Saving our Avian Resources) at White Rock Conservancy, Dickinson CCB at Spirit Lake and most recently Dubuque County Conservation Board at Mud Lake Park All ages are invited to celebrate the Mud Lake Osprey Project Wednesday, July 17th 9:00 am. Bring your cameras and your curiosity; this is a project that is worth being a part of!

If you have questions or comments please call the Swiss Valley Nature Center 563.556.6745.

IADG Energy Bank Revolving Loan Fund

Iowa Area Development Group is pleased to announce the newly created IADG Energy Bank Revolving Loan Fund program. This exciting new program has been created to finance renewable energy projects, energy efficiency improvements and energy management and implementation plans for business and industry.

[Click here for more information.](#)

