



# Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District's Conservation Corner

Highlighting the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District's projects, programs, and events.

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*Working to manage and  
promote the wise use of  
natural resources  
in Hamilton County*

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## Celebrating Earth Day

Earth Day celebrates its 41st anniversary on April 22nd. Here are 4 ideas to help you celebrate:

1. Prepare an **Earth Day Meal** with local or organic foods. When you buy local, you support community businesses and reduce environmental impacts such as transportation costs and pollution. Beans and veggies are nice choices because they are grown with fewer resources than mass-farmed meats.

2. Have **reusable shopping bags** handy in your car and use them instead of plastic bags. Reusable bags are durable and earth friendly. According to reusit.com, 1 single use plastic bag takes 20 to 1,000 years to break down in a landfill; the 100 billion plastic bags Americans use annually cost retailers \$4 billion; for every 4 trips to the supermarket, average families acquire 60 plastic bags; and 46,000

pieces of buoyant plastic float in every square mile of our oceans.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtfully committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*  
- Margaret Mead

3. **Recycle** because it decreases county expenditures it's the right thing to do. Hamilton County transfer stations accept #1 and #2 plastics; glass; metal; dry newspaper and white non-glossy paper; and corrugated cardboard. The more recyclables that are removed from the waste stream, the less processing costs will be to ship garbage out of the county. Contact your local transfer station for more info.

4. **Clean green** by replacing expensive

household products with homemade remedies. Household cleaning products are brimming with toxic chemicals and artificial colors and scents. They create indoor air pollution that irritates eyes and lungs, especially harming children and pets. Try these alternatives in your home. Clean bathroom grime and kitchen counters by sprinkling surfaces with baking soda or kosher salt and scrubbing with a damp sponge or towel. Conquer grease, mildew, and stains by applying lemon juice or vinegar to the area, allowing to sit for a few minutes, then scrubbing. For a bleach alternative, mix 2 C water, 3 Tbsp liquid soap, and 20 drops tea tree oil. Outwit a clog by pouring 1/2 C baking soda down the drain, then 2 C boiling water.

You have the power to make a difference.  
Happy Earth Day!



## A “Tree”mendous Success

The District’s Annual Tree and Shrub Program was a “tree”mendous success. Exclusively offering native trees and shrubs benefits Hamilton County’s economy and environment. Invasive plants may be beautiful, but they rapidly reproduce and displace native plants, quickly overrunning wetlands, roadsides, and forest understories. They inhibit recreation, decrease property value, alter food webs and destruct wildlife habitat. White Cedar, American Chestnut, Sugar Maple, Red Osier

Dogwood, American Bittersweet, fern pacs, blueberries, wildflower seed mixes, compost, rain barrels, and bat houses were a few of the products that were offered in this year’s sale.

The 2012 Tree and Shrub Order Form will appear in January’s Annual Newsletter as well as on our website. Thank you to everyone who supports this program. This year, your orders helped to plant over 1,905 native trees and shrubs, keeping our landscape invasive free.



*Orders ready for pick-up in Blue Mountain.*

## We have a Green Program for You

While local businesses, homeowners, and municipalities prepare for the approaching warmer months, the District gears up to assist in their efforts to green the environment. We provide green services and programs that are available to everyone in the Hamilton County community.

District staff can help you control sediment and erosion on your property, protect your shoreline, complete DEC and APA permits, enhance your pond, interpret soils



*Hydroseeding the Lake Abanakee Causeway.*

information, and install a dry hydrant.

The **Hydroseeding Program** has been successful in preventing soil erosion that degrades water quality and fish habitat. Mulch, fertilizer, grass seed, lime, tackifying agents, and water are mixed in the hydroseeder and sprayed onto soil. This process is cost effective, allows for uniform application, promotes quick germination, and results in a healthy, green lawn. We work with private land owners and municipalities to seed or re-seed lawns or large project areas, and stabilize ditches.

The District offers a wealth of **invasive species resources** including fact sheets, brochures, identification assistance, and management recommendations.

**Conservation presentations** are offered to schools and community organizations. Popular topics include lake trends and stewardship, invasive species, stream biomonitoring, tree identification, and watersheds. Outdoor labs are available for schools.

For more info on these and the many other services we offer, call our office or visit our website.



*Students learn about aquatic food webs.*