



MARCH NEWSLETTER

Geaux Green Schools!



The 2018-2019 Green Schools Challenge is still open!

The Green Schools Challenge is an annual competition in which we encourage schools to undertake a green project to make their school and/or communities a healthier place to live, learn, and grow. Schools may enter the challenge through April 2, 2019. Contact our Green Schools Coordinator, Jordan Stewart, at geauxgreenschools@gmail.com for details. Learn more online at [USGBC Louisiana Green Schools](http://USGBCLouisianaGreenSchools.org) and Facebook [@USGBCLouisianaGreenSchools](https://www.facebook.com/USGBCLouisianaGreenSchools). Thank you to **Entergy** and **Elkay** for sponsoring this year's Green Schools Challenge.



Earth Day in Louisiana 2019

The spring is a beautiful time to be in Louisiana and with Earth Day approaching on Monday, April 22, we have compiled a list of upcoming family-friendly, environmentally-oriented events and festivals across the state at the **end of this newsletter**. Take a look at the amazing events going on around Louisiana in the next few weeks!



Image: St. Margaret Catholic School's Leaders Against Litter with leader Mrs. Reeves, 2018

Properties in Orleans Parish Are Invited to Save Energy and Money by Competing in the “NOLA Energy Challenge”



New Orleans properties can now lower their energy use and save money by signing up for the [NOLA Energy Challenge](#). Buildings of any size from every sector are invited to sign up and start tracking their energy data in order to compete for prizes and industry recognition – not to mention the cost savings provided by energy efficiency opportunities!

Free technical assistance is provided to NOLA Energy Challenge participants, as well as training, industry networking, and marketing opportunities. Building tenants can get involved by helping their property owners or managers sign up for the Challenge.

By simply measuring and tracking energy data, buildings can realize between 6-14% in reduced energy use over several years, resulting in significant cost savings. Energy-efficient buildings have multiple benefits, including:

- Higher lease renewal rates
- Higher sales prices
- Higher worker productivity rates
- Improved indoor air quality
- Greater economic competitiveness
- Lower lender risk
- Lower operating costs
- Lower maintenance costs.

Last year's NOLA Energy Challenge featured 40 of the city's most prominent properties in the downtown area. [Winners](#) included the F.E. Hebert Federal Building, the U.S. Customs House, the Energy Centre (400 Poydras), the Downtown Tulane Campus, and the Convention Center.

To start on the road to energy savings, property owners and managers can sign up for the NOLA Energy Challenge at nola.gov/EnergyChallenge. There is no fee to participate. The NOLA Energy Challenge is brought to you by the City of New Orleans' Office of Resilience and Sustainability.

Winter Tours



Thanks to everyone who came out to the amazing site visit in February, where lucky USGBC Louisiana members and friends had the chance to view the beautiful LEED Gold certified Goldring/Woldenberg Complex at Tulane University. And the March tour of 419 Carondelet, a fantastic mixed use site development, which is a prime example of adaptive reuse on a historic property.

If you have ideas for future tours or events, contact info@usgbcloouisiana.org

Sign up for Energy Smart to Support Your Energy Efficiency Retrofit

[Energy Smart](#) is a New Orleans City Council and Entergy New Orleans energy efficiency program that provides incentives for energy efficiency upgrades for most properties in Orleans Parish. For [commercial properties](#), the program offers up to \$50,000 for lighting projects, \$100,000 for non-lighting projects, with a total of \$100,000 for combined lighting and non-lighting per Entergy account per year for energy efficiency upgrades. The incentive is based on the first year energy savings from projects and usually reduces the payback time for energy projects by 1.5 years.



Last year, for example, over 18 hotels participated in the program, receiving over \$300,000 in incentives for energy improvements that are leading to cost savings every year and money kept in the economy. Over \$3M was provided to businesses in New Orleans last year.

Homeowners and renters can also take advantage of the Energy Smart [residential program](#), which helps make your home more energy efficient through A/C tune-ups, appliance incentives, online scorecards, and other offerings.

In addition, contractors are welcome to apply to become a registered [trade ally](#), to help Energy New Orleans customers reduce their energy use. For more information about Energy Smart, visit <https://www.energysmartnola.info/>.

How U.S. Convention Centers Are Getting Greener

Many convention centers are discovering that implementing sustainable practices isn't just good for the environment; it's also good for conferences and their attendees. A comprehensive strategy for any hospitality-related venue should include finding ways to track and reduce energy, water, and solid waste. Trends identified by the [2017 Green Venue Report](#) include:

- Millions in cost savings due to sustainability
- Direct charges to event organizers based on
- Increasing importance on health and well-
- Better energy tracking (88% of venues, up 2015), including energy summaries for event of venues, up from 48% in 2015)
- Ongoing water consumption tracking, in specific water usage reports
- More procurement of renewable energy and energy certificates
- Growing importance of sustainable food sourcing and food waste reduction
- Ongoing tracking of event-specific carbon footprints (37% of venues, up from 31% in 2015)



upgrades
waste generation
being of staff
from 77% in
organizers (64%
addition to event-
renewable

The Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, for example, just completed a \$28 million energy efficiency upgrade that will reduce their energy consumption by 37%. The Anaheim Convention Center has a centrally-controlled, weather-based irrigation system, and reuses water from its food composters to irrigate its on-site hydroponic micro-green system. In Portland, Oregon, the Oregon Convention Center requires its event organizers to adhere to waste diversion guidelines as part of their contract. Nashville's Music City Center conducted a lighting retrofit that will produce an annual savings of over \$48,000. Among its many sustainability practices, the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center has a rooftop garden, purchases renewable energy credits, utilizes environmentally compliant paper products and cleaning products, and is pursuing LEED certification.

Many of these forward-thinking venues are drafting formal sustainability policies, and taking the extra step to communicate their goals to the public, including inviting event attendees to become part of the solution by turning off lights or recycling. This positive momentum in green convention centers and meeting spaces is only getting stronger, and represents a great opportunity for like-minded contractors, professionals and event attendees. For more information on the growing sustainable hospitality movement, [click here](#).

Now's the Time to Join USGBC Louisiana



Have you been putting off joining USGBC Louisiana? Now's the time to get involved! Membership benefits include networking with sustainability professionals from around the state, discounts on great educational and social events about green building, the opportunity to serve on a chapter committee to help shape the future of the organization, and - of course - supporting environmentally and socially responsible buildings and communities in Louisiana. Under 30? We have a discount for that. Employee of a company that is a member of USGBC national? We have a discount for that. Student or K-12 teacher? We have a discount for that. We can even renew your membership automatically each year. It's that easy!

Sign up today at https://usgbclouisiana.org/general/register_member_type.asp.

Geaux Green Schools! Newsletter Features

Feedback, events to announce, or service day requests? We are collecting feedback for this newsletter and other Green Schools topics [here](#).

Earth Day in Louisiana 2019

Capital Region & Florida Parishes

- **Louisiana Earth Day**
This festival includes live music, exhibitors, and activities for audiences of all ages including hands-on learning activities for families and children.
Baton Rouge
LSU Baton Rouge Parker Coliseum South Stadium Drive at Highland Road
April 28 2019 1:00 – 5:00 pm
Admission: Free
<https://www.laearthday.org>
- **Party for the Planet: BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo**
The Baton Rouge Zoo will participate in the Party for the Planet events in honor of Earth Day on April 20 with zookeeper chats, conservation education, and entertainment for friends and family.
BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo
Saturday April 20, 2019 9:30 am - 5 pm
Admission: Regular Zoo Admission
<http://www.brzoo.org/events/view/party-for-the-planet>
- **Great Louisiana Birdfest**
The Northlake Nature Center hosts a series of birding tours in South Louisiana. Birdfest tours include a variety of routes and ecological landscapes from which to view birds migrating northward through Louisiana during the spring.
Mandeville
Northlake Nature Center
March 10 - April 8
Locations, times, and registration costs vary by date.
<http://northlakenature.org/birdfest/>
- **Tree Symposium and Great Green Give Away (Formerly Abita Springs Earth Fest)**
Abita Springs will celebrate Arbor Day this year March 17 at Abita Springs Trailhead Park. Celebrating forest stewardship, the Apache Corporation has donated 200 native trees to give away festival goers. Youngsters are invited to help plant the playground. This event coincides with the Abita Art and Farmer's Market.
Abita Springs Trailhead Park
Admission: Free
Sun. March 17, 2019 12 pm – 4 pm
<https://abitafriendsofthepark.com/events>

Central Louisiana

- Party for the Planet: Alexandria ZOO presented by Walker KIA
Party for the Planet at the Alexandria ZOO will include interactive learning, animal encounters, music among their festivities to celebrate our natural environment and native wildlife.
Alexandria Zoological Park
Sat. April 13 11 am – 3 pm
Admission: Regular Zoo Admission
<http://www.thealexandriazoo.com/PartyForThePlanet.html>

South East Louisiana

- Earth Day at New Orleans City Park
Earth Day at the New Orleans Botanical Gardens promises festive music, food, and activities in appreciation of nature and environmental stewardship for audiences of all ages.
New Orleans Botanical Gardens
Tues. April 16, 2019 4 pm – 7 pm
Admission by donation
<http://neworleanscitypark.com/events/earth-day>
- Sprouts: Louisiana Earth Day
Longue Vue House and Gardens' weekly Sprouts program will celebrate Earth Day April 27th in their discovery garden through activities focused on plants and animals native to Louisiana.
New Orleans
Longue Vue House and Gardens
Ages 18 mo. – 10 years
Sat. April 27 9:30 am – 10:30 am
<https://longuevue.com/event/april-27th-sprouts-louisiana-earth-day-celebration/>
- Party for the Planet: Earth Day Family Service Day
Earth Day Family Service Day on April 27 offers families the opportunity to earn earth day badges working and learning together with Audubon educators and conservation partners. This event is part of a series of environmentally-minded Party for the Planet events that launch in the New Orleans area on March 23.
New Orleans Area
April 27 + Various dates and locations, check the website. Registration is encouraged for some events.
Admission: Free
<https://audubonnatureinstitute.org/party-for-the-planet>
- 3rd Annual Good Earth Market
This annual market hosted by the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center celebrates all things gardening and farming in Southeast Louisiana. The market features educational speakers in addition to regional vendors selling unique and fresh produce, eggs, jams, jellies, baked goods, and more!
Houma
112 Library Drive
April 6, 2019 9 am – 2 pm
Admission: Free
<http://slwdc.org/programs/good-earth-market/>
- Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration
The celebration includes a variety of ways to see the bird migration including expert-led bird watching, kayaking, and walking tours.
Grand Isle
Fri - Sun April 12 - 14, 2019
Check the website for specific individual event details including time, location, and cost.
Admission: Free, see event website for details regarding specific activities
<https://www.townofgrandisle.com/events/grand-isle-migratory-bird-festival/>

South West Louisiana

- Earth Day Celebration at Vermilionville

The Bayou Vermilion District holds their Earth Day fest April 14 with a focus on environmental stewardship through preservation, conservation, and restoration. Attendees of all ages will enjoy live entertainment and festival activities.

Vermilionville

April 14, 2019 10 am - 4 pm

Admission: Free

<http://www.bayouvermiliondistrict.org/events/earthday>

- **Bayou Teche Black Bear Festival**
The Bayou Teche Black Bear Festival, now in its 15th year, pairs Louisiana festival fun with exhibits and workshops that celebrate the Black Bear and its natural habitat.
Franklin
Bayou Teche
Fri - Sat April 12 & 13, 2019
Admission: Free, see event website for details regarding specific activities
<http://www.bayoutechebearfest.org/>
- **Earth Day Festival**
This event hosted by the Lake Charles library will explore recycling and conservation through a variety of activities including crafts and visits with live animals.
Lake Charles Central Library
Sat. April 13, 2019 10 am – 2 pm
Admission: Free
<https://www.visitlakecharles.org/event/earth-day-festival/34703/>

North Louisiana

- **Earth Day Celebration at Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge**
Black Bayou Lake National Refuge will celebrate Earth Day with two events this year. On Saturday April 20th they will hold special exhibits and activities for families, including the bi-annual turning of the Big Blue Goose to indicate the current direction of migrating birds. Then on Monday April 22nd, Black Bayou Lake National Refuge will celebrate the reopening of featured animal exhibits and learning center with a little shindig including presentations and a guided nature walk.
Monroe
Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Sat. April 20, 2019 10 am - 1 pm
Mon. April 22, 2019 6:30 pm
Admission: Free
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/black_bayou_lake/

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