

# Conservation Spotlight

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District  
29 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 2901  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246-3411



Spring Edition  
2008

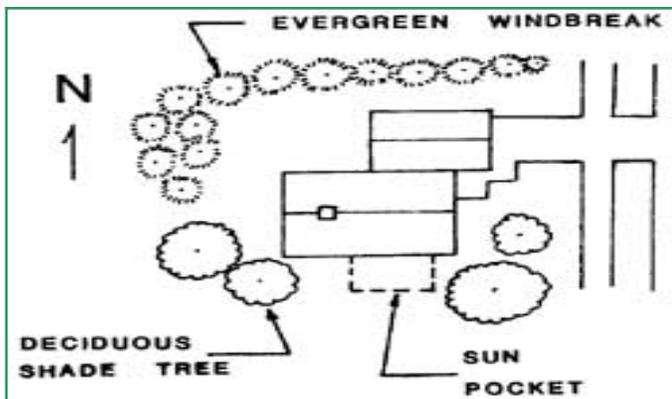
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Editor: Holly Utrata-Halcomb  
Layout: Susan Juriga

## Break for Savings *Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator*

Faced with rising energy costs, homeowners are looking for ways to conserve energy in the home. Landscaping can make a significant difference in the amount of energy required to maintain a comfortable home. Proper use of trees, shrubs, vines and man-made structures can modify the climate around your home to reduce winter heating bills as much as 25 percent and summer cooling bills 50 percent or more. Additional benefits include reduced noise and odor. Wind breakers provide shelter for many wildlife species and provide connecting corridors that enable wildlife to move safely from one habitat area to another. They can also stabilize a stream, filter pollutants and prevent wide swings in water temperature.

Properly placed plants can reduce air infiltration by reducing wind velocity near the home. In the summer, trees and shrubs can reduce the amount of solar radiation reaching the outside surfaces of a home, and thus reduce heat conduction into the house. In the winter, solar heating can reduce the rate of heat loss by raising the outside temperature of walls. Blocking cold winter winds also reduces conductive heat loss.



The recommended way to provide shade is to plant deciduous trees in an arc encompassing the home on the east, southeast, south, southwest and west sides. Plant shade trees based on their mature height so they will be properly spaced and provide desired shade. Location also depends on the shape of the tree crown, the position of the sun, the height of the roof or walls, desirable views from windows, aesthetic appeal of the overall landscape, and the presence of overhead wires and underground pipes.

An evergreen, properly placed, can divert cold winds away from the home. Locate the windbreak upwind

from the home. Distance from the home depends on the mature tree height. The optimum distance for reducing wind velocity is about one to three times tree height. However, a windbreak can provide reasonable protection at a distance of six times tree height.

Where space is limited, a single row of evergreens is adequate. However, up to three rows of several evergreen species is more effective.

References: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/Garden/07225.html>

## Presentations Available

Looking for an informative speaker for your next meeting? The SWCD has several PowerPoint presentations on Storm Water, Water Quality, Soils, Erosion and Hillside Stability & Pond Management Call 772-7645 to schedule a program.

# Ag News

John Williams, D.C. and Jeff Barnes, Soil Conservationist-NRCS

## *Helping People Help the Land*



With the mission of "Helping People Help the Land," the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides products and services that enable people to be good stewards of the Nation's soil, water, and related natural resources on non-Federal lands. With our help, people are better able to conserve, maintain, or improve their natural resources. As a result of our technical and financial assistance, land managers and communities take a comprehensive approach to the use, and protection of natural resources in rural, suburban, urban, and developing areas. The NRCS has a wide range of programs available to rural farmers and landowners that are concerned with improving natural resource concerns on their land.

These programs include the Conservation Reserve Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, just to name a few.

If you are interested in one of these programs, please contact John Williams or Jeff Barnes at 887-3720.

## **Spring is Soil Fertility Testing Time**

The best investment you can make in your garden or landscape is to have your soil tested for fertility before you spend money on expensive fertilizers. The District offers a Soil Fertility Test Kit for \$10.00 picked up at our office, or \$12.00 if mailed.

You will receive a report on the Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, pH, Magnesium, Iron and Cat Ion Exchange levels along with recommendations on how to amend your soil for optimum plant specific growth. Call our office for details at 772-7645.

## **Welcome New Staff**



Please help us welcome three new staff members to the District. As shown in the picture, **Annette Meagher** joined our team in February 2008 and is providing assistance in water quality and public outreach programs. Her position focuses on the implementation of U.S. EPA National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Phase II Requirements; coordinating storm drain labeling events and watershed sign installation. **Robert E. (Bob) Sheets, P.E./ R.S.** joined our staff in December, 2007 as Geotechnical Engineer. He is part of the team charged with administration and enforcement of the Hamilton County Earthworks Regulations. Prior to joining the District, Bob worked in a private

engineering practice. **Susan Juriga** came aboard in January, 2008 as our District Administrative Assistant. She is a recent graduate of Indiana Wesleyan University with a bachelor's degree in Accounting. Sue also has extensive experience as an Administrative Assistant.

## **Household Hazardous Waste Collection**

The 2008 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program will be open Saturday, March 1 through Saturday, November 22. The Spring Grove location will be open Saturdays 9 am - 1 pm and Tuesdays 2 pm - 6 pm. Spring Grove location is closed: March 22, May 24, July 5, and August 30. The Cincinnati-Dayton Road location is open Wednesdays from 2 pm - 6 pm. For more information, call 946-7734 or visit the following website [http://www.hcdoes.org/sw/HHW/hhw\\_collection\\_program.html](http://www.hcdoes.org/sw/HHW/hhw_collection_program.html).

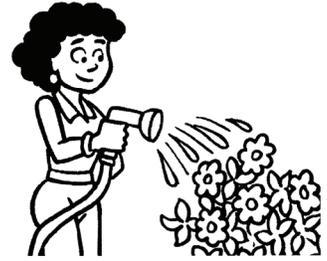
**As a reminder, this program is for Hamilton County residents only!**

# Education Corner

*Gwen Roth, Education Specialist and Cheryl Reinke Peck, Education Assistant*

## National Soil and Water Stewardship Week

The 2008 Stewardship Week' theme is, "Water Is Life!" and is being celebrated April 27 - May 4, 2008. Stewardship week helps reminds all citizens of the power of each person to conserve natural resources and improve the world. When people work together with their local conservation district, that power grows and grows. As these good deeds multiply across the nation's network of conservation districts, the results are spectacular! Contact the district office for more information.



## Poster Contest

The Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District will once again be sponsoring a Poster Contest. The theme is **Water is Life**. Here are the rules:

- ◆ Posters must measure between 8 ½"X11" and 22"X28"
- ◆ Crayons, watercolors, markers or other methods of writing, printing or drawing may be used to create a flat or 2 dimensional piece. Prints or pictures of commercial origin are not permitted.
- ◆ Posters must have the title **Water is Life** incorporated somewhere into the artwork.
- ◆ Posters must be delivered to the Soil and Water Conservation District office by May 2, 2008 (4:00 p.m.) Attn: Cheryl Reinke Peck
- ◆ Please write student's name, age, and grade level on the back of each poster. Also include school name, address, phone number and teacher's name and e-mail.
- ◆ Please only submit 5 posters per sponsoring teacher.
- ◆ Posters will be judged in the following categories: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, based on the conservation message (50%), visual effectiveness (30%), Originality (10%) and Universal Appeal (10%).
- ◆ The winning artist in each grade level category will receive \$25.00, the supporting teacher will also receive a \$25.00 gift certificate to Half Price Books.

Any questions, please contact Cheryl at [cheryl.peck@hamilton-co.org](mailto:cheryl.peck@hamilton-co.org) or 772-7645. Get those art supplies ready to go and show that **Water is Life!**

## 2008 Ultimate Educator Expo "It's Getting Easier Being Green"

Tuesday, September 9, 3:00 - 6:00

Educators, join us at the Cincinnati Zoo for the ultimate opportunity to learn about environmental education resources available in our community. Over 30 exhibitors from governmental, non-profit and educational organizations will provide you with grade level appropriate training opportunities, lesson plans, field trips and tons of free stuff, especially on being "**green**". We offer FREE Zoo admission & parking, break out sessions, refreshments and door prizes just for you. Don't miss seeing the newest Zoo exhibit featuring giraffes and their "**green roof**" barn. Presented by Educators from The Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators (GCEE), The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden and the Environmental Education Council of Ohio (EECO).

To register, go to <http://www.cetconnect.org/ultimateeducatorsexpo/>

# Continued Education Corner

Gwen Roth, Education Specialist and Cheryl Reinke Peck, Education Assistant

## Economics and Environment: Land, Water, and Air Resources

**Grades:** 5 - 8 Teachers

**Date:** Saturday, May 3, 2008, 9 - 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** Scarlet Oaks Career Campus (3254 E. Kemper Rd, Sharonville, OH 45241)

**Registration:** Free, Non-Credit, **Pre-registration is required.**

Help your students learn how to explore land, air and water resources, focusing on environmental issues through the lens of simple economic analysis. Activities will link the social studies and science standards. Learn about local resources for teaching about land, air and water resources. All participants receive a copy of the "Energy, Economics and Environment" teacher guide and a variety of other creative teaching resources. This program is conducted by the Economics Center for Education and Research, University of Cincinnati, in cooperation with the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services and Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District. Designed for grades 5-8. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Graduate credit from UC Center for Economic Education is available at a discounted rate of \$195 (full credit usually cost (\$389)). To register, call Douglas Haskell at 556-2951 or e-mail douglas.haskell@uc.edu.

## Project WILD/WILD Aquatic Teacher Workshop

**Grades:** 4-12

**Date:** Friday, June 20, 2008, 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Location:** Greenacres Foundation (Indian Hill)

**Registration:** \$25.00, **Pre-registration is required, Deadline: May 30**

This workshop will feature water-related activities from the **Project WILD Aquatic K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide** (developed through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) that emphasizes aquatic wildlife and aquatic ecosystems and the **Project WILD K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide** that focuses on wildlife and habitat. Both guides are interdisciplinary, supplementary, environmental and conservation education programs for grades K-12. Teachers who attend will receive both supplementary curricula. Correlations to Ohio's Academic Standards for both are available. Graduate credit from UC Center for Economic Education is available at a discounted rate of \$195 (full credit usually cost (\$389)).

## Celebrate Arbor Day!

Arbor Day is Friday, April 27! What can you do to celebrate?

- ◆ Plant a tree.
- ◆ Care for a tree.
- ◆ Get involved with your community tree committee.
- ◆ Get your friends to help you plant and care for trees.
- ◆ Offer to water a newly planted tree at your school over the summer months.
- ◆ Contact the SWCD office for more great ideas.



## Long Range Planning Meeting



The District held a Long Range Planning Meeting on March 19, 2008 at Raffel's Catering Center. Over 50 people from all walks of life attended and provided valuable suggestions on goals and actions the District should consider in the next five years of service. This plan is a work in progress and we welcome landowner input. If you have any thoughts or suggestions, call Holly at the District office – 772-7645.

We thank Raffel's for the use of their lovely center.



# Earthwork News.....

Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist, Chey Alberto, & Nate Sturm, Urban Technicians

## Field Day for Erosion and Sediment Control on Construction Sites



The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Southwest Ohio Erosion and Sediment Control Field Day will be held at the Warren County Career Center on Tuesday, June 3, 2008 from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Field Day is a joint effort between the Butler, Hamilton and Warren County Soil and Water Conservation Districts in partnership with the Warren County Career Center and various sponsors as a means to educate the construction community, local government officials and other NPDES Phase II stakeholders about compliance with construction site non-point source pollution regulations. The Career Center is located at 3525 N. State Route 48 in Lebanon, Ohio.

This year, the Field Day will focus on the new NPDES Phase II Permit, Green Building, and homebuilders' erosion and sediment control responsibilities. In addition to field expert speakers and product demonstrations, a "mock" subdivision of approximately 5-6 lots undergoing active earthmoving will be displayed to illustrate how individual lot erosion and sediment controls should be implemented in the field.

The cost for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Day is \$40/attendee and covers lunch and educational materials. Three levels of sponsorships are available. Donations of \$100 (Bronze) will receive booth space, advertising, and one free admission to the event. Donations of \$250 (Silver) will get two free admissions, booth space, and name on the event brochure. Donations of \$500 (Gold) or more will receive all of the aforementioned benefits as well as a logo on the brochure and banner to be displayed in a prominent location at the event. All free admissions are accompanied by a free lunch. Inquiries regarding registration, donations, event schedule, etc. can be made to Marsha Rolph at Warren SWCD 695-1861. Questions can also be directed to Chey Alberto or Nate Sturm at Hamilton County SWCD 772-7645.

### Pond Clinic



The Hamilton and Butler County Soil and Water Conservation Districts are sponsoring two Pond Clinics this year to provide information to owners or prospective owners regarding issues associated with owning a pond. Speakers will be on hand to discuss and answer questions about pond construction, fish stocking, aquatic weed control and pond aeration.

The **first clinic** will be on Wednesday, **April 9, 2008**, held at the Hamilton Optimist Club, located at 567 Beissinger Road in Hamilton. The clinic will be from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. For more information, contact the Butler County SWCD at (513) 887-3720. The **second clinic** will be on Wednesday, **June 4, 2008**, to be held at the Winton Centre at Winton Woods located at 10245 Winton Rd. The clinic will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. For more information, contact the Hamilton County SWCD at 772-7645.

In addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> clinic at Winton Woods on June 4<sup>th</sup> will feature new topics on water gardens and storm water retention/detention pond maintenance. Better understanding of the function and maintenance of storm water retention/detention basins are important especially to homeowners or homeowner's association officials of newer or recently built subdivisions.

There will be educational activities for children during both events. Parents are encouraged to bring their children and must pre-register at the Butler SWCD for the April 9th, Clinic and the Hamilton County SWCD for the June 4th clinic. Door prizes will be given out, as well as informational handouts that will be available for the attendees to take home. Both clinics are open to the public and are free of charge. For additional information, directions or to pre-register for children activities, call the Hamilton County SWCD office at 772-7645 or the Butler County SWCD office at 887-3720. Hope to see you there!

**Board of Supervisors**

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Denny Benson, Secretary  
Nate Holscher, Treasurer  
Sam McKinley, Program Chairman

**District Staff**

Holly Utrata-Halcomb, Administrator  
Susan Juriga, Adm. Assistant  
Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist  
Chey Alberto, Urban Technician  
Nate Sturm, Urban Technician  
Gwen Roth, Education Specialist  
Cheryl Reinke Peck, Education Ass't.  
Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist  
Annette Meagher, Public Involvement  
Coordinator  
Robert Sheets, Geotechnical Engineer  
Willie Potter, Design Technician

**NRCS**

John Williams, D.C.  
Jeff Barnes, Soil Conservationist

**Additional Up Coming Events**

**Make Your Own Rain Barrel Class**—Every Weds. through May 14  
Cost \$60.00 Call Don Brannen at McKie Rec. Center - 513-681-8247

**Pond Clinic**—April 9 & June 4, Chey Alberto 772-7645

**Earth Day**—April 19, Pati Schultz 569-7966

**Area IV Envirothon**—May 6, Gwen Roth 772-7645

**Clean Sweep of the Great Miami**—May 10, Brian Bohl 772-7645

**Crosby Day**—May 18, Gwen Roth 772-7645

**Bugfest at Cincinnati Museum Center**—June 7, Amanda Bishop  
287-7000 x.2397

**Paddlefest**—June 27, Heather Mayfield 231-7719

**Mission Statement:** A public organization committed to assisting the citizens of Hamilton County through education, technical assistance and leadership to be stewards of our soil and water resources.

*All District programs are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.*

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
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Cincinnati, OH



Hamilton County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
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Cincinnati, Ohio 45246-3411