

THE THREE R'S: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

Education for the Environment

Environmental education helps people develop sensitivity to their surroundings and the natural world. Environmental education promotes understanding of life's natural, physical, and social systems. Education for the environment motivates people to work for a more sustainable society.

The Clark County Solid Waste District works to promote and provide environmental education in schools and non-formal settings. Here are brief descriptions of the programs we offer:

1. "Keep Clark County Beautiful" is an interactive, humorous skit aimed at 1st and 2nd grades. Local storyteller Lisa Holmes and Steve Schlather, the district's program coordinator, portray characters who show the good, the bad and the beautiful of putting waste in its proper place.

The skit can be presented free to any Clark County school, takes about 25 minutes, and is correlated to Ohio's standards. Teachers have praised the skit as an entertaining and effective way to present solid waste issues.

2. Steve Schlather does solo presentations, either in costume as the Wizard of Waste



Lisa Holmes and Steve Schlather perform in "Keep Clark County Beautiful."

or in a more straightforward style (usually for older students). Presentations can be for any grade level and on such topics as waste reduction, recycling, landfills, composting, and more.

3. Program Assistant Bonnie Martens can present on recycling, composting, and nature-related subjects. Bonnie is versed in the activities in the Project Learning Tree guide. Before coming to the District, Bonnie worked at the Glen Helen Nature Preserve and as a substitute teacher for Springfield City Schools.

4. Tours of the Clark County Recycling Center help to demonstrate facts and dispel myths about recycling. Tours usually are limited to groups of no more than 25.

5. The District can provide technical assistance for any school that wants to start or expand a recycling program. This can include consultations, help with an awareness program, a waste audit, and/or referrals to businesses that offer recycling services.

For more information about the district's programs, contact Steve Schlather at 521-2022 or sschlather@clarkcountyohio.gov.

The Clark County Solid Waste District is dedicated to providing learning opportunities and resources to promote waste reduction practices.

For more information, contact Steve Schlather at 521-2022, or 1602 W. Main St., Springfield, OH 45504 or e-mail at sschlather@clarkcountyohio.gov.

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Donna Lewis demonstrates a wetlands model during the “Healthy Waters Healthy People” workshop in March. The model can be borrowed from the Clark County Park District. An Ohio Environmental Education Fund grant supported the workshop.

OEEF offers grants

The Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) provides grants for projects to educate the public about environmental issues. Grants are offered in two categories: mini-grants of \$500 to \$5,000 and general grants of up to \$50,000.

Schools, universities, park districts, municipalities, outdoor education centers, state agencies, non-profit groups, and others may apply. The grants are accepted in two annual cycles, with one round due in January and a separate round due in July. An organization can receive only one grant per year.

Grant proposals should target a specific audience: pre-school through university students and teachers, the general public, or the regulated community, including farmers. A match of at least 10% is required, and an application receives more points for a larger match.

Each year, OEEF publishes areas of interest that are priorities for funding. The priority areas for 2018, examples of past grant winners, and more information are available at the OEEF web page, epa.ohio.gov/oeef/EnvironmentalEducation.

Conferences planned for Ohio teachers

Ohio teachers will have opportunities to attend conferences on STEM or environmental subjects this fall.

Growing Up WILD, 6-9 p.m. Sept. 19, Tipp City. Free, but pre-registration is required. Project WILD's early childhood education guide fosters an appreciation of wildlife and the natural world. Call Tina Spaulding at (937) 220-1670.

STEM Conference, Sept. 26 at Northern Kentucky University and Sept. 27 at University of Cincinnati. Workshops, poster sessions, field trips. Cost varies from \$25 to \$75. Deadline to register is Sept. 12. To register, call (859) 572-5600 or email connect@nku.edu.

Combined Project WILD & Aquatic WILD, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sept. 30, Cox Arboretum, Dayton. The \$25 cost includes lunch. Hands-on, diverse activities help develop problem-solving and decision making skills in determining responsible human actions. Contact Lauren Asquith at (937) 277-4178.

101 Alternatives to the Chalkboard, Oct. 7, at YMCA Camp Kern. The \$30 cost includes all sessions and meals; option to stay overnight available. Contact Dave Moran at (513) 932-3756, ex. 1527, or dmoran@daytonymca.org.

Appalachian Green Teachers Conference, Nov. 2-3, Burr Oak State Park, hosted by Rural Action and Camp Ot'Okwa, hands-on experience for teachers and non-formal educators. Information at ruralaction.org.

District helps schools' waste reduction

Nightingale Montessori School has reduced its waste, improved its garden harvest, and incorporated these activities into students' learning through a program that has received support from the Clark County Solid Waste District.

The District provided grants in 2015 and 2017 for supplies and equipment for the school's composting program. Stephanie Woodward, head chef and Farm to School Coordinator, said Nightingale has diverted thousands of pounds of waste from the landfill and used almost half a ton of finished compost.

"The entire student body, staff and faculty, a total population of 160 people, now participates daily in composting," Woodward wrote in a grant report. "Our entire community is benefiting in the long run as we incorporate finished compost into our garden beds throughout the school property."

Woodward said lessons connected to the composting program encompass more than science and environmental issues. Students help track the data on how much waste is diverted and calculate the percentage of waste reduction.

"Students are able to see the entire carbon cycle where the organic matter is recycled



Stephanie Woodward, head chef at Nightingale Montessori School, and Audrey Akers, 9, a former student at the school, are pictured at a garden where the soil is partly made out of compost from the school's yard and food waste.

Waste Reduction Assistance

- The Solid Waste District can provide support of up to \$500 for waste reduction programs in Clark County schools.
- Eligible programs can include starting a recycling program, enhancing a current recycling program, or a field trip or other educational program that deals with solid waste issues.
- Apply for assistance by downloading an application form from the District's web site, www.32trash.org. Go to the "Schools" page and click on the link for the application form.
- Anyone interested should contact Steve Schlather at 521-2022 to discuss their proposal before applying.

directly on our property into the gardens and then back on the plates through our daily fresh salad bar," Woodward said.

**Visit the Clark County Solid Waste District on the Web at www.32trash.org.
Or call 521-2022 for information about our programs and services.**



Mural brightens district's building

The Clark County Solid Waste District had a mural painted on its building in May. Project Jericho hired muralist Mariah Kaminsky (at left) of Durango, Colorado, to design and supervise the mural's creation. The mural incorporates themes of recycling and beautification, showing a girl catching fireflies in bottles made from recycled glass and having a recycling bin filled with glass jars in the foreground. The young artists of Project Jericho assisted Kaminsky in painting and also painted a rain barrel to resemble the mural. The rain barrel was raffled off as a fundraiser for Keep Clark County Beautiful.

Center offers environmental lessons

Students can learn about resource conservation, waste reduction, and environmental sustainability at the Montgomery County Environmental Learning Center, located at the Montgomery County Solid Waste District, 2500 Sandridge Drive, Moiraine.

The center offers free tours to schools, community groups, and other organizations from the region surrounding Montgomery County. Groups also can schedule meetings or events at the center. Call (937) 225-4999 to schedule a tour. The Clark County Solid Waste District may be able to help with transpor-



tation costs for local schools wanting to plan a field trip.

The center includes educational, interactive displays about solid waste, water/sewer issues, and energy. The exhibits teach about litter prevention, recycling, where trash goes, water and energy conservation, the carbon cycle, and more. The center em-

phasizes teaching individuals how they can become more environmentally sustainable.

The ELC was built using sustainable building practices, including a green parking lot that reduces runoff, and is currently pursuing LEED certification.