

www.mcecc.org

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Terms in body text that are underlined and printed in green are defined in the terminology section on page 2 of this issue.

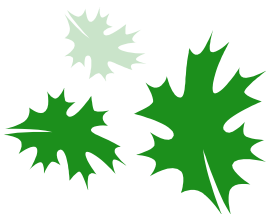
Good Web Sites Good Information

Michigan Land Use Institute
mlui.org

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
michigan.gov/dnr/

EPA Air Trends
epa.gov/airtrends/

MDEQ Beach Monitor Program
deq.state.mi.us/beach/public



The Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council Completes Three-Year Organizational Plan

Through a series of sessions sponsored by the Walker Foundation and the Community Foundation for Muskegon County, the Muskegon County Coordinating Council (MCECC) has creatively expanded the organization's purpose and refined group activities through a strategic planning process. Sessions were facilitated by Kevin Woods of Woods Consulting.

While the MCECC did not change its mission of "advancing the environmental well being through providing opportunities for collaboration, education, and stewardship," members saw a need to revisit environmental needs in the community and identify how the MCECC could most efficiently fill the gaps.

Through the process the MCECC will create a public relations committee, provide more assistance to State-lead environmental education efforts in Muskegon County, establish greater partnerships with local business and industry, provide an avenue for organizations to learn more about environmentally related issues in the community, and reexamine membership parameters.

The Council will begin implementation of the plan during the fall of 2004. For questions on the process or Council objectives, please contact Jill Montgomery, Chair, at 231-724-1293 or montgomeryji@co.muskegon.mi.us.

The Water Legacy Act and Our Fresh Water Supply

Liz Vos, MCECC

On August 31, nearly one hundred people packed the Norton Shores Library conference room to discuss water protection issues with Steven Chester, Director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Hosted by the League of Conservation Voters, participants learned how the *Water Legacy Act* would regulate withdrawals of large amounts of water from Michigan's surface and groundwater including the Great Lakes, inland lakes, rivers, streams, and underground aquifers.

The act introduced by State Senator Liz Brater (HB 5634) and State Representative Chris Kolb (SB 1087), would require water users to purchase a special permit for any new project that proposed to use more than 2 million gallons per day or 100 million gallons per year.

Current water users would need a permit if they sought to increase withdrawals or if the department saw

an adverse affect on nearby surface or groundwater from their operations.

With over 36,000 miles of streams, and more than 11,000 lakes and ponds, Michigan's fresh water resources are great; however, in some areas unregulated water withdrawals combined with drought conditions have led to major lowering in water tables. As a result, residents have had wells go dry and have been forced to drill new wells or import drinking water.

In several areas around the state, residential and wildlife water supplies have been threatened by large water withdrawals from bottled water operations, municipal wells, and unregulated large-scale farming.

Director Chester urged participants to remind their legislators that passing of the *Water Legacy Act* could be an important step in protecting the Great Lakes and our local water resources.

For more information on the Water Legacy Act, visit www.michiganlcv.org.

Countywide Scrap Tire Collection 2004

Once more, this year's tire collection project in Muskegon County was a success. In spite of the inability to provide residents with an opportunity to recycle used tires for free, the municipalities reported collecting a total of 6,738 tires during six collection days, which is an average of 1,123/day (in 2003, with the first 10 tires free, sites collected an average of 1,636 tires/day). Every municipality in Muskegon County participated in the planning and providing oversight for all on site collections. This program would not have been possible without their cooperation and willingness to participate.

While over the past two years nearly 45,000 tires have been collected in Muskegon County, a huge problem still exists. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) estimates that Michigan alone harbors an estimated 25 million scrap tires scattered in wooded areas, back yards, fields, and streambeds.

During this summer's collection, five more abandoned tire sites in Muskegon County were brought to the attention of the Health Department and the MDEQ. These sites will be applying for scrap tire collection grants in the fall of 2004 with the assistance of their jurisdictional municipality and the Muskegon County Health Department (MCHD).

MCHD would especially like to thank the Muskegon County Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Sheriff's Department for their assistance with this year's project. Associated costs for the hauling of tires to the recycling center were covered by DPW (15 trailers) and the Sheriff's Department "Pay It Back" program provided workers to load tires onto the trucks at collection sites. Deputy Laura Lewis-Mulder was extremely helpful in coordinating workers at the collection sites and providing transportation when requested.

In addition, MCHD would like to recognize Jerry Bartozek, DPW Norton Shores; Bill Stancroff, Twp Supervisor Mooreland; Jim Nielson Twp Clerk Muskegon; Scott Hladki, Twp Supervisor Dalton; Mike Smith, DPW Muskegon Heights; and Janell Beard, Twp Clerk Fruitland for supervising and coordinating individual collection sites throughout the County. Their expertise and enthusiasm was beyond expectations.

This project has been extremely popular over the past two years among residents and the media. As last year, the Muskegon Chronicle and the White Lake Beacon showed a great deal of interest in this project and produced a number of articles in support of the project. In addition, Wood TV (Channel 8) covered a story on the tire issue for Muskegon County as did Digital Spectrum Enterprises of West Michigan.

Many of the municipalities throughout Muskegon County have expressed their wishes to continue the springtime scrap tire collection program into 2005. Suggestions for improvement among participants include reintroduction of the free disposal of a limited number of tires and the ability to have more collection sites in other areas of the County.

Upcoming Events

5th Annual Korth Conservation Speakers Series ***Valuing Nature: Integrating Ecology & Economics for a Sustainable Future***

Wednesday, October 20, 2004

Frederick Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids Michigan

1-616-451-9476

lcwm@naturenearby.org

12th Annual Great Lakes Region Waste Reduction & Energy Efficiency Conference ***Staying Competitive in the Environmental Arena***

Tuesday, October 26, 2004

Burton Manor, Livonia Michigan

1-800-662-9278

www.michigan.gov/deqworkshops

Designing Healthy Communities

Monday, November 8, 2004

Kellogg Center, East Lansing Michigan

1-517-663-5147

dmsdiane@concentric.net

Terminology

E. coli

"Escherichia coli" or "E. coli" means a bacteria which is a member of the family enterobacteriaceae and which is the predominant facultative anaerobe in humans and warm-blooded animals. It is an indicator of the presence of human or animal fecal material in the water.

Nonattainment

EPA designates an area as *nonattainment* if it has violated or has contributed to violations of the national 8-hour ozone standard over a three-year period.

EPA Reclassifies County Ozone Status Liz Vos, MCECC

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Mike Leavitt was in Muskegon recently to announce the reclassification of the county's ozone nonattainment status from moderate to marginal, the next lower classification.

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, a MCECC member, organized the press conference, held at the County of Muskegon Hall of Justice. During the announcement, Leavitt explained that by reclassifying Muskegon County's nonattainment status to a lower classification, the area is expected to achieve cleaner air sooner. While moderate areas must attain national air quality standards for 8-hour ozone no later than June 2010, marginal areas, where Muskegon County is now classified, must attain clean air standards no later than June 2007.

Reclassifying Muskegon County to a lower classification also means that the area may be subject to fewer mandatory emissions control requirements such as tighter requirements to offset emissions of ozone forming compounds from new and modified industrial facilities.

Leavitt also touted the new *Clean Air Interstate Rule*, proposed in January 2004, which would establish permanent caps significantly reducing emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂) in the eastern United States. In 2015, NOx emissions from the electric power sector would be cut by 70 percent.

"The nonroad diesel rule, part of the suite of Clean Air Rules, will result in making that black puff of smoke we see from diesel engines a thing of the past," said Leavitt. "With these implementation details, we are now well on our way to finalizing the Clean Air Interstate Rule and slashing power plant emissions that contribute to ozone and particulate health problems in many of our nation's urban areas. These actions are part of my commitment to accelerate our progress in meeting clean air goals so that all Americans will have cleaner air to breathe, so that we can have blue skies and big smiles." To comply, the Administrator said it is up to the local governments to create and implement a plan to attain clean air standards.

MCECC member Roger Morgenstern, Public Affairs Director for Consumers Energy's B.C. Cobb Plant, said the utility company is already doing its part to clean the air by investing \$770,000 in emission reduction equipment to its power plants. He said the proposed Clean Air Interstate Rule, when enacted, would mandate additional reductions, and that Consumers Energy would comply.



Mike Leavitt, US EPA Administrator

Residential Leaf Burning *An Unhealthy Solution to Leaf Disposal* US EPA, 2004

Each autumn, homeowners across the United States rake up fallen leaves from their lawns. In the past, people routinely took leaves and other yard trimmings to landfills or relied on waste pick-up services for disposal of the leaves. Because of increasingly scarce landfill space, many state and local governments now ban leaves and other yard trimmings from landfills. With this option removed, there is a growing concern that homeowners may be tempted to burn the leaves in their yards, which in many communities is not only illegal, but the total health, financial, and environmental costs of leaf burning can be quite high.

The open burning of leaves produces particulate matter which can increase the chances of respiratory infection, reduce the volume of air inhaled and impair lung ability to use air, and trigger asthma attacks.

In addition, because leaves are often moist and burn without proper air circulation, they often burn poorly, producing high levels of hydrocarbons. Some hydrocarbons cause irritation of the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. Other hydrocarbons are actually known cancer causing agents.

Burning leaves also emits carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is absorbed into the bloodstream through the lungs and combines with red blood cells, reducing the amount of oxygen the red blood cells can absorb and supply to body tissues. Unborn children, newborn infants, smokers, the elderly, and persons with heart and chronic lung disease are more susceptible to carbon monoxide than the general population.

For information on burning regulations in Muskegon County, please contact your township or city authority or the Muskegon County Health Department at 231-724-6208 or www.muskegonhealth.net.

County Concludes Beach Monitoring Project for the Summer of 2004

In partnership with the Robert Annis Water Resources Institute, the Muskegon County Health Department has concluded beach monitoring for the summer season of 2004. This year's project included the testing of 14 inland lake beaches and 12 swimming beaches along Lake Michigan.

Overall, test results were outstanding from a majority of beaches with a total of four incidences where swimming areas were required to be closed due to high levels of E. coli. On each occasion advisories were lifted in less than 24 hours after retesting showed E. coli levels to drop significantly.

Testing of Muskegon County swimming beaches was made possible through funding from the Clean Michigan Initiative and the Federal Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act.

Tested Inland Swimming Beaches

- Blue Lake Park
- Deremo Park
- Duck Lake Park
- Fox Lake Park
- Fred Jacks Park
- Harbour Towne Park
- Twin Lake Park
- Mona Lake Park
- Moore Park
- Muskegon State Park East
- Ross Park
- Sunset Park
- Maple Park
- Wolf Lake Park

Tested Lake Michigan Swimming Beaches

- Bronson/Kruse Park
- Duck Lake State Park Outlet
- Lake Harbor Park
- Medbury Park
- Meinert Park
- Muskegon State Park Campground
- Old Channel Beach
- Pere Marquette Park
- P.J. Hoffmaster State Park Campground
- P.J. Hoffmaster State Park Public Beach
- Sylvan/Lighthouse Beach
- Pioneer Park

E. Coli & Beach Monitoring Facts

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

E. coli bacteria do not survive long in water. Factors such as wind action, wave action, and ultraviolet light from the sun help to reduce the level of bacteria. The amount of time needed to reduce bacteria levels can be unpredictable, however, it is usually less than 48 hours.

It is a popular misconception that if one area of the lake is contaminated, then the whole lake is contaminated. Bacteria contamination originates from conditions or factors present on or near the shore. Two beaches on opposite ends of a lake that have different on-shore conditions will not have the same bacteria levels.

If you would like to submit information on an issue, an environmental organization, or have questions pertaining to an article, please contact:

Jill Montgomery
Muskegon County Health Department
at montgomeryji@co.muskegon.mi.us (231) 724-1293
or
Liz Vos
Project Director, MCECC
at liz@mcecc.org (231) 557-2915

Muskegon County
Environmental Coordinating Council

P.O. Box 1512
Muskegon, Michigan 49440