

DCEC Newsletter

Environmental News for Door County



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Summer 2011

Successful Water Testing Program in Liberty Grove

The Board of Directors and the Water Quality Committee of the Door County Environmental Council wish to express their appreciation for the Town's successful efforts to determine the groundwater quality throughout the town of Liberty Grove.

When our water committee assumed the responsibility for establishing a cooperative testing venture with the Town we were not sure how this concept would be received, and we were delighted when the Town Board agreed to pursue the testing program.

The cooperative action in establishing the publicity information, sample bottle distribution and collection, and the ultimate recording of test results give proof that organizations such as ours, and town officials can work together for the benefit of all town residents. The help of many volunteers also made this program a great success by sharing the workload involved in sample recording of over 100 individual samples.

It may be conducive to renew the testing effort after a significant period of time to monitor any changes that have occurred and to maintain an ongoing permanent record of problem areas, and identify possible sources for long-term contamination potential

We are proud of the positive reception and cooperative sponsorship given this important health issue by the Liberty Grove Town Board and we thank you for taking the lead in Door County. We also hope that other towns will follow this concept and utilize the reasonable testing program from UW/Stevens Point, establishing groundwater water data throughout the County.

D.C.E.C. Summer Program Coming Soon August Seminars

The **annual free summer public program** will headline environmental activist, **Ed Garvey, prominent Madison attorney, co-founder of "Fighting Bob.org"** and experienced political analyst promoting return to honest representation of the citizens. The annual "Fighting Bob Fest" draws thousands of participants wanting return to the progressive movement that was originated by "**Fighting Bob Lafollette**" the political reformer of the 1920's. Lafollette's efforts brought about reform in Wisconsin politics that was badly needed then and resulted in the clean and honest reputation for our state.

Through his years of experience in Madison and Washington, Mr. Garvey has again seen the need to return to a mode of environmental protection and reform to ensure that our democratic society endures as the founders intended. Don't Miss this important presentation on the future direction of our State!

**Wednesday evening August 17th at the BAILEY'S
HARBOR TOWN HALL 7:00 p.m.. Come early!**

Free Refreshments



The 2nd of the summer seminars continue with a presentation by John Peck, Executive Director of Family Farm Defenders, a Wisconsin organization dedicated to helping family farms that deal with the competitive pressure created by mega-farm operations. His talk will also address the issue of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) and the effect on natural and organic crops.

**Collins Learning Center at
CROSSROADS at BIG CREEK,
Wednesday, August 31st 7:00 p.m.**

September 17th Dr. Roger Kuhns will be highlighting new ideas in Community Gardening, Organic production and Sustainable Food into the Future. Dr. Kuhns comes with extensive world experience and credentials to give insight into food sustainability for local adaptation and internationally.

**Collins Learning Center at
CROSSROADS at BIG CREEK,
Wednesday, September 17th 7:00 p.m.**

We Must Keep Our Lakes and Bays Clean

Our laws to protect and clean our waters are at grave risk and we need you to call your lawmaker today and tell them to vote "no" to H.R. 2018. The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act would roll back 40 years of Clean Water Act protection by stripping away EPA's authority over our nation's water quality standards.

Before we had the Clean Water Act, each state was free to set their own standards, which resulted in a "race to the bottom" to attract industry. This also created great conflicts between the states when one state's pollution problems were passed downstream to another. The Clean Water Act enabled EPA to create a level playing field for the water quality across the country that improved our waters and protected public health. H.R. 2018 would throw us right back into the dirty water ways of the past and risk undoing 40 years worth of efforts to clean and restore our waters.



Photo by: Jim Olson

If passed, this law would:

- Prevent EPA from requiring states to develop strong, consistent regulations to protect our waters.
- Eliminate EPA's authority to step in when a state-issued Clean Water Act permit is inadequate.
- Weaken our efforts to achieve "fishable, swimmable" waters across the U.S.
- Send us back to a time when industries were free to dump their toxic sludge into our waters.

To add insult to injury, the House Appropriations Committee released the fiscal year 2012 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, which slashed EPA's budget by \$1.5 billion, most coming from reductions to the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), which were cut 55% and 14% respectively. These programs provide critical investments for states to update and improve water infrastructure and ensure safe, clean water supplies for communities. This funding is critical to fixing discharges from aging and failing sewer systems, urban storm water, and other sources that continue to pose serious threats to our lakes and rivers, endangering not only public health but our economic stability.

Call or write your Congressperson and let them know you want them to oppose H.R. 2018, the Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011, and to support funding Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds at 2011 levels. To find your Members' phone number, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

The Great Lakes Compact

The Great Lakes Compact that we supported and promoted for years has hit a snag recently as the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact has not received any money from the states, leading to questions of its effectiveness. Effective in December 2008, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact was the first legally binding compact to govern the region. Signed by the governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, the compact joins the states in the common goal of regulating the region's water use and reducing diversions of water out of the basin.

Each state met the first deadline in December 2009 and submitted a report to the council on existing Great Lakes programs and regulations. No state, however, fully met the second deadline in December 2010 to submit a water conservation program and implementation plans, according to a report last month by the Natural Resources Defense Council. A report

released this week by the National Wildlife Federation found similar results.

NWF found that of the four states that did develop goals and objectives for their conservation plans -- Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin -- only the latter two did so "through a thoughtful, open planning process." When states have adopted goals, they have chosen the "bare minimum" required by the compact, the NWF report found. "No state, when faced with the choice, has opted to create a mandatory new program" for conservation and efficiency, the report states. "The ugly reality is that the failure of implementation in this area is not a problem of a few bad apples, but is widespread across the region," the report continues. In view of the present political situation with Wisconsin "open for business" it would be safe to assume that funding from our State will be non-existent for controlling water uses by anyone with a designed purpose of creating jobs, real or imagined.

(JMV)

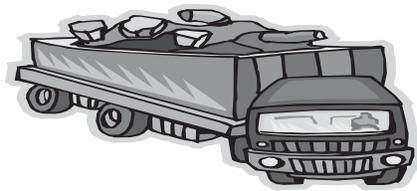
Europe Produces Clean Energy From Trash

Why is Europe ahead of the U.S. in using clean incinerators that turn garbage into energy?

Denmark has 29 waste-to-energy plants located throughout that country and they have reduced the country's energy costs significantly. Copenhagen boasts the largest generating plant, *Vestforbraending*, and has few complaints, with other wealthy suburbs having similar plants located nearby.

Far cleaner than conventional incinerators, this new type of plant converts local trash into heat and electricity. Dozens of filters catch pollutants, from mercury to dioxins that would have emerged from similar plants a decade ago. In that time, such plants have become both the mainstay of garbage disposal and a crucial fuel source across Denmark. Their use has not only reduced the country's energy costs and reliance on oil and gas, but also benefited the environment, diminishing the use of landfills and cutting carbon dioxide emissions. The plants run so cleanly that *many times more dioxin* is released from home fireplaces and backyard barbecues than from incineration.

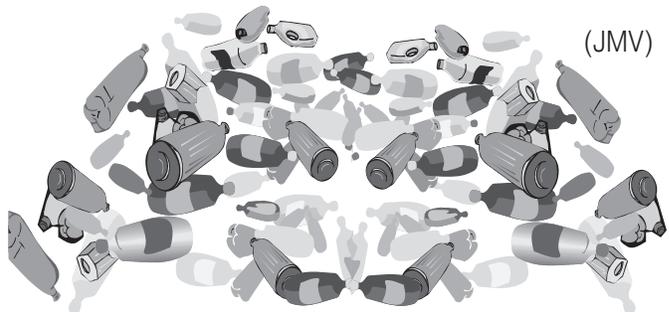
Many countries that are expanding their waste-to-energy capacity, like Denmark and Germany, typically have the



highest recycling rates, only the material that cannot be recycled is burned. In Denmark plants are placed in the communities they serve, no matter how affluent, so that the heat of burning garbage can be piped into homes. Planners take pains to separate residential traffic from trucks delivering garbage, and some of the newest plants are encased in outer shells that resemble sculptures.

While new state-of-the-art landfills do collect the methane that emanates from rotting garbage to make electricity, they churn out roughly twice as much climate-warming gas as waste-to-energy plants do for the units of power they produce. Methane, the primary global warming gas emitted by landfills, is 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide, the gas released by burning garbage, according to a 2009 EPA study.

The fact that real estate for landfills is still readily available in the United States and Canada makes the conventional landfill process more attractive now, but that is about to change dramatically as communities become educated in the many advantages of local garbage incineration in a proper facility.



Oneida Nation's Electrical Generation Plans

Recently, the nearby Oneida Tribal Nation announced plans for an electrical generating facility to operate entirely on garbage collected within the cities of Green Bay and DePere. The original plans were to locate that facility in the Town of Ashwaubenon which met with serious opposition so the location was changed to Hobart Road where it likely would be more acceptable.

The Oneida Nation had applied to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the necessary permits to facilitate planning and to begin construction of this generating plant. Several environmental groups including DCEC have taken a position that this proposal needs to be further evaluated by the EPA and other federal agencies before it can proceed if the detailed evaluation allows it.

After those obvious concerns by Midwest Environmental Advocates, DCEC and other groups were voiced to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, that State agency will require further study and evaluation by the United States Department of Energy and the Federal

Environmental Protection Agency. If the approval is given by these two federal departments it is likely that Wisconsin DNR will follow and allow construction and operation. DCEC supports sustainable and ecologically acceptable alternatives to landfills.

There is always the problem that some hazardous material will be co-mingled with the garbage to be incinerated in this facility, but the supportive reasoning is that it consists of a very small amount. Also if it is known that the material is going to be burned and not buried in a landfill, *out of sight*, people *may* be more selective in keeping hazardous material out of the household garbage.

Remember that compact unbroken fluorescent bulbs that are burned out can be brought for proper recycling in an original package to any public event that DCEC sponsors during the year. The large long tubes are not acceptable through our program, and be very careful not to break any of these bulbs as they contain mercury which escapes if they are broken.

A Fond Good-bye to Carol Farwell

The Board of Directors and Staff of DCEC were all saddened by the loss of our good friend and board member, Carol Farwell on July 15th. She had served this organization diligently as president for several years, and most recently as co-secretary for many more. Carol was an untiring, sincere and dedicated individual who gladly shared her love for the resources of this County, Wisconsin and New Mexico. As long-time residents of Ephraim, she and Bob freely gave their efforts in support of all things good for the Village and they both could be counted on for cooperation and dedication.

In recounting the years he had known Carol Farwell, Jerry Viste, executive director of DCEC commented, "Carol was one of those unique individuals who are an asset to any organization and always had time for a friendly conversation. She brought a cheerful attitude even in the times we were facing major challenges. We will all miss our Carol very much".

The Board of Directors and Staff extend their sympathy to the family of Carol Farwell. We will always cherish her memory and her outstanding dedication and work in support of our environment and this organization for most of its many years.

A memorial service is planned for later this fall to honor the memory of Carol Farwell.



◦ doing your part ◦ making a difference ◦ doing your part ◦ making a difference ◦ doing your part ◦

Helpful "Do It Yourself" Bits 'n Pieces

It was more than 2 years ago that I asked readers for their ideas on the little things they do in life to reduce their carbon footprint and I am still getting great ideas when I'm out and about. I'm passing some of them on to you to see if you find them adaptable to your life.

Mineral Deposits on the Showerhead: Instead of using harsh chemicals to clean it, put the showerhead in a bowl of 1/2 cup baking soda and 1 cup vinegar and let sit for several hours. Rinse with hot water and that should loosen up the gunk. If your showerhead is too stubborn to take off, use a plastic bag of the solution and attach it around the showerhead with rubber bands, twist-ties, or tape and let it soak overnight.

You can use the same mixture on the mineral deposits around the faucets of the sink. Just let the mix sit for 20 minutes and scrub with an old toothbrush. If you have a kitchen sink sprayer, use the same method as the showerhead. This same mix of baking soda and vinegar can also be used to get the mineral deposits out of flower vases. Again, let it sit for a few hours and rinse clean.

Baked-on Microwave Splatters: If the inside of your microwave is dirty, you don't need any chemical sprays for those baked-on messes, just wet your dishcloth and cook in the microwave for 2 minutes. Let it sit inside with the door closed for another 5 minutes or so and the baked-on gunk should wipe off easily. The wet cloth makes steam for easy cleaning.

Microwave as a Disinfectant: The heat of the microwave can help disinfect many items, but the items should always be wet before "Cooking". A wet dishcloth cooked for 2 minutes will kill germs between washings. Wet your toothbrush and cook for 40 seconds to kill the bacteria that lay between the bristles. Sponges are notorious for harbouring bacteria so put a wet sponge in to cook for 2 minutes to reduce germs. Remember ALWAYS wet the item first and keep an eye on them or they may start on fire in the microwave.

Mesh Laundry Bags for Produce: You probably use cloth bags for your groceries but have a collection of those darn plastic produce bags in the closet. I found mesh laundry bags used for fine washables at the Dollar Store (4 in a pack) that work well for apples, cukes, zucchini and other individual produce. You can then clean them by using in the washing machine for your delicate items just remember to put them in your cloth shopping bags before heading to the market.

Substitutions for that Can of Shaving Cream: Finally, no more aerosol cans going into the landfill if you take one of the new foam soap dispensers and mix 1/3 lotion hand soap with 2/3 water and fill the container. Use lotion hand soap not just liquid hand soap for a smooth, creamy texture. The foam soap container pumps air along with soap as it dispenses, thus the foam. Shaving cream is basically lotion soap with air pumped into it, so you can make your own refillable shaving cream. Make sure to shake the homemade mixture for a minute or so to mix it up or else it will be too thick to flow through the air pump. The lotion soap can be purchased in a 48 oz. bulk size for more savings and less waste.

Thank you for all the suggestions you have given me to pass on to others. Keep 'em coming!

Eileen Andera DCEC President

◦ doing your part ◦ making a difference ◦ doing your part ◦ making a difference ◦ doing your part ◦

Planning For The Future of Our Great Lakes

Condensed from the first of 12 public presentations July 18th explaining the current progress report by Dr. Gene Stakhiv, spokesperson for the Commission.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) in 2007 began a 5-year study of future water levels in all of the Great Lakes. Lake Superior has been regulated since 1914 and the regulation there occurs with the control structures at the Sault Ste. Marie in the St. Mary's river. As a result of that control and with naturally occurring benefits, Lake Superior is the most stable of the Great Lakes.

Lakes Michigan and Huron are considered for regulation purposes as one water-body as they are directly connected and at the same water level. The extreme high water level in both lakes is at **plus 3** feet with the low level at **minus 3** feet giving a possible extreme variation of from high to low of 6 feet. There are no control facilities for either of these two lakes, and there are several diversions withdrawing water for various municipal uses. The Lake Superior water entering Lake Michigan is surplus water in excess of that needed to operate the generating plants, locks, navigation channels, and reasonably normal river flow while maintaining the nearly constant Lake Superior level, and is limited at certain times.

The new plan **must** address the concerns about economic and environmental issues which were not an integral part of the 1914 international treaty and play an important part of lake management now. These concerns were solicited from individuals and agencies that are dependent on all of the lakes'

waters for all purposes, commercial and recreational.

The other lake level control structure is at the outlet of Lake Ontario at the Niagara River/falls and primarily controls water levels in Lake Ontario. As predicted, the St. Lawrence Seaway opening caused a complete disruption of the natural forces that had controlled lake levels for centuries. More forces are at work ever since the ice age retreated as the weight of 1000 feet of ice covering the Great Lakes area was removed slowly. As the ice melted we now are experiencing "morphing" of the lake region, with the northern portion of the lakes sinking at 5" every 50 years while the southern lake bottoms are rising the same amount. While this seems like a small amount of change, it will continue and have an effect on each of the Great Lakes

To further complicate planning for restoration and maintenance of the Great Lakes, the climate change effects must be addressed with the anticipated effects being: (1. Increase in precipitation and more frequent and intense storms. (2. Increase in evaporation and wind speed. (3. Increased lake temperature in all lakes, (4. Slight increases to the water supply in winter and spring with decreases in supply resulting in lower levels in summer and fall.

The suggested quick fix is to build a new control structure in the **St Clair River (Lake Huron)** and using existing and new control structures to regulate the **Great Lakes/St Lawrence River** on a basin-wide basis. You can examine the charts and maps on our website: http://www.dcec-wi.org/issues_dcec.html (simply copy and paste to your browser).



Another Out of State Owned Mega Farm in Wisconsin

The public hearing for the latest Milk Source project, Richfield Dairy, in Adams County was held on July 18th 2011 at the Adams County Community Center in Adams, Wisconsin. This is the latest assault on traditional family farms in Wisconsin by mega-farm plans for facilities owned by out-of-state financiers. The promoters organized a well-regimented parade of supporters who had prepared scripts and a rehearsal session prior to the hearing. The local opposition was countered by those who had a vested interest in promoting this latest huge proposal.

Adams County is an integral part of the Wisconsin River flowage, borders the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge and has 49 lakes consisting of 2,309 acres within the county. This has been an agricultural county historically, with 18,000 residents. Many of these residents have been farmers who will be urged to sell or rent their land to the mega-operators, effectively phasing out the family farms in the area.

This latest proposal brings the total number of cows for all five MilkSource Mega Dairies to approximately 26,100. That takes the place of 174 average family farms of 150 cows.

Richfield Dairy Information: Adams County
-Construction of the proposed facility is tentatively scheduled to begin in March, 2012. The facility anticipates reaching the 6,270 animal unit threshold by 2013. The project cost is estimated at \$35 million. The facility expects to employ ~ 40 staff with an estimated annual payroll of \$1.5 million.

The out-of-state applicant owns and operates four other permitted confined animal feeding operations in Wisconsin: Tidy View Dairy (7000 dairy cows/9400 animal units, Outagamie County), Omro Dairy (2500 dairy cows/3500 animal units, Winnebago County), Rosendale Dairy (8000 dairy cows/11,500 animal units, Fond du Lac County) and the recently permitted New Chester Dairy (4300 dairy cows, 250 steers/6270 animal units). This latest Permit can be viewed at: http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/ww/drafts/richfield_dairy_perm.pdf (If the link doesn't work copy and paste with your web browser).

Please send written comments to: Terence Kafka, DNR, 5301 Rib Mountain Dr., Wausau, WI 54401, Terence.Kafka@Wisconsin.gov

This project represents the latest assault on a way of life for people in Wisconsin that have made agriculture a respected and admired method of

making a living and raising a family with inherent traditional values. DCEC found that when we presented Sustainable Agriculture twenty years ago as an option to the "more is better" concept that was promoted by the University of Wisconsin, we discovered that the most staunch enemies of sustainable thinking were the large dairy processors and the University System, with few exceptions. Our Sustainable Agriculture effort which continued for 10 years, ran out of supporting funds and the interest waned for most of the participants. We were ahead of our time and some of the serious farmers continue the good practices.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has made attempts to regulate these mega-operations and control the negative aspects of these large animal numbers, but with little effective support from the State legislature with the powerful lobbyists in charge in Madison and Washington. Now more than ever before, the State's effective control is minimal. Pollution violations meet with token fines and citizen complaints are the only real tools that can bring about any change in operational methods. A classic example is right next door in a neighboring county where one of the mega-operators was given two citations for stream pollution, he paid \$300,000 fine and continues as before. This is no time to be weakening water protection regulations anywhere!

(JMV)



DCEC Endowment Fund

The *DCEC ENDOWMENT FUND* exists so that the future of Door County's wild spaces and family farms can be protected far into the future.

Every year, the fund grows.

You can help this important fund grow even faster by remembering DCEC in your estate. Each bequest, through your wills and estate plans, helps to bring us one step closer to financial independence, allowing us to take tough, sometimes unpopular positions that protect our county for our future generations.

So, whether you can contribute now or later, please make a point of supporting *DCEC ENDOWMENT FUND*.

Legacies, memorials and direct gifts are all deeply appreciated. Please call or have your advisor call, Jerry Viste at (920) 743-6003 for further information.

door county environmental council

- () \$ 25 Individual
- () \$ 35 Family
- () \$ 100 Donor
- () \$ ___ Other
- () \$ 50 Sustaining
- () \$ 15 Student/Limited

This amount would really help! Thanks!

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Door County Voter? () yes () no

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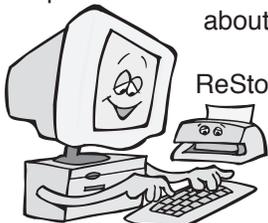
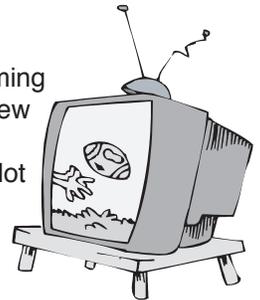
- Recycle, Recycle, Recycle... There's now a place for old TV's, Computers and Small Batteries

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The **Habitat for Humanity ReStore** in Sturgeon Bay is now offering recycling for electronic items. For \$5 an item, the ReStore will accept things like TVs, computers, monitors, DVD players, cell phones and cameras.

ReStore Manager Leslie Boden says they're even seeing some of the old console-style televisions coming in that have been in storage for a long time waiting for a place to take them. Boden says because of new laws a lot of e-waste can't be put in landfills anymore. He says a lot of the stuff is recycled in state.

"The glass is actually recycled here in Wisconsin -- that goes for the televisions and monitors -- and a lot of the plastics out of both of those components are being recycled here in the state and getting 're-pelleted' and then those pellets are resold to be used to make clothing or plastic items for just about any use.



ReStores of Wisconsin have signed a contract with Vintage Tech to do the recycling. The ReStore can accept items during their normal business hours, Thursday and Friday from 8-4 and Saturday from 9-2. They're located at 410 N. 14th Ave. in Sturgeon Bay. For more information, call 920-743-2869.

Used Small Batteries can be brought to **Door County Waste and Recycling Center** at 1509 Division Road in west Sturgeon Bay (Division Road connects Shiloh Road and County U) during normal business hours. Batteries should have both ends taped to eliminate contact with metal to prevent any spark from the electrical discharge that might be remaining.

...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend.



DCEC Incorporated in 1970 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation