



MARION COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conservation in the Neighborhood

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It's Time for Spring Cleaning!

It's time to get outside on these nice early spring days to catch up on our outdoor maintenance. One task that can easily be overlooked is cleaning out our drainage swales and storm drain inlets. Many homeowners have shallow channels in their backyards called drainage swales which allow storm water to pass through yards on its way to a storm drain inlet, larger ditch or stream. It is each homeowner's responsibility to maintain these swales by clearing out any debris, limbs or leaves which may accumulate in them. The Indiana drainage law states that we must allow surface water to drain across our properties as it follows its natural topographic direction. You should never pile leaves or limbs in swales nor build any structures over the top of them.

If your yard contains a storm water inlet, or if you have a storm drain along the curb in front of your home, it is also your responsibility to keep those cleaned off so that leaves and debris do not keep stormwater from entering the drain. This is vitally important in order to keep roads and yards from flooding.

If you have a ditch along the road in the front yard be sure to keep it cleaned out also. Check the condition of your driveway culvert to be



sure it is clean and in good repair.

Once we begin mowing our lawns it is also important to keep lawn clippings off of the streets. Wet lawn clippings can cause accidents. Lawn clippings left on the roadways can also be washed down into the storm drains causing drainage and water quality problems. Keep lawn clippings on your lawn to help fertilize your soil or bag the clippings, then compost them or dispose of them properly.

Maintaining our drainage facilities is vitally important to alleviating flooding problems and keeping mosquitos at bay.

For more information on improving drainage around your home check out our website: <http://marionswcd.org/drainage/> or email Julie from our [Contact Us](#) page.



Organic Gardening Workshop - April 13th



**Organic
Gardening
Workshop
April 13th
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Are you interested in creating or transitioning to organic practices in your garden? Join fellow gardeners on Saturday, April 13th to learn how use organic practices in your garden and develop a plan for your property.

In this workshop you will learn about seed selection, soil health, cover crops, pest management, and sourcing organic products. There will be a panel Q&A session and time for your questions.

This workshop is part of an annual spring Sustainability Series held by Hamilton County Soil and Water

Conservation District and Purdue Extension Hamilton County. This year's event is also supported by Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District.

"Each year we focus on a different sustainable living topic and we think a holistic organic gardening approach is central to sustainability" said Hamilton County SWCD Urban Conservationist Claire Lane. "This workshop is great because it is not just about receiving great information but also developing a plan to implement it on your property so we focus on providing access to expert speakers so attendees can ask spe-

cific questions regarding their property and get advice."

The Sustainability Workshop will take place Saturday April 13th at the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall in Noblesville. The workshop costs \$20 per person (includes lunch) and will run from 9am – 3pm. Registration can be completed at www.hamiltonswcd.org. Space is limited.

Questions regarding the event can be directed to Claire Lane at Claire.lane@hamiltoncounty.in.gov or 317-773-2181.

Grow Indiana Natives

As you make plant choices for your spring gardens consider taking a look at native plants. Natives have a number of benefits over non-native landscaping plants. Many non-native plants are invasive, aggressively taking over large areas and crowding out native species.

Native plants are naturally well acclimated to our climate and soil types. They also have some natural resistance to insects and plant diseases common in Indiana. They tend to be much better providers for wildlife and native beneficial insects than invasives.

The Indiana Native Plant Society is promoting the use and sale of native plants through their Grow Indiana Natives program. Their website promotes companies who sell native plants and refuse to sell invasive species. Check out their website at <https://growindiananatives.org/>



Marion County SWCD Celebrates 50 Years

In February at our SWCD Annual Meeting we celebrated the beginning of our 50th year! What a wonderful history we have of serving Marion County and promoting conservation and best management practices throughout those years. One of the things that struck me as we looked at all the work that has been done was how our natural resource problems have spurred us to innovation in finding solutions and new ways to educate the public in order to help us all make better decisions for our land.

Protecting our soil and managing its use is one of the main objectives of the SWCD. Our initial efforts included promoting minimum tillage or no-till on traditional agricultural land as well as using mulch and cover crops. We continue this effort today through our Soil Health program and Stop That Dirt erosion control program for construction sites. Kevin Allison and Cheyenne Hoffa do a great job educating the public and improving soil conservation throughout the county.

Managing storm water, protecting water quality and improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods are important goals for the District. We have worked closely in the past with the Health Department and Department of Public Works in helping to solve problems for homeowners. We offer individual technical assistance and provide educational resources to help alleviate natural resource issues and promote wise land use.

At our annual meeting two individuals were recognized with Lifetime Achievement Awards for their work in Natural Resources. Harold Thompson has had a full life career in conservation serving in many positions at the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Most recently he has been instrumental in helping create and launch our Soil Health Program and promoting education. Thank you Harold for all you've done! Resource Conservationist Julie Farr was also presented with an



Harold Thompson teaching kids at the STEM farm.

award for 30 years of service at the Marion County SWCD. Julie works with landowners to help them make land use decisions and find solutions to drainage and erosion problems.

All of our work has been undergirded by a host of wonderful volunteer Supervisors over the years.

These people have given unselfishly of themselves, many of them volunteering numerous hours for a number of years. These men and women have a great passion for conservation and for serving the community in this way.

You can watch our Annual Meeting [HERE](#). Watch our Blog and Facebook in the coming months for fun stories and pictures from the past 50 years.



LYME DISEASE PREVENTION FAIR

April 13, 2019
noon to 3 pm
College Park Ministry Center
3600 West 96th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Stop by and learn simple, practical, potentially life-saving prevention action steps to help keep your family and your pets safe from disease-carrying ticks while enjoying the great outdoors.

- Take-aways & demonstrations
- Fun interactive learning station for children & teens
- Goodie bags
- Talk with a veterinarian
- Talk with a lawn specialist
- Watch the documentary *Under our Skin 2- Emergence*



• Perhaps you think: Lyme disease is not in Indiana. Ticks are only found in the woods. Ticks are easy to find. Lyme disease is hard to get and easy to cure.

• Come on April 13th to crack the myths! Prevention strategies are your best defense to preventing a tick bite. Play it safe.



www.indianalymeconnect.org



URBAN GROWER WORKSHOP SERIES 2019

2019 Grower Workshop schedule

- April 25: Seedling Production at Mad Farmers Collective (MFC)
- May 2: Lasagna Gardening at Temple Garden**
- May 16: Urban Livestock at Paramount School of Excellence
- June 6: Summer Production in High Tunnels at MFC
- June 20: Veggie Wash-Pack at MFC
- July 11: Intro to Cut Flowers at Indy Urban Acres
- July 25: Native Plants for Pollinators and Pest Control at CUE Farm at Butler University**
- August 1: Organic Pest Control at MFC
- August 22: Soil Health in Intensive Production at Eagle Creek Community Garden**
- September 5: Vermicomposting at Lawrence Community Garden
- Sept. 28 (Saturday 2-4:30): Season Extension at MFC

Workshops with () are offered in partnership with Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District

GROWER WORKSHOPS: JOIN US IN THE FIELD THIS SEASON!

Visit urban farms and gardens around Indy to build your skills and connect to other growers. Workshops take place Thursday evenings from 6 - 8 pm. Workshops are \$10/each or \$8/each if you register for 3 or more.

See full workshop descriptions and REGISTER:
<http://www.cvent.com/d/h6qcmy>

Also check out...

URBAN AG CERTIFICATE

A yearlong experience to gain knowledge and connections to build and sustain your urban farm or garden. Next course launches in November 2019!

LEARN - CONNECT - GROW



PURDUE
UNIVERSITY®

Extension
MARION COUNTY

Connect with us!

Instagram: @purdueurbanag

www.indygrown.com

<https://www.purdue.edu/dffs/urbanag/>

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service is an equal access/equal opportunity institution.

Register for Grower Workshops [HERE](#)



MARION COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
—CONSERVATION DISTRICT—

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Find us on the web:

www.marionswcd.org

The Mission of the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District is to assist Marion County land users in conserving soil, water, and related natural resources by providing technical, financial and educational services.

We are now looking for 2019 Supporting Affiliate Members! Please consider supporting your Marion County SWCD. Applications are available on our website: www.marionswcd.org

Don't Let April Showers Wash Away Our Soil!

Sediment is the #1 water pollutant by volume in the United States. Sediment is the loose sand, clay, silt and other soil particles that are carried from a site by runoff water that eventually settles at the bottom of streams, rivers, lakes and ponds. Sediment comes from soil erosion. As runoff water flows it collects and transports soil as sediment, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, litter and other potentially toxic pollutants. This water drains directly into storm drains or nearby drainageways into creeks, streams and rivers most often without receiving any treatment at a sewage plant. Sediment is the most common pollutant in our waterways. While natural soil erosion produces about 30% of waterway sedimentation, accelerated erosion from human modifications of the land accounts for the remaining 70%. The most concentrated sediment releases come from construction activities which can often exceed 100 times that from agricultural use of the land.



Sediment entering stormwater can cause severe water quality degradation of our waterways that we depend on for our drinking water, that provide fish and wildlife habitat, and that provide us with recreation in the form of swimming, fishing and boating. Excess sediment can also cause flooding, severe streambank erosion and undesirable physical and chemical changes to our lakes and ponds. It increases the cost of treating our drinking water and it can affect the odor and taste. Sediment fills up storm drains, catch basins, roadside ditches and streams creating costly drainage, flooding and associated problems.

What can you do to help "Stop that Dirt?" The Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) encourages residents to be on the lookout for signs of offsite erosion from construction sites and other areas. If you see sediment leaving a site or find an active construction site without erosion control measures such as silt fence installed, please contact the [Marion County SWCD](http://www.marionswcd.org).

Follow us on our new Facebook page!



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