

STEAM

The monthly newsletter of the Green Lake Area Sustainability Team*

For November 2011

Compiled by Jason Kauffeld, Green Lake County UWEX

***STEAM meets the first Tuesday of every month from 2-3pm in the training room of the County Government Center in Green Lake. The meeting is an open discussion of current projects, ideas for the future, and a sharing of advice and lessons learned.**

Next meeting is Tuesday, December 6 and is open to all. Please come and contribute!

An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, UWEX provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements. Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are kept confidential.

TOP STORIES / RECOMMENDED SITES

Here is a short animated video put out by Bay Localize in California called "Who Ate the Economy?" <http://www.baylocalize.org/whoate>

In this short animation, psychologist Tim Kasser discusses how America's culture of consumerism undermines our well-being. When people buy into the ever-present marketing messages that "the good life" is "the goods life," they not only use up Earth's limited resources, but they are less happy and less inclined toward helping others. The video both lays out the problems of excess materialism and points toward solutions that promise a healthier, more just, and more sustainable life. To watch the video, visit: <http://www.newdream.org/resources/high-price-of-materialism>

A humorous short animation about food wastage and food miles, told from the viewpoint of a frozen chicken: [Foul Plea](#)

EDUCATION/ HOW TO / TRAINING

[Food Safety Education and Planning for Agritourism Providers](#), Webinar Wednesday, December 14, Noon to 1pm (ET). Free -- open to all interested. Understanding the latest in food safety is essential for farmers who sell products directly to consumers. This webinar will present the latest in food safety and food-based risk management issues specifically aimed at those involved in agritourism, including u-pick operations, farm stands, CSAs, prepared meals, and other activities where visitors and food come together on a farm. Whether you are a farmer or an Extension educator supporting farmers, the webinar will provide up-to-date information, best practices, and future directions in risk management and food safety in agritourism.

The Georgetown Climate Center, a nonprofit organization based at Georgetown Law in Washington, DC, has launched the Adaptation Clearinghouse, an online database and networking tool to assist state and local policymakers, resource managers, and others who are working to help communities adapt to climate change. The clearinghouse can be accessed at: <http://www.AdaptationClearinghouse.com>.

The University of Illinois has developed a free, open-source textbook titled "Sustainability: A Comprehensive Foundation" to serve as a comprehensive textbook for teaching introductory sustainability courses. Each chapter is written by a recognized expert in the field. <http://www.illinoiseducator.uillinois.edu/opentxt/default.htm>

[Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education at UWSP celebrates 20 years](#), Stevens Point Journal, Nov. 3. For two decades, the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education has helped school districts around the state integrate environmental aspects into their curriculum and train teachers. WCEE's work has helped turn Wisconsin into a leader in environmental education, so much so, that other states model their own efforts after the WCEE...

The book titled "Local Climate Action Planning" is now available from Island Press. The book is intended as a basic guide for preparing local-level strategic plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. Order Local Climate Action Planning here: www.islandpress.org/lcap. Use promo code 4LCAP at checkout to receive 20% off.

BUILDINGS

Green Infrastructure for Counties introduces green infrastructure principles and presents county successes in managing green spaces, greenways and natural lands for public benefit. To access, click [here](#).

[First National Green Building Code Approved!](#) For the first time, the US has a national green building code. The International Green Construction Code (IGCC), approved last week after two years of development, applies to all new and renovated commercial buildings and residential buildings over three stories high.

BUSINESS and EMPLOYMENT

[Sustainability Reporting Evolves to Include More Water Risk, Supply Chain Disclosures.](#) As the number of companies compiling sustainability reports grows, the content of those reports is evolving to include more focus on water impacts and supply chain information, according to corporate sustainability officials and consultants. Sustainability reporting provides corporate disclosure on environmental, social, and governance performance and management, including strategies and goals.

[Can Milwaukee become the Silicon Valley of water?](#) Zetland, who predicts that water will be treated like it is limited and like gasoline, has followed Milwaukee's push closely. The city's water council invited Zetland to speak at its Global Water Summit in September and has questioned the idea of Milwaukee becoming like Silicon Valley.

ENERGY

[EPA showcases new environmental apps.](#) The [Light Bulb Finder](#), a mobile phone application that helps users pick more energy-efficient bulbs for their homes, was the overall winner of the Environmental Protection Agency's [Apps for the Environment](#) challenge.

[Could Shale Gas Reignite the U.S. Economy?.](#) Unlocking vast reserves of shale gas could solve the energy crisis, the jobs crisis, and the deficit. Now, about fracking's safety ...

["Wisconsin among nation's top biomass crop producers,"](#) Wisconsin Ag Connection, Nov. 30. A recent release of science-based biomass cropping guidelines shows that Wisconsin is one of the country's top states in planting and harvesting biomass crops. The document, titled 'Wisconsin Sustainable Planting and Harvesting Guidelines for Nonforest Biomass,' is the result of a two year joint project...

ENVIRONMENT

["EPA leader criticizes House GOP for undermining regulations,"](#) WisBusiness, Nov. 15. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson defended her agency's initiatives under the Obama administration before a UW-Madison audience today, chastising House Republicans for a series of votes she says undermine the nation's environmental regulations...

[Walking on Water: Essays for the Central Sands.](#) I lost my lake—is it in your field? This question is not uncommon in Wisconsin. When farmers pump huge quantities of groundwater to irrigate fields, the water levels of surrounding streams, rivers and lakes may sink—causing a flood of controversy. Some people want to irrigate farm fields; others want their surface waters left untouched, unsiphoned, and brimming. This is a collection of twenty engaging, informative, and often colorful essays presenting opinions about how groundwater should be used, allocated, and preserved in Wisconsin—opinions of farmers, conservationists, lakeshore owners, government officials, and longtime Wisconsin residents.

FOOD

Direct and Intermediated Marketing of Local Foods in the United States. [This new USDA study](#) uses nationally representative data on marketing of local foods to assess the relative scale of local food marketing channels.

Cleveland Could Become 100% Self Sufficient in Food Production. A recent study by Ohio State University concludes that Cleveland residents could meet all their basic nutritional needs from [food raised within the city limits](#) while retaining \$29 million to \$115 million in the local economy. Reaching this goal would necessitate urban gardening plots on most vacant lots, growing food on some commercial rooftops, and helping homeowners grow food on their own property.

Food System Wiki Seeks Contributors. [This Wiki](#) aims to present a comprehensive guide to all food system and agriculture development-related terms, viewing a food system as "a dynamic structure consisting of the production, distribution, acquisition, consumption and disposal of food."

[Wisconsin Farm to School Summit.](#) The Wisconsin Farm to School Summit will showcase current efforts across the state, feature new resources and highlight opportunities for farm to school programs and policy. It will be held January 25 at the Lake Lawn Resort in Delavan, and will be followed by the [Wisconsin Local Food Summit](#) on January 26-27. More information is available [here](#).

Here is a link to a story about the passage of Local Food and Self-Governance Ordinances in Maine: <http://www.energybulletin.net/stories/2011-05-04/third-maine-town-passes-landmark-local-food-ordinance>.

Here is a link to a template for such an ordinance:

<http://localfoodlocalrules.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/localfoodlocalrules-ordinance-template.pdf>.

RECYCLING

[UW recycles 350 tons of e-waste in 12 months](#), WISC-TV, Dec. 2. The University of Wisconsin-Madison has managed to become very effective at keeping electronic waste out of area landfills. New statistics from the university show more than 350 tons of computers, monitors and other electronic equipment have been recycled by the UW between July 2010 and June 2011...

TRANSPORTATION

[The Hidden Toll of Traffic Jams](#). Scientists Increasingly Link Vehicle Exhaust With Brain-Cell Damage, Higher Rates of Autism. Congested cities are fast becoming test tubes for scientists studying the impact of traffic fumes on the brain. As roadways choke on traffic, researchers suspect that the tailpipe exhaust from cars and trucks—especially tiny carbon particles already implicated in heart disease, cancer and respiratory ailments—may also injure brain cells and synapses key to learning and memory.

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