



Less Is More: Zero Waste Updates

Chicago Public Schools Cohort

As SGA continues to facilitate the Oak Park Elementary District 97 Zero Waste Schools Cohort, a new cohort is being developed with Chicago Public Schools. This initiative, funded by Peoples Gas, individual schools, and CPS, has already begun with **waste audits at four CPS schools**: Namaste Charter School, Northside College Prep, Pulaski Elementary, and Peterson Elementary. Three additional schools are hoping to join the cohort, with others in the inquiry phase. For more information, contact Jen Nelson at jen@sevendgenerationsahead.org.

IL DCEO Grant Opportunity

The annual IL DCEO Zero Waste Schools Grant Program – the only one of its kind in the country – is expected to put out an **RFP in March**. Funding covers zero waste hard costs up to \$10,000, to help schools increase recycling, eliminate waste sources, and convert food scraps to compost. SGA works with schools on a contractual basis to support the required waste audits, strategy development, and proposal development. For details, contact jen@sevendgenerationsahead.org or contact Brett Ivers from IL DCEO at brett.ivers@illinois.gov.

Holmes and SGA Recognized At Annual Green Awards

SGA and Oak Park's **Holmes Elementary School's Zero Waste Program** were recognized as part of the Village's Annual Green Awards. An enthusiastic student body and faculty from Holmes Elementary were on hand to receive the award, presented to Holmes Principal Suzie Hackmiller by the Village of Oak Park's Karen Rozmus. Congratulations, Holmes!



Get Ahead – Green Tip of the Day

Is your municipality, community's park district, or school district looking for guidance on natural lawn care and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) options? The **Safer Pest Control Project** has developed a valuable toolkit to help large institutions figure out strategy options, regulations, and vendors. [CLICK HERE](#) to access the guide or visit the Safer Pest Control Project website at www.spcpweb.org.

You may also attend a **Natural Lawn Care Workshop** on March 23, 2011 in Des Plaines, IL. It's presented by Safer Pest Control Project, ILCA, MELA, CMAP, Sea Grant, and U of I Extension and will provide information on natural lawn care techniques, products, and resources for landscape professionals, homeowner associations, and municipalities.

Get Involved

Seven Generations Ahead offers numerous opportunities to donate your time and talents toward work that reflects your values. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

A Great Read: The Oak Park River Forest Sustainability Plan

PlantGreen, a project of the OPRF Community Foundation's *Communityworks* initiative led by Seven Generations Ahead and the Delta Institute, has just finished drafting this exciting new road map for the sustainable future of OPRF. To view a **PDF of the DRAFT Plan** [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#) – we encourage you to read and distribute it plus provide your comments using the Feedback Survey link. [CLICK HERE](#)



This ground-breaking plan was developed from the results of nearly 900 PlantGreen surveys completed by residents and community stakeholders, and the input of more than 500 people who attended meetings, community forums, and topic area sessions.

From January through June 2011, PlantGreen will conduct a Plan Review Process, seeking further input from community institutions and sector groups including OPRF businesses, teachers, faith-based congregations, and students. Visit www.sevendgenerationsahead.org for more details!



Fresh From The Farm

Enlightening Kids

SGA's **"Healthy Cooking" class** is off to a great start at Ames Middle School in Logan Square. All 30 student spots filled up in less than 30 minutes – the fastest enrollment of the Elev8 after-school classes offered through June 2011. Ames' curriculum focuses on understanding, sourcing, and preparing healthy, sustainable food as well as basic nutrition and food safety.

Our **"Fresh from the Farm" program** at Humboldt Park's Lowell Elementary School began in early January with nearly 30 students. Lowell's after-school program, in partnership with Children's Home and Aid, focuses on gardening,

nutrition, and wellness for kids. Five parent programs are also being offered at Lowell between January and May 2011.

Teaching Teachers

"Fresh from the Farm" teacher training is coming to downstate Illinois. In two, one-day training sessions, participants in Carbondale (**March 21**) and Springfield (**April 4**) will gain the knowledge and resources needed for immediate implementation of the "FFF" curriculum and will learn how to design, install, and maintain a school garden. The teacher training is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Public Health, Office of Women's Health.



Instituting Change

SGA has been selected as the Farm to School technical assistance provider for the Cook County Department of Health's **Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CCPW) program**, and will be presenting at the CCPW Change Institute on February 15, 2011 in Rosemont, IL. SGA's expertise in the areas of Farm to School programs and school gardens will be showcased for recipients of CCPW grants, including Cook County school districts, municipalities, and other community institutions. SGA will support grant recipients over the next 12 months in all facets of farm-to-school programs. This project is a partnership between the Cook County Department of Health (CCDH) and the Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC).



Save The Date: GreenTown Elgin

GreenTown Elgin will be held on **April 28, 2011**, in collaboration with the City of Elgin. This conference will focus on a wide range of sustainability strategy areas, with a particular emphasis on downtown development and sustainability. For sponsor and registration information, visit www.greentownconference.com.

Good News!

USDA Raises Nutrition Standards for School Meals

For the first time in 15 years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will raise the nutrition standards for school meals. Responding to the growing obesity and diabetes epidemics facing our nation's children, the new standards will **place limits** on high fat foods, sodium, trans fats, and calories, and mandate more servings of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

To learn more [CLICK HERE](#). To read child nutrition expert Marion Nestle's commentary on the new standards [CLICK HERE](#).

Chicago Green Office Challenge Up and Running

The Chicago Green Office Challenge is a friendly competition for commercial property managers and office tenants, which offers **Mayoral and media recognition** to participants for their achievements in greening their operations. The Green Office Challenge helps participants move down the path towards environmental sustainability, and in some cases, towards third-party green building certification through the ENERGY STAR and LEED rating systems. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

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Seven Generations Ahead is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization whose mission is to promote ecologically sustainable and healthy communities. SGA advocates for pro-active community solutions to global environmental issues, and works with municipal, business, and community decision-makers to promote green community development, clean, renewable energy, eco-effective products, zero waste strategies, green building design, and fresh, local, and sustainable food raised using healthy practices.

Generosity is the best gift.

Join us in making 2011 the year of sustainability in the Midwest. Support SGA's work building healthy, sustainable communities by making a donation. [CLICK HERE](#)

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