



# AIR CURRENTS

Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air Newsletter

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## WPCA Message from the Chair

Just as your summer may have flown by like a swift breeze, so has my stint as WPCA Chair. While I still have a few more months to go in my two-year term, allow me time to reflect.

I think that we all can be proud that as an organization, we have made a good effort to meet a strategic goal of improving communication with our members. Two examples of this effort are the revival of this quarterly newsletter and providing peer-learning opportunities like the one you will read about below. I hope you agree and I am encouraged about the coalition's future.

Be well– *Erin Lee*, WPCA Chair

## Up on a Roof: Seeing the Site and Sights

It was nearly a year ago when members of the Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air Steering Committee identified a work plan activity to seek out more networking and peer-learning opportunities similar to what takes place at the annual Clean Air Extravaganza.

For our inaugural member site visit, we took up an offer from last year's Commuter Champ, Rockwell Automation, to open up their facility to WPCA members.

Mary Joann "Majo" Thurman, Director of Environment, Health & Safety, at Rockwell Automation provided an overview of their sustainability efforts and Steve Strzok, Facilities Manager, walked the audience through the three year process for obtaining their recent Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification. The certification is very impressive given that the iconic building, known to many as Milwaukee's *Polish Moon*, is over one hundred years old.

The truly fun part of the visit, besides the nice refreshments, was seeing their expansive green roof and allowing us to go up into the clock tower to get a 360 degree panoramic view of the city—all of which was very impressive.

Equally impressive was the opportunity to meet other attendees and the distance some of them made to be part of the event. We extend a thank you to Rockwell Automation for opening their facility up to us so we could learn about their worksite, achievements, and enjoy the view.

*Interested in sharing your organizational story and showing your worksite?*

***Please Let Us Know!***



Rockwell Automation's iconic clock tower.



WPCA members take a walk on Rockwell Automation's green roof.



## Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air

### Success Spotlight:

### Urban Ecology Center

The Urban Ecology Center in Milwaukee has a mission to foster ecological understanding as an inspiration for change, neighborhood by neighborhood. The Urban Ecology Center is involved in many activities that attract 90,000 annual visitors, but a primary focus is to provide environmental education for urban youth. What started in a double-wide trailer next to an outdated play area in the corner of a park, has expanded to three branch locations in Riverside Park, Washington Park, and the Menomonee Valley near the newly opened Three Bridges Park.

Across all three branches, Urban Ecology Center relies on a community of partners and volunteers. In 2012, there were over 2,000 individual volunteers who contributed over 17,000 volunteer hours. Among these volunteer hours included a two-week "Plant-a-Thon" that resulted in the planting of over 2,000 trees, shrubs, grasses, and plants for the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum scheduled to open in 2013, at the Riverside Park branch location. This is in addition to the eradication of invasive plants along the floodplain and replacing them with over 8,500 native plants and shrubs. Similar land stewardship activities included replacement of an old elevated bridge and uneven trails with a new accessible pedestrian bridge with a paved path leading into Riverside Park.

The building at Riverside Park has many sustainable features including re-used and recycled materials, a green roof garden, restrooms that use rainwater to flush toilets and a 44 kW photovoltaic system consisting of 256 solar photovoltaic panels. In 2012, the photovoltaic system produced 41,422 kWh of electricity which avoided 37.6 metric tons of carbon emissions. Not only do the panels provide power to the building, the Urban Ecology Center received \$9,331.48 for selling power back to the utility.

The newest facility in the Menomonee Valley utilized similar green building features including a geothermal heating and cooling system and a 270 square foot green roof. At the Washington Park location, Milwaukee County installed a metal roof with a 5 Kw photovoltaic system with a solar thermal system for hot water production.

In addition to the positive structural developments, the Urban Ecology Center weaves in transportation alternatives like hiking and biking into their environmental education and the staff shares a hybrid vehicle to further reduce emissions. For added incentive for not bringing additional vehicles to the centers, staff also have an on-going Eco-Buck program which pays employees \$1 a day for commuting by foot or bike and .50 cents a day for using a car-pool or transit.

### ***Want to be featured in the WPCA Success Spotlight?***

Send us your emission and environmental success story.



Attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Sustainable Energy Efficiency (SE<sup>2</sup>) Conference, October 4, 2013 from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Ave., Milwaukee, sponsored by the Wisconsin Green Building Alliance (WGBA).

The event's theme, "Focus on Sustainable Communities," offers examples of good business and good government throughout the state. It will bring together architecture, facilities, government, construction, education, environmental and design professionals; building owners; local elected officials; university students; and the public. SE<sup>2</sup> features:

- Continuing education sessions and seminars on LEED v4, PACE financing, and net-zero buildings.
- Awards, best practices and fresh ideas to spur investment and development.
- Receptions for outstanding industry networking, including a focus on young professionals.
- Showcase for alternative fuel vehicles from Wisconsin Clean Cities.

**For Program and Registration, visit: <http://wgba.shuttlepod.org>**