



Muskegon County  
Environmental Coordinating Council

[www.mcecc.org](http://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

MSU Department of Geography  
[www.geo.msu.edu/](http://www.geo.msu.edu/)

Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands  
[www.miseagrant.org/wetlands/](http://www.miseagrant.org/wetlands/)

West Michigan Clean Air Coalition  
[www.wmcac.org/](http://www.wmcac.org/)

EPA Region 5 Water Quality  
[www.epa.gov/region5/water/](http://www.epa.gov/region5/water/)

EPA Air Quality Index  
[www.epa.gov/airnow/](http://www.epa.gov/airnow/)



# Your Environment

*A collaborative information resource for the Muskegon County Community  
Brought to you by the Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council*

SPRING/SUMMER 2004

## MDEQ Releases Updated Wetlands Map for Muskegon County

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

In order to be considered a wetland, land does not have to be wet all the time; and sometimes, it is not obvious that a wetland exists on a piece of property without expert on-site analysis.

While no map or information source can absolutely define where a wetland is located, the MDEQ has published an updated preliminary wetlands map for use in the identification of possible wetland areas in Muskegon County. A copy of this map is available in at [www.michigan.gov/documents/CGI\\_Muskegon\\_prelim\\_wi\\_75137\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/CGI_Muskegon_prelim_wi_75137_7.pdf)

When it is necessary to identify the location of a wetland or its boundaries, a site analysis through the

MDEQ Wetland Assessment Program or a qualified consultant can be helpful.

If you are in need of a wetland consultation, visit the Department of Environmental Quality's website and click on "Water" and then "Wetland Protection" or call the MDEQ at (517) 241-1515 for assistance. In addition, you can call the Muskegon County Health Department Environmental Health Division at (231)724-6208 to speak to a sanitarian that is familiar with wetlands in your area.



## Replanting Our Ancient White Pine Forests

Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce

Children across the state of Michigan will begin replanting the ancient forests of Michigan White Pine trees. Thanks to a grant from the Alcoa Foundation, school children will be learning about Michigan's Native Americans, lumber history, business, and the environment. Alcoa presented a check for \$60,000 to begin tree planting in the spring of 2004. School children will plant the seedlings on school grounds, designated Public Parks or appropriate forest settings.

Called the "White Pine Project", thousands of white pine seedlings will be purchased for a planting project this spring, managed by local conservation districts. Activity will take place in Muskegon, Ottawa, Calhoun, Grand Traverse and Van Buren Counties where partnerships have been formed between the business community, intermediate school districts, local conservation districts and Odowa Nation.

Alcoa originally sponsored a pilot of the program in Muskegon because Muskegon has a rich heritage in forestry and lumbering; in the late 1800's many local trees were cut down to rebuild the city of Chicago. Since then Alcoa has learned that Muskegon's story is common throughout the state of Michigan and has decided to expand the program to other Alcoa communities.

During the project, children will learn about preserving and protecting our natural resources while at the same time appreciating the role of the environment in the development of communities. For example, Muskegon would not exist if it had not been for the requirement of lumber to build buildings and products. In addition, in a classroom setting children will learn about Native American history in Michigan, which honors the White Pine as "the great teacher" and the "tree of peace."



# Protecting Nature as Communities Grow

A short course in understanding & participating in your community's development

Thursday, June 3, 2004  
5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

*Muskegon Community College*  
*Stevenson Center for Higher Education ♦ Lecture Hall Room 1100*  
*221 S Quarterline ♦ Muskegon, MI*

**Registration Fee: \$10.00**

(Includes materials & light dinner)

Please register on or before Monday, May 24 at (616) 850-0745  
or email [surbanski@lakemichigan.org](mailto:surbanski@lakemichigan.org).

## RECYCLE MUSKEGON!



A Guide to Recycling Opportunities in Muskegon County

A project of the Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council

**DO YOU HAVE YOURS YET?**

Get your copy by calling 231.557.2915

or contacting by email at [liz@mcecc.org](mailto:liz@mcecc.org) or [skyprice@iserv.net](mailto:skyprice@iserv.net)

## Ozone Action! Season Nears

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

The Governor and the Clean Air Coalition feel a good faith effort to reduce any amounts of locally produced ozone is beneficial to the environment and human health. As a result, the Coalition, through the Ozone Action! Program, will continue to educate West Michigan residents about how individual actions contribute to ground-level ozone formation and encourage residents to take voluntary low and no-cost measures to help reduce air pollution for the 10th consecutive year.

Because of program efforts, it appears West Michigan is listening and taking action. During a survey at the end of the 2003 Ozone Action! Season, 85 percent of residents surveyed said they were aware of Ozone Action! Days; and nearly 70 percent said they voluntarily took action on all, almost all, or most Ozone Action! Days. When asked why they chose to participate, the most common reason was concern for the environment. Of all actions taken, refraining from lawn mowing and altering refueling habits were at the top of the list. Interestingly, these two actions are also the voluntary actions most stressed by the coalition due to the fact that they have the greatest impact on ground-level ozone formation.

**Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and The Clean Air Coalition declared May 3, 2004 as the beginning of West Michigan's 10th Annual Ozone Action! season.**

In addition to refraining from lawn mowing and refueling autos on Ozone Action! Days, there are other actions individuals can take to reduce ground-level ozone pollution.

- Taking public transit, carpool, bike or walk to work.
- Combining errands into one trip (trip chaining).
- Avoiding excessive idling and avoid drive-thru lanes.
- Keeping your vehicle well maintained.
- Educating children about the dangers of pollution so they will grow up aware of their environmental impact.

## Terminology

### Ozone

O<sub>3</sub> is a colorless, odorless gas at ambient concentrations and is a major component of smog.

### ISO14001

ISO14001 is an industrial standard that specifies requirements for establishing an environmental policy, determining environmental aspects & impacts of products/ activities/services, planning environmental objectives and measurable targets, implementation & operation of programs to meet objectives & targets, checking & corrective action, and management review.

### criteria pollutants

The EPA considers ozone, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and lead as the six criteria (or common) air pollutants.

## Think Green by Reducing Waste Cynthia Price

Reducing the total amount of waste headed to the landfill helps the environment in many ways, from reducing the fuel used to transport it to using fewer resources in the production process. A good place to start is to seek out and purchase products with recycled content and those that are considered "source reduction products."

A "source reduction product" is a consumer good that is manufactured with reduction of waste materials in mind. Source reduction products include durable, reusable, and remanufactured products; products with no, or reduced, toxic constituents; and products marketed with no, or reduced, packaging. The consumer can influence the availability of source reduction products simply by asking for them when shopping, such as requesting recycled paper products.

Interested in becoming a Green Consumer? Here are some activities to help you get started:

- Become a "conscious consumer" and get familiar with the entire life cycle of a product. Know the amount and nature of the raw materials used to produce it, package it, and possible manufacturing alternatives. Buy the product with the least impact.
- Stop junk mail delivery. Go to [www.obviously.com/junkmail/](http://www.obviously.com/junkmail/) to find out how to eliminate and reduce junk mail. The Direct Marketing Association estimates that listing with their mail preference service will stop 75% of national mailings. Send a postcard or letter to DMA Mail Preference Service, PO Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008. Include complete name, address, zip code and a request to "activate the preference service."
- Shop at used clothing, household goods, and furniture stores. Buy in bulk to avoid packaging either through a department of your local store or by going to stores that specialize in bulk sales.
- Use Household Hazardous Waste programs in your area to reduce the amount of toxics in the home. In Muskegon County, call (231)724-6525 for more information.
- Use cloth shopping bags or take advantage of stores that allow you to return and reuse paper bags. The web site [clothbag.com](http://clothbag.com) is a good starting point.
- Bring containers from home for restaurant leftovers.

Additional information on Green Consumerism can be found at a variety of sites on the world wide web. Some websites to get you started are listed below:

Conserveatree: While focusing primarily on good paper choices, this site offers beginner information on reduction of waste. [www.conservatree.com/paper/Choose/PaperSelection.shtml](http://www.conservatree.com/paper/Choose/PaperSelection.shtml)

EPA Read the Label First: This site outlines a newly formed program to encourage consumers to read the label first, which is the first step to choosing the right product to keep you, your children, and your pets safe; save money; and help the environment. [www.epa.gov/opptintr/labeling/campaign.htm](http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/labeling/campaign.htm)

Michigan Earth911: Brought to you by Hewlett Packard, Home Depot and ESRI, a provider of Geographic Information System and mapping software, this has green shopping, energy conservation and pollution prevention information. [michigan.earth911.org/master.asp](http://michigan.earth911.org/master.asp)

Green Seal: This site belongs to a non-profit organization that strives to achieve a healthier and cleaner environment by identifying and promoting products and services that lessen toxic pollution and waste, conserve resources and habitats, and minimize global warming and ozone depletion. [www.green Seal.org](http://www.green Seal.org)

## And the Winner is...

Cynthia Price



## MUSKEGON AREA ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The 2004 Environmental Excellence Awards were presented on April 29 at Muskegon Community College. This year's well attended conference was privy to a keynote presentation by Hans Voss of Michigan Land Use Institute who spoke about the Land Use Leadership Council. In addition, seven individuals and organizations were presented awards for outstanding environmental achievements.

### **Government - West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC)**

WMSRDC was honored for its strong commitment to the environment, reflected in three projects. Nan Emmer coordinated the Lake Michigan Academy, a December 2003 USEPA-sponsored event which educated and trained local planners on cross-jurisdictional planning at the watershed level. Amy Haack has led the highly successful Ozone Action program which notifies citizens of poor air quality days and educates them on how to deal with them. The Muskegon Areawide Plan (MAP) project, spearheaded by Erin Kuhn, brought decision makers and the public together to start countywide planning for better land use.

### **Agriculture - Krepps Farm**

The Krepps have a strong commitment to conservation with a goal of preserving and maintaining the soil resource base for future generations. They have installed numerous conservation practices including conservation cropping rotations for diversity/healthy soils, grassed waterways, management of nutrients and run-off/erosion, conservation tillage, habitat and woodland management for wildlife, and most recently, the establishment of 22 acres of shallow wetlands for waterfowl. They also offer educational conservation tours for Ravenna FFA student members.

### **Business & Industry - ADAC Plastics**

In addition to developing environmental management systems which won them recognition for [ISO14001](#) compliance and the state's Clean Corporate Citizen designation, ADAC's plants in Muskegon recently undertook two programs with far-reaching environmental benefits. The first is a process change in their basecoat color system from piping small amounts of colors a long distance, to a Mini-System process where smaller amounts are closer to their use, eliminating wasted paint and solvents, and reducing frequency of solvent use for cleaning the pipes. For their Solvent Reconstitution project, ADAC evaluated which off-site facilities could do the best job of reclaiming solvents for reuse, and local Webb Chemical won the contract. Since that time, the Port City plant is reusing solvent at a rate of 69% and the Keating plant is at 85% reuse rate, an overall reuse rate of 74%.

### **Natural Resources/Education - Pace Union Local 6-1015 and Bunker School**

Pace Local 6-1015 for the past thirteen years has led a clean-up and restoration project at the former Grand Trunk Railroad site on Muskegon Lake at Lakeshore Drive. The project has included trash removal, planting native plants, removing non-native species, erecting birdhouses, and storm drain stenciling. What started out as a handful of union members has blossomed into a large group including the Lakeside Neighborhood Association, local conservation groups, and Bunker School students. Bunker teacher Ronace Hogan, working with Mark Evans (see below), has used the hands-on work to educate her students on the environment.

### **Individual Achievement - Mark Evans**

Mark Evans was nominated as the prime mover behind the clean-up and restoration above. However, he has also over the years devoted countless volunteer hours to a wide variety of initiatives from the Beach Sweep/Coastal Cleanup in the fall, to expressing citizen concerns over safety at the Lomac plant near his home, to other hands-on habitat restoration projects. He has worked at SAPPI Paper to keep the company and the workers involved in environmental projects over the years. Mark has also done a wonderful job working with and educating the students.

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**Environmental Excellence Award Winners (Con't)****Individual Achievement - Darlene DeHudy**

Ms. Dehudy's organizing work on the effort to "Preserve Lake Harbor Park" was instrumental in allowing this small park on Lake Michigan to remain natural. At the same time she worked on behalf of purchasing Whitey's Woods in Norton Shores and helped Land Conservancy of West Michigan preserve it in perpetuity. She is very concerned about water quality issues, and has most recently devoted her talents to supporting the Department of Environmental Quality's denial of a Nugent Sand permit request to put a pipeline through a critical dune.

**Lifetime Achievement - Allen J. Bell**

Al Bell has served his community for many years as an environmental activist, working on efforts ranging from water quality to outdoor recreation to air quality. He chaired the Muskegon Lake Public Advisory Council and remained an officer for years, has been extremely active in the Muskegon Conservation Club, and serves on their MERES education site steering committee; was a charter member of Muskegon Steelheaders, now Michigan Anglers Association; and has been a valued member of the Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council, West Michigan Region Environmental Network, and others. He has done volunteer monitoring for Lakewatch and other programs, and spearheaded highway clean-ups. One of Al's niches has been to keep abreast of permit applications that may result in environmental damage, commenting, requesting public hearings, and assisting organizations in doing the same. He raised his eight children to love the outdoors, resulting in one of his daughters pursuing a science career. His wife Marjorie says, "Al has been interested in the environment FOREVER."

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## New EPA Air Quality Designations

A "designation area" is the term the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses to describe the air quality in a given region for any of six common pollutants or [criteria pollutants](#). One of those pollutants is ground-level ozone, which is unhealthy to breathe. "Designation areas" can either be considered "attainment" or "nonattainment" areas, depending on historic air quality conditions and the availability of data.

The 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 may designate an area as "attainment/unclassifiable" if it has: 1) monitored air quality data show that area has not violated the ozone standard over a three-year period; or if 2) there is not enough information to determine the air quality in the area.

Once designations take effect, they become an important component of state, tribal and local governments' efforts to control ground-level ozone. Designations also assist the public in determining the quality of air they breathe.

Several regions in West Michigan have been categorized by the EPA as basic, marginal, moderate, serious, severe, or extreme nonattainment areas; and they will have to comply with nonattainment requirements of the Clean Air Act. As far as ozone nonattainment, the EPA classifies a region based on the severity of the ozone problem.

In West Michigan, the following areas are classified as "nonattainment." In the basic category are Kent and Ottawa Counties classified together as one nonattainment area. Also, classified as basic are Mason County and Allegan County, as individual nonattainment areas. Muskegon County was classified as an individual nonattainment area, but in the higher moderate category.

Nonattainment areas with higher classifications like Muskegon County, must meet additional requirements and have later attainment deadlines. States and tribes seeking a reclassification to the next higher or lower classification need to make that request by July 1, 2004. Currently, the EPA is considering "bumping down" Muskegon's classification from moderate to marginal. Muskegon has until 2010 to meet the new standards under the moderate designation and until 2007 to meet the new standards if designated marginal.

It is important to note that West Michigan has an extreme ground-level ozone transport issue as much of the polluted air monitored in West Michigan is blown across Lake Michigan from areas like Chicago, Milwaukee, and Gary, Indiana. The EPA plans to release a list of cleanup measures in August of 2004.

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## Swimming Beach Monitoring in Muskegon County

Muskegon County Health Department

Muskegon County Health Department (MDCH) is monitoring swimming beaches in Muskegon County again this summer thanks to two grants from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the assistance of Grand Valley State University's Annis Water Resources Institute.

Through funding from the Clean Michigan Initiative and the Federal Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act, Muskegon County Health Department has acquired \$10,000 to monitor 14 inland lakes and an additional \$15,000 to monitor 12 swimming beaches along Lake Michigan. While MDCH will provide oversight for the project, Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI) will be providing an intern for sample collection as well as use of laboratory facilities and equipment for sample testing. This is the second season that MCHD partnered with AWRI to test swimming beaches in Muskegon County.

Last year the project included monitoring for E. coli by traditional methods (mTEC Agar) along with a trial run of a rapid testing method called ATP/Luminometer. Though ATP technology has not been fully approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), it has some distinct advantages over traditional mTEC Agar methods. The most important difference is turnaround time for sample results. For the mTEC Agar method, sample results can take up to 36 hours. On the other hand, obtaining E. coli levels of swimming beaches using ATP technology can take only a few minutes if testing is done on site.

Because of the high number of beaches being tested in Muskegon County for this year's swimming season, AWRI will adding a third method of testing to the program using the Colilert-18. Using the Colilert method, E. coli levels can be determined within 18 hours of collection, which is not as quick as ATP; however Colilert-18 still provides much faster results than traditional methods. In addition, this system has already received approval from the EPA for use at swimming beaches throughout the country.

Beaches in Muskegon County will be tested in Muskegon County from June to September during what is termed the "high use season." If you are interested in information on a beach that you or your family visits during the summer, visit the MDEQ beach monitoring website at [www.deq.state.mi.us/beach/public](http://www.deq.state.mi.us/beach/public) or the Muskegon County Health Department website at [www.muskegonhealth.net](http://www.muskegonhealth.net) this summer.



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

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