



WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

January 2025

Mission: The West Chester Green Team is a civic organization in West Chester, PA, that works to educate the local public and to establish and nourish green initiatives in the community in harmony with nature and each other, promoting the health of all living things and of planet Earth.

Inside:

Earth Day sneak preview, Auction wrap-up, Green New Years resolutions from our local politicians, Those Burger King apartments again, Cutting out salt, A pause that isn't refreshing...and more



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

When – What – Where.



Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 PM: School Garden meeting, at West Chester Friends School. See details on page 3.

January Green Team Board meeting place, date, and time TBD. Contact Elizabeth Cunningham at ecunningham5093@gmail.com after Jan. 11 for details.

For details on other January and later events, see listings beginning page 3.

Related groups and committees:

4th Monday of every month: East Bradford Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), 7 – 8:30pm, East Bradford Township Bldg, 676 Copeland School Rd.

4th Monday of every month: East Goshen Sustainability Advisory Committee, 7 – 8:30pm, East Goshen Township Bldg, 1580 Paoli Pike

4th Tuesday of every month: West Goshen Sustainability Advisory Committee, 6 – 8 pm, West Goshen Township Bldg., 1025 Paoli Pike

4th Tuesday of every month: Westtown Environmental Advisory Council, 7 – 8:30pm, Westtown Township Bldg., 1039 Wilmington Pike (Rt. 202)

4th Thursday of every month: West Chester Sustainability Advisory Committee, 6:30 – 8 pm, Room 240, Borough Hall, 401 E. Gay St.

Be sure to visit our Web site at <https://wcgreenteam.com/> and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WCGTeam/> (all are welcome to post environment- and sustainability-related items there). If you wish to support our work, please donate here: <https://wcgreenteam.com/contact-2/>

NOTE: Deadline for the February 2025 issue is January 31! We welcome contributions and suggestions from our readers for possible inclusion in a future issue. E-mail your ideas to Dianne Walsh at LDwalsh318@gmail.com.

This and That

More Coming Attractions

January 7, 6:30 pm: School Garden Planning: The preliminary meeting of the SCHOOL GARDEN Committee of the West Chester Green Team will be held at West Chester Friends School, 415 N High Street, adjacent to and set back from the Meeting House, on Tuesday evening, January 7 at 6:30 pm. Karen Iacobucci, Associate Head of School, has kindly offered us meeting space at the school. Please park in front of the school in the parking lot accessed via High Street.

Marilyn Quinn, recently retired teacher and garden organizer from Hillsdale School which has a gardening program that reaches and teaches 550 students each year, and Courtney Finneran, of the Green Team's Board of Directors and head of the Living Landscapes Committee, are happy to explain Hillsdale's success as a model for other schools wishing to pursue a similar project. We will organize this evening in preparation for an offering to interested schools in April. All are welcome. Hope to see you there.

Starting February 25: RUX 110: Environmental, Food, Land Justice, & Community Change! 3-credit short course running 2/25-4/01/2025. In-person 3/07-3/09. Synchronous online meetings 2/25, 3/18, 3/25, and 4/01 in evenings. Taught by WCGT member and WCU professor Megan Schraedley. For WCU students and community organizers. We are still looking for Environmental Justice Community Fellows to participate in the course! For community organizers please note that For your expertise, time, and participation, receive \$2500 OR \$1500 and 3 college-credits towards a certificate in Community Change Studies. If you know an organization or person who might be a good candidate, please reach out to Megan Schraedley at mschraedle@wcupa.edu

April 26: Earth Day—Peace for the Planet

On April 26, the West Chester Green Team will be celebrating Earth Day in collaboration with our friends at the Unitarian Congregation in West Chester. Our focus this year is on the importance of peace to the health of planet Earth with the keynote speaker Dr. Sa'ed Atshan. See his information here: <https://www.swarthmore.edu/profile/saed-atshan-%E2%80%999906>



Dr Atshan will discuss the importance of peace for environmental as well as human health and ways to come together even when governments seem to be at odds. Atshan has worked in Germany and Israel/Palestine on peacemaking as well as in Georgia, USA. He has local roots having spent a year at Westtown School after his graduation from Ramallah Friends School, on the West Bank Palestine/Israel. After Dr Atshan's address, a Middle Eastern banquet catered by the Mediterranean Restaurant will be served to attendees with an introduction on this cuisine by incoming GT President, Karen Slossburg.

See the WCGT website and Facebook page in February to make a reservation for this event.

Green New Year's Resolutions from Two Chester County Politicians

As reported by the Daily Local News

Danielle Friel Otten, State Representative, 155th Legislative District —

“My goal for the New Year is to become a more intentional consumer, reduce waste, and find more ways to recycle, reuse and upcycle. I am working to decentralize my household from large corporate interests like Amazon, shop more local, and with companies that treat their workers with dignity and pay living wages and benefits. I’ve been trying to break away from fast fashion culture and love shopping local consignment shops and thrifting. I have been a host for a local CSA, for going on 11 years, and also have found some amazing local flower growers that I love to support.”



Eric Roe, Chester County Commissioner — “In my public-facing role, one thing I’d like to accomplish is greater preservation of farmlands, wetlands, and forestlands in Chester County. We did that in 2024, but I’d like to ramp it up in 2025. If we don’t steward our open spaces well, urban sprawl could fundamentally change the rural nature of our county. I want to ensure green spaces for my future grandchildren to enjoy someday.”



Chester County Commissioners, Eric Roe, left.

Seasons Greenings Auction Wrap-up



We did it! We reached our goal of \$12,000! A big thank you to everyone who donated items or services, helped with logistics, or bid on our wonderful auction items.

THE PLASTIC POLLUTION CRISIS BY THE NUMBERS

From [BeyondPlastics.org](https://beyondplastics.org)

- America's rank in global plastic production: **1**
- The percentage of plastics that gets recycled in the United States each year: **5-6%**
- The percentage of plastic produced annually that's used for single-use plastics: **42%**
- The number of chemicals used to make plastics: **16,000**
- The number of microplastics particles found in a 1-liter plastic bottle of water: **240,000**



ACK, right? But **please do not lose heart!**



There is *another* set of numbers that fills us with hope and excitement.

PLASTIC POLLUTION *REDUCTION* BY THE NUMBERS

- Number of states with a ban on single-use plastic bags in effect as of 2024: **12**
- Number of staff at Beyond Plastics, including policy, communications, and organizing experts. We've quintupled in size since our founding in 2019: **16**
- Percentage of Americans who are concerned about plastic pollution and its impact on their health and their family's health: **83%**
- Number of Local Groups & Affiliates in Beyond Plastics' growing grassroots network, working in 40 states: **161**
- Number of people who attended a Beyond Plastics' educational webinar or grassroots advocacy training this year: **18,211**

Have you heard of this service? <https://retrievr.com/>

For a small fee, they pick up textiles and electronics at your house and recycle it. It keeps textiles and other items out of landfills, which is always a good thing.

Retrievr charges a base \$12.50* doorstep convenience fee, which includes unlimited clothing, and small electronics. There are other convenience fees for items that are particularly hard to collect or dispose of:

- \$15 for each microwave
- \$38 for each flat TV of any size, for each TV/Computer monitor less than 33 inches that uses a Cathode Ray Tube (CRT)
- \$105 for each TV/Computer monitor 33 inches or higher that uses a Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) , for each wooden cabinet or rear-projection TV of any size
- \$55 for each dehumidifier
- \$55 for each window air-conditioner
- \$55 for each mini refrigerator under 50 lbs

Retrievr, con't.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are paying for one or more convenience fees from the previous list, then we'll waive the base \$12.50* doorstep convenience fee, and we'll still take unlimited clothing and small electronics on the same pickup visit.

*Doorstep convenience fee can vary depending on your location. Visit their website for more information on what is and isn't accepted and/or to schedule a pick-up.

Cut the Salt

Out of your diet? Well, maybe, but definitely cut down on winter road salt usage.


Why is Winter Salt an Issue?

Over the past 50 years, the use of road salt during winter has dramatically increased, impacting our streams, lakes, and rivers year-round.

It's time to ***Cut the Salt.***

While road salt manages winter road conditions, it can have serious unintended consequences. High concentrations of salt disrupt aquatic life, damage plant growth, harm community infrastructure, and lead to the contamination of local waterways all year.

How Can You Help?




Test your water

You can make a difference by testing your local waterway! Order a free [Freshwater Test Kit](#) to measure salt levels and learn about the impacts of winter salt. Your data will help us better understand the problem and educate our communities.

Share your results

Tag Stroud Water Research Center on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, and share your testing experience with the Stroud Center community using **#cutthesalt.**



Order your test kit here: <https://mailchi.mp/stroudcenter/cut-the-salt>

Apartments. Apartments everywhere. If you live in West Chester Borough, you know. . .

Builder Wants to Add More Units to Planned Development at Burger King Site in West Chester

By Leah Mikulich

Published: December 29, 2024 at Vista.Today



The former Burger King, S. High St. Image via Bill Rettew, The Daily Local News.

The prospective builder at the former Burger King restaurant site in West Chester has added more units to the planned building.

The plans for the housing development at the former [Burger King](#) restaurant site in [West Chester](#) have changed, with the prospective builder adding more units, writes Bill Rettew for *The Daily Local News*.

However, with the change to the rules on how many parking spaces have to be incorporated into new housing developments adopted by the borough council in June, the builder may have to add more parking spots to the building.

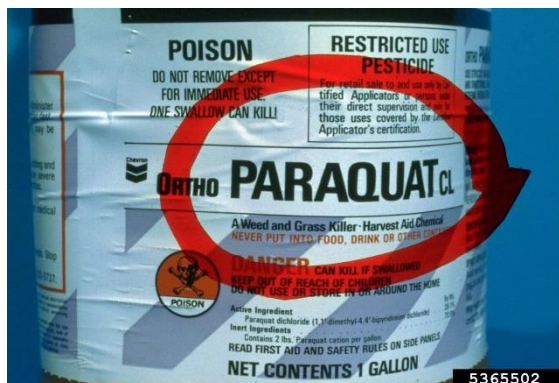
The newly adopted rules call for 1.2 parking spots per one-bedroom unit or studio, 1.7 per two-bedroom home, 2.2 per three-bedroom unit, and 2.5 per four-bedroom home.

The original plans for the Burger King site called for 125 apartments, 9,200 square feet of retail space, and 170 parking spaces.

Councilwoman [Nicole Scimone](#) said that the “goal is to not cripple development,” and to find the “right size.”

Now, property owners [Gary D. Saluti](#) and [Suzanne M. Dunphy](#) and equity owner High Street 410 want to build 139 units and 175 parking spaces. According to the new rules, if all of the new units are one-bedroom, only 167 spaces would be required.

Para...what? Paraquat! And it's not good.



Back between 2012 and 2015, we were observing the widespread spraying of toxic pesticides ostensibly to reduce the risk of West Nile virus. The Chester County Health Department brought us this program which was suspended during the first year of covid and limped along with one spray per year the following 2 years and Hallelujah! did not spray in 2024! Commissioner Josh Maxwell and State Senator Carolyn Comitta beginning when she was mayor of West Chester have helped us with this fight to preserve the health of

children and pets and all of us. It is disconcerting to observe that chemicals that are outlawed in other nations are legal in the US. Let us be vigilant in the next few years as what few protections we have may be rolled back. Here is another case in point described in an article from the *Guardian*.

More than 50 US lawmakers are calling on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to join dozens of other countries in banning a widely used weedkiller [linked to](#) Parkinson's disease and other health dangers.

In [a 31 October letter](#) to the agency, seven US senators said that paraquat, a weedkiller commonly applied on US farms, was a “highly toxic pesticide whose continued use cannot be justified given its harms to farmworkers and rural communities”. The call for a ban from the senators came after 47 members of the US House of Representatives [sent a similar letter](#) to the EPA calling for a ban earlier in October.

The lawmakers cite scientific links between paraquat use and development of Parkinson's and other “life threatening diseases” as well as “grave impacts on the environment”. “Health risks include a higher risk of Parkinson's disease, with some studies finding a 64% increase in the likelihood of developing Parkinson's, non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, thyroid cancer, and other thyroid issues,” they wrote.

Coca-Cola Dropping Reuse Targets

From #BreakFreeFromPlastic

New York — December 4, 2024 — As the global Plastics Treaty talks just concluded in Busan with no agreement, The Coca-Cola Company announced on December 2nd what it calls an ‘evolution’ in their environmental goals. However, the announcement marks a significant de-evolution as the [Top Plastics Polluter](#) has completely dropped its 2022 goal of achieving a [25% reusable packaging target by 2030](#). Instead, Coca-Cola continues to focus on failed recycling goals that will do little to address the plastic crisis.



Read the rest of the story at

<https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/2024/12/03/breakfreefromplastic-movement-members-respond-to-coca-cola-dropping-reuse-targets/>