



Environmental Policy

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Environmental Policy Statement

The Warrenville Park District acknowledges its obligation to serve as an environmental role model to the community through the business of the district and the conduct of its employees. As a public institution, the District recognizes the irreplaceable value of a healthful environment for our patrons. The District has an ethical and social obligation to safeguard a critical public resource – the natural environment – and is committed to protecting the environment while meeting the recreational needs of the community. The District also has a duty to establish physical environments and organizational practices that are conducive to the health and well-being of its patrons. The District is committed to developing and using sound environmental policies and best practices, and is committed to promoting and creating programs that encourage sound environmental practices and conservation.

The following environmental policy will provide the guidelines when making decisions to carry out this commitment as we continue to develop environmental action plans for the future. This Environmental Policy compliments the Mission Statement and the Values of the Warrenville Park District and is intended to help the District achieve excellence in programming and operations.

Purchase and Use Environmentally Safe and Sensitive Products

Purchase products for use in facility and park operations that minimize negative environmental impacts, taking into consideration the effects of product production, use, storage, and disposal.

Use and Protect Air, Water, Soil and Wildlife Wisely

Actively seek and implement ways to conserve and protect water and soil, enhance air quality, limit the production and release of damaging pollutants, and protect wildlife.

Use Energy Resources Wisely

Actively seek and implement ways to conserve energy resources and investigate methods of applying alternative energy technologies.

Reduce and Handle Waste Safely

Reduce waste production, reuse and recycle materials from facility and park operations, and handle hazardous and all other wastes according to lawful and safe procedures.

Protect and Restore Open Space

Protect and restore indigenous natural communities such as grasslands, woodlands and wetlands, and promote the reclamation, acquisition, preservation, and management of other open space areas, including river corridors, greenways, and trails.

Provide Environmental Education

Provide education and interpretation opportunities for staff and the public that increase appreciation for the natural world and promote environmentally conscious lifestyles, emphasizing selective consumption and low-impact resource use.

Purchase and Use Environmentally Safe and Sensitive Products

The production, use and disposal of many office, recreation, and maintenance products contributes significantly to the pollution of the air, water, and soil and the destruction of natural communities of plants and animals. Educated product selection in the workplace and at home can mean the difference between an environment safe for all living things, including people, and a planet contaminated with toxic pollutants.

- Purchase products with recycled content wherever possible for use in offices and recreation programs.
- Encourage the conservative use of paper and wood in place of plastics and other non-biodegradable and non-renewable products.
- Eliminate the use of Styrofoam products by staff, volunteers, and park/facility users.
- Reduce the use of disposable products by staff, volunteers, and park/facility users.
- Use electronic mail resources such as phone or computer message systems in place of paper memos.
- Inventory all hazardous materials including cleaners, paints, solvents, sealants, wood preservatives, and office products, and investigate environmentally sensitive alternatives.
- Avoid the use of chlorine-bleached paper products.
- Minimize indoor pesticide use by incorporating integrated pest management within all facilities.

Use and Protect Air, Water, Soil and Wildlife Wisely

All life on earth is dependent upon clean and reliable sources of air, water, and soil. Without these basic life-support systems, the quality of life declines and the diversity of plants and animals on the planet are diminished.

- Reduce vehicle emissions through regular tune-ups and other applicable vehicle maintenance.
- Identify sources of indoor air pollution and implement preventative measures.
- Monitor and remove asbestos as needed or warranted
- When renovating/replacing hardware, retrofit facilities with water conservation hardware.
- Evaluate the impact of cleaners, solvents, and other products on water sources and investigate environmentally sensitive alternatives.
- Use drought resistant and native species for landscaping.
- Investigate alternative snowmelt products, using those that have the least impact upon the surrounding soil, water, and plant life.
- Practice soil management and appropriate landscaping to prevent erosion.
- Incorporate environmental impact considerations in the design process of facilities and parks.

Use Energy Resources Wisely

The majority of energy produced in the United States is derived from non-renewable or limited resources such as oil and coal and from nuclear sources, releasing large amounts of pollutants into the air and/or creating other toxins. Careful conservation of energy resources will minimize pollution while prolonging the lifespan of the non-renewable resources until other alternative and less harmful energy technologies are readily available.

- Plant shade trees near buildings to reduce energy consumption due to air conditioning.
- Plant evergreens and shrubs as windbreaks along building foundations and walls to reduce energy consumption due to heating.
- Design and build energy-efficient buildings, giving consideration to insulation and energy-efficient appliances and incorporating alternative, renewable technologies.
- Conduct energy audits and retrofit buildings with energy-saving devices.
- Improve the efficiency of existing lighting by retrofitting outdoor and indoor lighting with energy efficient bulbs and requiring all new lighting to be energy efficient. Use dimmers and timers where appropriate.
- Properly maintain refrigerators and air conditioners for more energy-efficient cooling.
- Establish minimum and maximum thermostat temperature settings for all facilities.
- Insulate hot water heaters and pipes and reduce temperature settings.
- Consider alternative fuels such as propane and natural gas and alternative energy technologies.
- Maintain vehicles to reduce fuel consumption and implement energy-saving fleet operation procedures.

Reduce and Handle Waste Safely

Americans produce over 154 million tons of garbage every year. Much of this material could have been reused, recycled or reduced at the source. The Warrenville Park District is committed to good management of the environment. Simple steps taken at the Park District to eliminate waste in the work place, reuse materials when possible, and recycle discards can result in measurable waste reduction. Solid waste landfills have negative long-range environmental impacts, drain community resources, and have limited capacity to accept the large quantities of waste generated by our society today.

The Warrenville Park District will make every effort to reduce the solid waste generated on its properties. Four methods will be used to implement this policy; source reduction, reuse of materials, recycling, and purchase of recycled content/materials. Every District department and individual community member has a personal responsibility for implementing this policy.

- **Source Reduction:** All District employees are responsible for implementing practices that prevent waste from being produced and investigating source reduction of waste.
 - Reduce excess use of paper: printing reports and documents on both sides of the paper; printing appropriate numbers of documents; sharing subscriptions; using memo routing slips and keep mailing lists current; using e-mail rather than printed correspondence.

- **Reuse of Materials:** All District employees are responsible for reusing products whenever possible. Examples include using dishes, glasses, and reusable flatware rather than disposable paper and plastic ware.
- **Recycling:** All District employees are responsible for separating identified recyclable materials and placing them in appropriate recycling containers.
- **Purchase of Recycled Content Materials:** All District employees are responsible for taking efforts to purchase and use products manufactured from or containing recycled materials.
 - Use products that are reusable, refillable, repairable, and recyclable. Items requiring the least possible packaging should be purchased when practical. Every effort should be made to prevent excess or unneeded materials from being purchased.

Procedures

The Earth Action Committee will be responsible for implementing this Policy.

- The District will develop and implement a waste reduction and recycling program in accordance with this Policy.
- Purchase and use recycled content when feasible, and include criteria for recycled content products in the purchasing bid process.
- Ensure that all new construction includes designated areas for recycling and solid waste collection and removal.
- Promote recycling and waste reduction in employee orientation.
- Encourage all contractors to adhere to District recycling policies and procedures.
- Taking other appropriate action deemed necessary to implement this Policy.

Protect and Restore Open Space

Open spaces and green places are essential to the health and happiness of all human beings, providing solitude, beauty, and inspiration. Maintaining native natural areas is also imperative to the health, diversity, and balance of all life on this fragile planet Earth.

- Develop and implement plans for the re-establishment and/or restoration of native grasslands and woodland ecosystems.
- Re-establish and protect river corridors, wetlands, and other wildlife habits.
- Provide appropriate recreational access to and enhance public awareness of such restored and protected natural sites.
- Support local efforts to establish greenways.
- Develop and implement recreational programming, while being cognizant of limiting the impact they have on our natural resources.

- Utilize native species for park landscaping.
- Eliminate or control exotic and invasive plant and animal species that inhibit ecological diversity and integrity.
- Abide by existing laws to protect rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species.
- Develop a tree planting and replacement program to reforest park areas in the community.

Provide Environmental Education

As leaders in park management and recreation programming, park and recreation agencies have a responsibility to educate staff and patrons alike about environmentally sensitive lifestyles, helping people renew connections with and heighten feelings for the natural world. An individual's actions on the earth really do make a difference, but "unless we know, we cannot care."

- Involve agency staff in an environmental education program that explains the commitment of the agency to the environment, provide information about environmentally-conscious lifestyles and workplace choices and habits, and stress the need for staff input and involvement.
- Provide the District's adopted environmental policies to contractors and vendors. Promote leisure activities that minimize environmental impact and energy use.
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- Develop and present public programs that enhance the public's relationship with the natural world and teach environmentally responsible lifestyles.
 - Work with local groups to provide environmental-themed programs for kids through adult such as prairie gardening, creating a rain garden, attracting butterflies to your yard, bird sheltering, etc.
- Interpret the natural resources specific to the community via programs, presentations, signage, or brochures.
 - Identify significant trees, bio-diverse areas, and list advantages of biodiversity with park maps and signage.
- Use Earth Day and Arbor Day as vehicles to educate the public about the environment.
- Work with other interested community agencies and organizations to develop and enhance a strong environmental ethic.