

Chicago Green Drinks - January 17, 2007
*Cultivating "Green" Chicago: Local sustainability organizations,
who they are, what they do, and how you can get involved*

* Please note that this list is not a comprehensive roster of Chicago-area sustainability organizations, but rather an imperfect effort at a selective sampling. Please see the Chicago Environmental Network (<http://www.chicagoenvironment.org/member/index.cfm>) and the Illinois Environmental Council (<http://www.ilenviro.org/links.php>) for more info.

1. American Institute of Architects - Committee on the Environment

AIAChicago CotE (Committee on the Environment) / Environment KC educates the Architecture and Building community of the Chicago area on sustainable design and construction. CotE holds monthly discussion, inviting practitioners, from the Chicago and the world, to demonstrate how they promote or integrate sustainable building design and construction. See http://www.aia.org/cote_default

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2. Audubon Chicago Region

Audubon Chicago Region strives to support a culture of conservation through the active involvement of citizens in ecological restoration, biological monitoring and advocacy for nature. We work throughout the greater Chicago area to develop and implement volunteer-driven habitat improvement projects consistent with our mission to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. More information can be found at <http://www.HabitatProject.org> or <http://www.Audubon.org>

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3. Campaign for Better Health Care

Not only does true sustainability call for environmental conservation and economic vitality, it also requires healthy families, healthy workers and healthy communities. The Campaign for Better Health Care (CBHC) advocates for affordable, quality health care accessible to all in Illinois. To learn more about health care reform and how you can get involved, contact Jonathan VanderBrug, Health Care Justice Director, at (312) 913 - 9449 or jvanderbrug@cbhconline.org. Or visit CBHC on the web at <http://www.cbhconline.org>

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4. Center for Neighborhood Technology

Since 1978, CNT has worked to show how urban communities in Chicago and across the country can develop more sustainably. CNT founded I-GO car sharing and the Community Energy Cooperative that enable consumers to live more sustainable lives. These are just a few examples on how CNT works to makes better use of existing resources and community assets; and improves the health of natural systems *and* the wealth of people--today and in the future. <http://www.cnt.org>

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5. Chicago Center for Green Technology

The Chicago Center for Green Technology promotes and advances sustainable homes, workplaces, and communities to enhance the quality of urban life. We work to facilitate this through education and training, research and demonstration, and acting as a resource network. CCGT offers a range of educational programming regarding green technology and sustainable living, and manages a Resource Library both of which are free and open to the public. For more information, please visit <http://www.cityofchicago.org/Environment/GreenTech>

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6. Chicago Conservation Corps

You care. Do something. We'll help. The mission of the Chicago Conservation Corp (C3) is to recruit, train and support a network of volunteers who work together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods through environmental service projects that protect our water, clean our air, restore our land and

conserve energy. C3 is a program of the City of Chicago in collaboration with partners across the city. To participate in our upcoming Leadership Training Course in April, attend an orientation in March. For more information visit: <http://www.cityofchicago.org/Environment/C3> or call (312) 744-9137.

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7. Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

The nonprofit Chicagoland Bicycle Federation has worked for more than 20 years to engage people in bicycling, encourage activity, increase safety, and design a world-class bicycle facilities network. Chicagoland Bicycle Federation is North America's largest bicycling and pedestrian advocacy organization, supported by nearly 6,000 members, more than 1,000 volunteers and 35 full- and part-time staff. For more information on the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, visit www.biketraffic.org or call (312) 427-3325.

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8. Clean Air Counts

Clean Air Counts is a northeastern Illinois regional initiative to reduce ozone-causing emissions, thereby improving air quality and enabling economic development. Clean Air Counts is a voluntary program focused on businesses, municipalities and households that has a variety of strategies to improve air quality, including: energy efficient lighting and equipment, low VOC products and transportation options. Membership is easy and so is reporting of strategies undertaken by members, which is the key to achieving the goal of reducing air pollution by 5 tons a day. <http://www.cleanaircounts.org>

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9. Congress for New Urbanism

The 3,000 members of the Congress for the New Urbanism work around the world to build compact, walkable, sustainable neighborhoods in place of suburban sprawl. New Urbanists are architects, planners, developers, public officials, engineers, citizen activists, and other professionals who are working locally and globally to reshape the built environment, from individual buildings to entire regions. Individuals and firms can join and strengthen our movement at <http://www.cnu.org>.

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10. Delta Institute

The Delta Institute is a nonprofit organization formed in 1998 to develop and test fresh ideas for bringing about sustainable communities in the Great Lakes region. Delta and its affiliates, the Delta Redevelopment Institute and the P2/E2 Center are re-thinking the disciplines of environmental protection and economic development—and figuring out ways to integrate them. Brownfield redevelopment, green purchasing, carbon sequestration, urban agriculture and sustainable product manufacturing are just some of the sustainability program areas we work in. For more information about Delta and its affiliates, visit <http://www.delta-institute.org>

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11. Environmental Law and Policy Center

The Environmental Law and Policy Center (ELPC) works to achieve cleaner energy resources, efficient transportation and land use approaches that lead to cleaner air, and sound environmental management practices that conserve natural resources and improve the quality of life in our communities. One of ELPC's premises is that environmental progress and economic development can be achieved together. Our projects around the Midwest put that policy belief into practice. <http://www.elpc.org>

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12. Foresight Design Initiative

Foresight Design runs Chicago Green Drinks (among other things)! The Foresight Design Initiative seeks to improve and sustain the quality of life in the urban environment through smart design, without sacrificing the needs of future generations. Embracing strategies that engage design practitioners,

government agencies, the business and non-profit communities, and the public, Foresight collaborates to develop and empower initiatives, build community support and engender a positive human evolution. <http://www.foresightdesign.org>

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13. Friends of the Parks

Friends of the Parks (FOTP) is a 501(c)(3) designated park advocacy organization, dedicated to preserving, protecting, and improving Chicago's parks and forest preserves for all citizens. Since 1975, FOTP has increase private and public commitment to Chicago's parks through establishing park advisory councils, developing new parks, renovating playlots, and presenting public workshops and lectures to create and informed citizenry. <http://www.fotp.org>

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14. Illinois Environmental Council

IEC is a 30 year old-statewide organization that educates and empowers organizations and individuals to increase participation on environmental issues. IEC leverages its resources by strengthening and supporting a network of large and small environmental organizations in Illinois. Recent successes include:

- Mandating the removal of mercury filled switches from cars before they are melted down (eliminating 850 pounds of mercury per year).
- Mandating the capping of coal-fired power plants smoke stacks which will reduce mercury pollution by 90% (eliminating 6,000 pounds of mercury per year).
- Preventing \$25 million earmarked for openlands and natural areas funding from being swept into the General Fund for other pet projects. <http://www.ilenviro.org>

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15. Illinois League of Conservation Voters

The Illinois League of Conservation Voters (ILCV) is the political arm of the environmental movement in Illinois. Through elections, we actively support candidates who promote sustainable economic development and oppose candidates who vote for anti-environmental legislation. <http://www.lcvillinois.org>

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16. Illinois Solar Energy Association

The ISEA was founded in 1975 and incorporated in the State of Illinois in 1979. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization supported by our members and volunteers. The ISEA is the Illinois chapter of the American Solar Energy Society (ASES). Our mission is to provide energy education to the Illinois public and promote the widespread application of solar, renewable and sustainable energy methods and technologies. We help our members get educated on clean energy issues and support them in adopting clean energy use in their homes and businesses. <http://www.illinoissolar.org>

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17. The Land Connection

The Land Connection is a nonprofit working to ensure healthy farms, healthy food, and healthy communities. The Land Connection saves farmland, trains farmers in entrepreneurial farming, connects local producers and consumers, and helps educate farmers and the public on the many benefits of growing and eating local organic foods. <http://www.thelandconnection.org>

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18. Local First Chicago

Local First Chicago is a network of locally owned, independent businesses and friends joined together to keep money and character in our neighborhoods by supporting local businesses. Locally owned businesses keep wealth recirculating locally, preserve the culture and character of an area, help maintain walk-able town centers that are more environmentally sustainable, and are committed to place, engaging

in civic concerns, contributing to local non-profits, and responding to the needs of their communities. <http://www.localfirstchicago.org>

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19. Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

The Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is a collaborative network of organizations working to advance energy efficiency in the Midwest. Energy is one of the most important issues of our time -- linked to economic prosperity, domestic security, public health, environmental quality, and quality of life. Wise use of energy is critical to our future. MEEA is the leading source and champion for advancing sound energy policy and energy efficiency programs in the Midwest. Through its policy initiatives and programs, MEEA aims to increase the market penetration of existing energy-efficient technologies and to promote new technologies, products and best practices in energy efficiency. <http://www.mwalliance.org>

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20. North Branch Restoration Project

We are an all volunteer group engaged in restoration of natural areas along the North Branch of the Chicago River, primarily in the Cook County Forest Preserves bordering the river. Our stewards and volunteers work to return health to the native prairies and woodlands, and are proudly celebrating our 30th year of work this year! You can find out a bit more about us by visiting our website at <http://www.northbranchrestoration.org>

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21. Openlands

Founded in 1963, Openlands is a non-profit conservation organization that protects, expands and enhances public open space – both land and water – to provide a healthy natural environment and a more livable place for all people of the greater Chicago region. Openlands' work is a unique combination of advocacy; community organizing and education; technical expertise and planning; and the ability to buy land for preservation. Openlands concentrates on the region's interconnected network of natural areas from community gardens in Chicago's inner-city neighborhoods to the 19,000-acre Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie near Joliet to improve the quality of life for all. <http://www.openlands.org>

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22. Resource Center

For over 30 years, the Resource Center, a non-profit environmental education organization, has led the way in demonstrating innovative techniques for recycling and reusing materials. Too often in the urban setting, abundant and important resources are wasted. Our recovery work aims to reverse waste and to improve the quality of life for urban dwellers. We have been devoted from the beginning to the economic and educational revitalization of city neighborhoods through recycling, urban gardening and other programs that reclaim and reuse resources. <http://www.resourcecenterchicago.org>

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23. Safer Pest Control Project

The Safer Pest Control Project is the only organization in Illinois dedicated to protecting children and their families from the serious health consequences of pesticides. Safer Pest Control Project (SPCP) works to reduce pesticide use and promotes safe, effective alternatives. At the center of our efforts is Integrated Pest Management (IPM), a proven method that emphasizes simple, inexpensive prevention practices that cause the least harm to people and the planet. For 11 years, we've done our work by developing model programs and policies, lobbying, building coalitions, and conducting outreach, training, and advocacy programs. <http://www.spcpweb.org>

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24. SCARCE Environmental Education Center

Through education, the SCARCE team inspires others to preserve and care for the earth's natural resources. Demonstrated in the work, they bring awareness to the importance of building sustainable communities. SCARCE conducts enumerable educational seminars to businesses, organizations (i.e. Shedd), and schools every week. Additionally, they operate many "rescue" programs (read further on their website); among them is the Book Rescue, which has successfully diverted over 2 million books from landfills in their 16 years of operation. SCARCE organizes several community recycling events throughout the year and works diligently on advocacy with government officials regarding critical environmental legislation. <http://www.bookrescue.org>

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25. Sierra Club - Illinois Chapter

The mission of the Sierra Club is to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives. The Illinois Chapter is comprised of 15 local groups and 26,000 members throughout the state who work within communities to protect Illinois air, land, and water quality through a combination of education, scientific monitoring, working to elect candidates committed to environmental protection, and litigation. <http://illinois.sierraclub.org>

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26. Southeast Environmental Taskforce

Southeast Environmental Task Force (SETF) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to serving the Southeast Side and south suburbs of Chicago by promoting environmental education, pollution prevention, and sustainable development. <http://www.southeastenvironmental.org>

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27. Sustain

Through public and private partnerships Sustain encourages sustainable economic development that creates jobs and revitalizes communities in an environmentally sound manner. It's FamilyFarmed.org Program creates opportunities for Midwestern family farmers by connecting them to consumers and trade in search of local food. The 2007 FamilyFarmed.org EXPO will be held at the Chicago Cultural Center on March 23 & 24. For more information go to <http://familyfarmed.org>

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28. The Trust for Public Land - Chicago Office

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come. Within the City of Chicago, since 1999 TPL has expanded or created 10 new park or playground projects, acquiring or facilitating the protection of more than 38 acres of land for parks or playgrounds valued at more than \$24 million. Working with the Chicago Park District, the Department of Planning and Development, and local neighborhood organizations, TPL is helping to expand and create new neighborhood parks, adding more green space in Chicago's underserved and park-poor neighborhoods. <http://www.tpl.org>

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29. U.S. Green Building Council - Chicago Chapter

The U.S. Green Building Council - Chicago Chapter is dedicated to transforming the region's built environment to sustainable, profitable, healthy places to live and work. Through our diverse membership of nearly 400 persons from across the building industry, we offer a variety of educational programs, policy discussions, green building tours, and other events to promote green building within the region. Annually the Chapter offers over 50 programs for over 3,000 participants. More information is available at: <http://www.usgbc-chicago.org>

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