

eco-calendar



urban farming—a paradigm shift



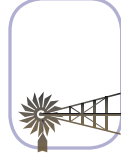
Economic challenges create an opportunity to re-think how we live—from our relationships with family, friends and community to our spending habits, travel choices, as well as our work and home life. According to *The Urban Homestead*, “Homesteading hooks us into the natural world and the passing of the seasons, and reminds us of our place within the greater cycle of life.” This year we will focus on ways to live simpler, more sustainable lives while reducing our impact on the planet’s resources. Educational opportunities will include lasagna gardening, preserving the harvest, working with native plants, edible gardens (not just veggies) and rainwater harvesting.

Small changes can generate big results. The City of Irving is dedicated to increasing environmental awareness and education to support sustainability. For more information about the city’s green initiatives, events and classes, visit www.cityofirving.org/begreen.

How to use this calendar:

Each month of the 2012 eco-calendar includes suggestions and activities to assist residents in their journey to environmental sustainability. The city will host classes, activities and events throughout the year with an emphasis on specific environmental issues. The names and dates of these eco-awareness activities are listed for each month and are identified in the calendar with a windmill symbol (shown at right). Classes are designated with **(c)**; events are designated with **(e)**; and activities are designated with **(a)**. Times, locations and details are listed online. It is recommended that residents register by visiting www.cityofirving.org/begreen and selecting “Educational Opportunities and Activities” or “Events” where applicable.

Dates for classes, events and activities are subject to change. For more information, call (972) 742-2296.



tending the soil

Healthy soil is the key to a successful garden, which can allow nutrients to flow, rain to seep into the soil and microbial activity to abound. The Irving area has a variety of soil types, the majority of which is clay. Compost and organic materials can enrich the clay soil and release the pent-up nutrients. In the words of Malcolm Beck in his book *The Secret Life of Compost*, "In Nature, there is no waste. All is reused, and usually made into something of still greater value for the sustenance of life."

Eco-Awareness Dates

Jan. 2: City Holiday

Jan. 12: Soil Prep ... The First Step to a Great Garden (c)









Jan. 21: Texas Stream Team Activity (a)

Jan. 27: Night Hike on Campión Trails (e)

Jan. 28: Lasagna Gardening (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

20
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January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2 City Holiday	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 	21
22	23 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday (Observed)	24	25	26 	27 	28
29	30	31				

birds of a feather

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun and easy—and it helps the birds.

Eco-Awareness Dates

Feb. 2: World Wetlands Day

Feb. 17-20: National Great Backyard Bird Count

Feb. 18: Great Backyard Bird Count at Bird's Fort (e)

Feb. 18: Master Composter Spring Course – Day 1 (c)






Feb. 18: Texas Stream Team Activity (a)

Feb. 21: Planting an Edible Front Yard (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

Feb. 25: Master Composter Spring Course – Day 2 (c)

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f e b r u a r y

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 5	 6	 7	1	2	3	4
12	13	14	8	9	10	11
19	20	21 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
26	27 Presidents Day	28	22	23	24	25
						

creating something delicious

Your first vegetable garden doesn't have to be complex. Gardening can be as simple or as complicated as you make it. There are many benefits to creating a garden, such as preserving your own harvest. The benefits of preserving your own foods are as numerous as the reasons you chose to grow your garden. You want to present the most wholesome fruits and vegetables to your family. By taking charge of how you grow your garden, you know that the harvest is fresh and chemical free.

Eco-Awareness Dates

- March 3:** Keep Irving Beautiful's Great American Cleanup (e)
- March 10:** Native Gardening Classes (c)
- March 11:** Daylight Saving Time Begins
- March 12:** Plant-a-Flower Day
- March 12-18:** Fix-a-Leak Week
- March 17:** Texas Stream Team Activity (a)
- March 17:** Canning and Preserving (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)
- March 20:** Organic Gardening and Companion Planting (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)
- March 22:** World Water Day
- March 24:** Community Fest (e)
- March 31:** Earth Hour

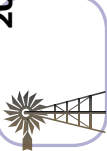
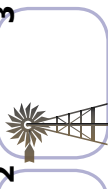
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m a r c h

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Daylight Saving Time Begins

St. Patrick's Day



earth week ... green week

First of all, Earth Day should be every day! However, a national movement is growing to promote "Earth Week," leading up to the nationally designated Earth Day. There are many actions that an individual, school and business can take to be more sustainable resulting in a smaller impact on the planet. The number one action—conserve. Reduce consumption of energy and water. Other actions are: buy local products made in America to help stimulate our own economy; recycle; compost; plant a tree and native plants; collect rainwater; go paperless; or use a reusable shopping bag. Visit www.earthday2012.com to learn more.

Eco-Awareness Dates

April 6: City Holiday

April 7: Nature Encounters-Mountain Creek Trail (Campion Trails south) **(e)**

April 14: Water Conservation In and Around the House **(c)**

April 16-22: Earth Week

April 21: Earth Day Eco-Movie Fest **(e)**

April 21: Texas Stream Team Activity **(a)**

April 22: Earth Day

April 24: Backyard Composting Short Class **(c)**

April 27: Night Hike on Campión Trails **(e)**

April 27: National Arbor Day

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a p r i l

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 City Holiday	14
15 Easter	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

breathing easy

For better or worse, every person impacts air quality. Did you know that vehicles cause half of all ozone-forming emissions? According to Air North Texas, there are a number of actions we can do to keep our air clean and healthy to breathe. Use mass transit such as DART and the TRE; carpool or vanpool; combine trips; limit or avoid idling your vehicle; obey the speed limit; bicycle or walk; consider clean fuels and technology; maintain vehicles by getting them inspected; keep tires properly inflated; change filters; and report smoking vehicles. For more information, visit www.airnorthtexas.org.

Eco-Awareness Dates

- May 1:** Ozone Season Begins
- May 5:** Cinco de Mayo Event (e)
- May 10:** Backyard Composting Short Class (c)
- April 30-May 6:** National Drinking Water Awareness Week
- May 6-12:** International Compost Awareness Week
- May 12:** Rainwater Harvesting (c)
- May 19:** Irving Bicycle Fest (e)
- May 19:** Texas Stream Team Activity (a)
- May 14-18:** Bike to Work Week
- May 18:** National Bike to Work Day
- May 28:** Memorial Day-City Holiday

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m a y

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Mother's Day	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
	City Holiday Memorial Day					

reaping the rewards

Urban farming is starting to take hold in communities across the nation, but, also is developing edible gardens in schools. The Edible Schoolyard curriculum is designed to engage students and teach lessons that involve food, community, health and the environment. Lessons also are designed to integrate concepts taught in traditional math, science and humanities classes. Some of the core concepts taught at the Edible Schoolyard include: cycles, seasonality and change; sustainability; environmental and personal impact of food choices; and wellness through knowledge of healthy choices. To learn more, visit www.edibleschoolyard.org.

Eco-Awareness Dates

June 2: Raising Chickens in an Urban Setting (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

June 5: World Environment Day

June 5: Energy Conservation Techniques (c)

June 9: Summertime Water Usage (c)

June 14: Becoming a Beekeeper (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

June 16: Texas Stream Team Activity (a)

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j u n e

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Father's Day

Flag Day

every drop counts

Whether in a drought or not, water conservation is of the utmost importance. Less than two percent of the earth's water supply is fresh water and only one percent of the earth's water is suitable for drinking. Did you know that up to 70 percent of water use is outdoors and that the largest water-consuming device in our homes is the toilet? What can you do to conserve? Turn the water off while brushing your teeth, install low-flow fixtures and faucet aerators, and use native plants. To learn more, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com.

Eco-Awareness Dates

July 1-31: Smart Irrigation Month

July 4: Independence Day-City Holiday

July 7: Livestock in an Urban Setting (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

July 11: World Population Day

July 12: Drip Irrigation (c)

July 20: Night Hike on Campión Trails (e)

July 21: Texas Stream Team Activity (a)

July 24: Benefits of Collecting Air Conditioning Condensation (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

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j u l y

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 City Holiday Independence Day	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

our beautiful communities

According to Keep America Beautiful (KAB), the diverse American landscape consists of many different "community environments," each with their own interconnected needs and challenges. With a national network of more than 1,200 local affiliates and participating organizations, KAB combines education with hands-on stewardship to address the needs of communities on an intensely local and effective level. Irving has its own award-winning program, Keep Irving Beautiful. To learn more about how you can get involved, visit www.keepirvingbeautiful.org.

Eco-Awareness Dates

Aug. 4: Morning Bicycle Ride (a)

Aug. 6: Mayor and Keep Irving Beautiful's Annual Awards Reception (e)

Aug. 16: Meet the Farmer Night (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

Aug. 18: Texas Stream Team Activity (a)

Aug. 25: Basic Soap Making (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)

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AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

food for thought

Fact: From field to fork, the average dinner travels approximately 1,500 miles. A food mile is the distance food travels from where it is grown or raised to where it is ultimately purchased by the consumer or end-user. Eat locally grown foods whenever possible. Why? It reduces the total carbon footprint of what it takes to get the produce to the table. When you buy direct from local farmers, your dollars stay within your community and strengthen the local economy. Visit www.ediblecommunities.com. Also, consider growing your own fruits and veggies. Learn more by visiting www.pickyourown.org.

Eco-Awareness Dates

- Oct. 1:** World Habitat Day
- Oct. 6:** Mid-day Bicycle Ride (a)
- Oct. 16:** World Food Day
- Oct. 20:** Irrigation Basics (c)
- Oct. 20:** Texas Stream Team Activity (a)
- Oct. 26:** Night Hike on Campión Trails (e)

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o c t o b e r

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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	15	16	17	18	19	20
	22	23	24	25	26	27
	29	30	31			

Columbus Day

Halloween

reduce, reuse, recycle, re-buy





Nov. 15 is America Recycles Day—a celebration of opportunities to recycle items such as paper, cans, plastics, glass bottles and jars. Reduce is the best of the four Rs—because preventing waste in the first place means you have less waste to worry about in the end. Reuse is the next best—if you can reuse your waste, it is no longer considered waste. Giving away old clothes and other unwanted items to charities and thrift stores keeps good items out of the trash and can save you money. Recycling keeps raw materials in the system and makes us less dependent on virgin ore, oil and trees. Buying recycled products creates a larger demand for them. More demand means more manufacturers will try selling more recycled products.

Eco-Awareness Dates

- Nov. 3:** Go Green Shopping Tour (a)
- Nov. 4:** Daylight Saving Time Ends
- Nov. 10:** Nature Bicycling (a)
- Nov. 15:** America Recycles Day
- Nov. 15:** Keep Irving Beautiful and the Irving YMCA (a)
- Nov. 15:** Making Your Own Alternatives to Household Cleaners (part of Irving's Urban Farming Lecture Series) (c)
- Nov. 17:** Texas Stream Team Activity (a)
- Nov. 22-23:** Thanksgiving-City Holidays

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n o v e m b e r

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Daylight Saving Time Ends						
Veterans Day	19	20	21	22	23	24
18				City Holiday Thanksgiving	City Holiday	
25	26	27	28	29	30	

ever green

Eco-Awareness Dates

Dec. 1: Home, Sweet Green Home (c)


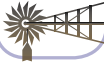
Dec. 15: Texas Stream Team Activity (a)

Dec. 24-25: Christmas-City Holidays

According to *Use Less Stuff*, from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, household waste increases by more than 25 percent. Added food waste, shopping bags, packaging, wrapping paper, bows and ribbons—it all adds up to an additional one million tons a week to our landfills. A couple of things to keep in mind this holiday season. If we each sent one fewer card, we'd save 50,000 cubic yards of paper. Consider sending an electronic card. If every family reused just two feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet. Have a happy green holiday!

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d e c e m b e r

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 <small>City Holiday</small>	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 <small>City Holiday</small> Christmas					

city eco-facts

Hosted 341 events/classes with 33,000 participants and 1,358 volunteers giving 4,808 hours of service.



More than 9,400 tons of waste was diverted from the landfill. Approximately 9,000 tons of the diverted waste was converted into mulch and the remaining materials, including metals and tires, were recycled.



Water Utilities Department named best utility in state for second year in a row.



The city's green webpage has seen significant user increase since the initial rollout more than two years ago. This year, visits are up by more than 36 percent.



100 percent compliance with stormwater regulations attained on Capital Improvement Program and private construction.



Scan this code with
a smartphone to visit
the Think Green ... Be
Green website.



IRVING
T E X A S

www.cityofirving.org/begreen