



# WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

April 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 Event--and lots of other events, Road Salt, Butterflies, the Dirty Dozen...and more!



# WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

## When – What – Where.



**Monday, April 7: 7:00 PM, Green Team Board meeting** at the home of Karen Slossburg. Contact [karenslossburg@gmail.com](mailto:karenslossburg@gmail.com) for details.

**Saturday, April 26: Earth Day: See details on pages 6 and 7**

**For details on other April 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 May 2025 issue is April 30! 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](mailto:LDwalsh318@gmail.com).**

## WE NEED YOU!

The West Chester Green Team is seeking interested individuals to fill several Board vacancies. If you are interested in joining our Board to help us carry on our mission of educating the local public and establishing and nourishing green initiatives in the community in harmony with nature and each other, please contact Karen Slossburg at [karenslossburg@gmail.com](mailto:karenslossburg@gmail.com) or Chris Pugliese at [chrispugl@gmail.com](mailto:chrispugl@gmail.com).

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. —Margaret Mead*

### *This and That*

#### More Coming Attractions

Saturday, April 12, Darby Creek Clean-up, 9 AM – 12 noon, John Heinz Nation Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, 8601 Lindbergh Ave., Philadelphia



**DARBY CREEK CLEAN-UP**  
**Saturday, April 12**  
**9 AM – 12 PM**

Lend a hand to  
community, wildlife and  
wetland habitat !

**LUNCH PROVIDED!**

Meet at the Pavilion near the Visitor  
Center for sign-in and supplies!

For more information or group scheduling, contact  
[hannah\\_thompkins@fws.gov](mailto:hannah_thompkins@fws.gov)  
or call 267-969-3206



**WM** WASTE MANAGEMENT  
**EFNC**  
**KEEP PENNSYLVANIA Beautiful**  
**LDGVA**  
**PENNDOT**  
**FOHR** FRIENDS OF HEINZ REFUGE

John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum  
8601 Lindbergh Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19153  
SEPTA routes 37, 108, & 115 stop at 84th and  
Lindbergh Blvd. Eastwick Train Station is 0.5 miles away.

  @johnheinznr

**Sunday, April 13, 3-4:30 PM, Unitarian  
Congregation, 501 S. High St., West  
Chester**

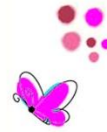


 Join us for  
**Pollinator Love**

Plants for pollinators- how to attract  
pollinators to your backyard

On April 13, 2025, from 3PM to 4:30PM,  
landscape architect Lawrence Lesser of  
The Laughing Earth will speak about plants  
that attract pollinators and teach you how  
to see your garden space with a designer's  
eye. You'll learn about species with  
interesting flowers, forms, and foliage,  
the insects and animals they attract, and  
how and where they can be used in the  
landscape. Maintenance perspectives will  
also be covered, as well as what to expect  
over time as the landscape matures. The  
talk will be followed by a Q&A.

If time permits, you will also have an opportunity to  
speak one on one with Larry Lesser and/or Kathy Beatty,  
native plant expert, about your individual project.



**Sunday, April 13, 3PM-4:30  
Unitarian Congregation of West Chester  
501 South High Street, West Chester, PA 19382**



**Thursday April 17, 12 noon: Online Webinar**



To celebrate Earth Day, Treecologist Basil Camu has generously agreed to give a special presentation!

From Wasteland to Wonder

Easy Ways We Can Help Heal Earth In the Sub/Urban Landscape

April 17th, 12:00 - 1:30 pm EDT

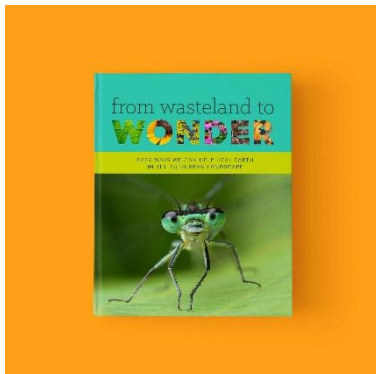
Our current landscaping practices work against nature by destroying ecosystems, polluting water, and wasting time and money. By choosing to work with nature, we can restore beauty, resilience, and biodiversity instead!

In this talk, you'll learn:



- How plants, soil, water, and air interact to support life
- Simple steps to heal the Earth: protect trees, plant saplings, and replace lawns with native plants
- Community-driven solutions, such as growing and giving away native trees

There will be an opportunity for Q&A.



This presentation is based on the book [\*From Wasteland to Wonder\*](#). Download your free eBook to begin exploring natural systems.

Learn more about [Basil Camu](#) and his tree care company, [Leaf and Limb](#).

[Register for the Webinar](#)

A recording of the event will be available through May 16th, 2025 for those who register.

**Tuesday, April 22, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**



Pop-up repair clinic for desk and table lamps at WCU, Sykes Student Union Ballroom, Rosedale Ave., West Chester. All welcome; you do not have to be a WCU student. Get your lamp fixed free! Bring your own parts, or purchase parts on-site. One lamp per person, please!

We will be repairing desk and table lamps at our pop-up repair clinic. You can also learn more about our Repair Cafe events held every other month in Downingtown.

Limit 1 lamp per person!  
\*Bring your own parts, or  
lamp parts are available for  
purchase at our cost.

**MORE INFORMATION**

- 🌐 [repaircatedowningtown.com](http://repaircatedowningtown.com)
- ✉ [repaircafe165@gmail.com](mailto:repaircafe165@gmail.com)
- 📱 [@RepairCafeDowningtown](#)



Flyer design by Upward Arrow

## **Saturday April 26th (May 3 rain date), 8:30am-noon: Marshall Square Park Spring Cleanup**

Be part of this year's Cleanup Crew by giving your park a couple of hours picking up sticks, spreading mulch, and keeping it safe, beautiful and healthy. *Kids are welcome to come with their parents, too! Coffee, donuts, and water will be available at the gazebo!*



Please Register below if you are planning to help! Let us know in your registration if or what tools you could bring. 'Light Rain' or shine, check in either with Roger Lacy near the corner of N Marshall and E Matlack, or with Jordan Norley near the corner of N Franklin and E Biddle.

*(Rain date - if heavy rain is forecast, we will push it back one week to Saturday May 3, and let you know as soon as practical by email.)*

### **Register**

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## **April 26: Earth Day: Our Power. Our Planet.**

Earth Day this year brings together the diversity of the West Chester community in celebration of the 2025 Earth Day theme "Our Power, Our Planet." The event which is cosponsored by the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester, the Sustainability Office of West Chester University, and the West Chester Green Team is being held at the UCong, 501 S High St. Tabling by Citizens Climate Lobby, the West Chester Cooperative, WCGT Dark Sloes and Living Landscapes Committees and Food and Water Watch-Plastics will begin at 4 PM, Sidewalk chalking in honor of the beauty of the planet is encouraged with chalk provided.



At 5 PM the program begins with a prayer/invocation on the historic and ongoing leadership of women, from internationally to locally, in preserving Mother Earth and improving life for her people. From Eleanor Roosevelt to Rachel Carson, and Greta Thunberg to the women of West Chester such as our own Senator Carolyn Comitta, a champion of children and gardens that enhance the beauty of the borough, women's leadership will be celebrated. Representatives from Interfaith, Meaning-Making and Spirituality Project will participate.

This evening will also feature a tribute to Don't Spray Me! and WC Green Team founding board member, Donald Braceland, who died last month, presented by Nathaniel Smith, Green Team co-founder and Gillian Alicea who worked with Don on the Green Team board and on WC Borough environmental initiatives.

The keynote speaker of the evening is Prof. Sa'ed Atshan of Swarthmore College presenting on the importance of peace to preserve the planet. Dr. Atshan is a member of the Society of Friends and has worked as a peacemaker, bringing people together in Israel/Palestine, Germany and in Atlanta during his tenure at Emory University.



**Earth Day 2025**  
On Stewardship of Earth:  
Personal Reflections

**Earth Day celebration, lecture, and dinner**

- Lecture by **Dr. Sa'ed Atshan**, Chair of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at Swarthmore College
- Celebration of the culture and heritage of the Middle East with food and music

**Admission including dinner for adults \$25, children 7-17 \$12.50, children 6 & under free \$10 admission for those not eating dinner.**

**Donate:**  **Register:** 

**West Chester Green Team**  
www.wcgreenteam.com

**April 26th 5pm**

**Location**  
Unitarian  
Congregation,  
501 S High St.,  
West Chester,  
PA 19382

Sponsored by the West Chester Green Team, West Chester University Office of Sustainability, and the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

The Mediterranean, a popular local restaurant, is serving a Middle Eastern buffet dinner that includes vegetarian options such as falafel, hummus and tabouli as well as chicken and rice with baklava and other sweet treats served with coffee and tea for dessert.



The following link is for purchasing tickets to this April 26 event, The site includes an option of donating to our work in the community: <https://ticketstripe.com/events/> All are welcome to join in the celebration.



Saturday, May 3, 11:30 AM, Chester City Hall, Chester, PA



The poster features a vibrant design with a yellow and orange sunburst background at the top. The main title 'ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE DAY' is in large, bold, purple letters. Below it, 'CARAVAN AND MARCH' is written in yellow letters inside a purple arrow pointing right. A purple banner below the arrow says 'Hosted by Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living (CRCQL)'. The middle section has a purple background with a crowd of people silhouettes holding flags. Above the crowd, it says 'Bring noise makers! Drums! Make signs!' in white. A large orange circle with a diagonal line through it covers a black and white illustration of two industrial smokestacks. Below the crowd, a purple banner reads 'NO LNG! NO HYDROGEN HUB!'. The bottom left has a yellow box with event details in purple and black text. The bottom right contains three paragraphs of white text on the purple background, a QR code, and the CRCQL logo.

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE DAY

## CARAVAN AND MARCH

Hosted by Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living (CRCQL)

Bring noise makers! Drums! Make signs!

**NO LNG! NO HYDROGEN HUB!**

**Saturday  
May 3, 2025**  
Rain or shine!

**MEET AT 11:30AM  
MARCH BEGINS  
AT NOON**

**CHESTER CITY HALL  
1 E. 4TH ST, CHESTER, PA  
MARCH TO COVANTA**

Bring your own water/snacks.

**#BANTHEBURN**

GET INVOLVED AND LEARN MORE  
ChesterPAEJ.org 484-402-7530

Join CRCQL ("circle") as we march & car caravan to celebrate the City of Chester as our home and community, and to show that we deserve better than polluting industries!

Did you know that the largest trash incinerator in the U.S. is located in Chester? Pollution from Covanta/Reworld contributes to asthma, cancer and other health issues. Residents bear the impacts of trash from NYC, Philly and beyond. It's just ONE of many polluters here in Chester.

And now, Chester is being targeted as a location for a liquified natural gas (LNG) export terminal and hydrogen hub, which would bring explosive, toxic materials by truck, train or pipeline through our city, putting residents in even more danger.

Enough is enough. We demand a clean future and a green waterfront for the people, not polluters! Come march with us for environmental justice.





**Saturday, May 17 from 10 AM to 2 PM**  
**West Chester University Sciences and Engineering Building**

If you're like many people in Chester County, protecting the environment is important to you, but it can be hard to find good information about what we, as individuals, can do to have an impact.

To provide the best information on what residents, homeowners, and owners of small businesses can do to be more environmentally sustainable, Chester County is hosting a [Sustainability Summit & Expo](#). This FREE event will feature:

- Presentations by local experts on topics like heat pumps, solar power, rain gardens and backyard habitat programs
- Opportunities to chat with neighbors who have solar panels, heat pumps, electric vehicles, rain gardens, and more
- A Sustainability Expo to learn about companies who offer sustainable services like solar installers and ecological landscapers, as well as the organizations spearheading sustainability efforts in our communities
- And more!

[Sign up today!](#)

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## First Bluebirds of the Year in Everhart Park!

Take a look at this beautiful clutch of eggs and keep your fingers crossed for these little guys. Let's hope they will increase their population in the park. Thank you to David Yezuita and Bob Eaves for their care of the boxes.



## *In Memoriam*

**W. Donald Braceland**  
**February 24, 1951 - March 21, 2025**

We are saddened to announce the passing of Green Team supporter and Board Member Don Braceland. Don was a man of many talents and was active in the West Chester community not only with the Green Team, but also with his years on Borough Council. He will be sorely missed. Read Don's obituary here:

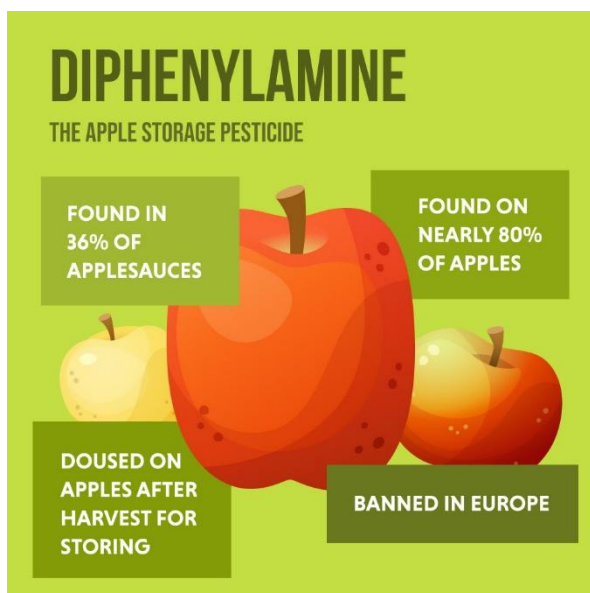
<https://www.foundsferyo.com/obituaries/W-Donald-Braceland>

# The Dirty Dozen (No, not those guys from that movie)

From EWG Food News Highlights

It's important to remember to look out for toxic pesticide residues. From apples to pears and kale to spinach, [EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™](#) found more than 75% of non-organic produce contains harmful pesticide residues, even after thorough washing!

Shop smarter and avoid pesticides with [EWG's Dirty Dozen™](#) list of fruits and vegetables. We recommend you buy organic when possible to reduce your exposure to toxic pesticides.



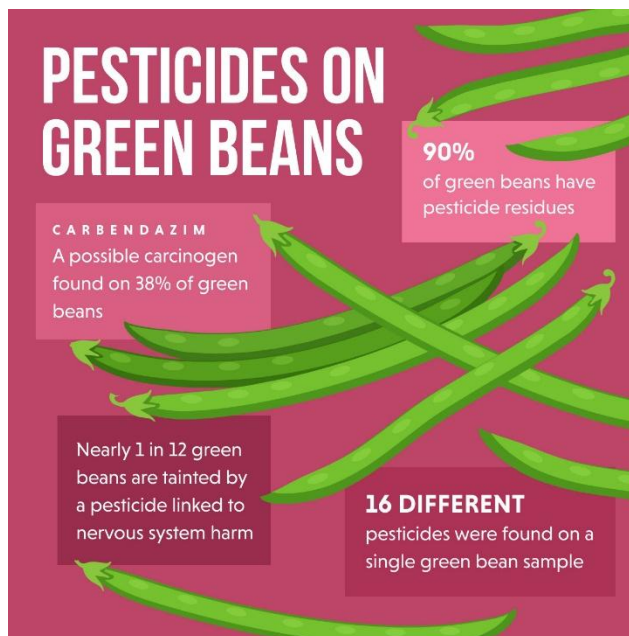
Apples are an iconic part of fall, but [80% of apples contain diphenylamine](#), an EU-banned pesticide linked to cancer, putting apples in 8th place on [EWG's Dirty Dozen list](#).

Although fresh produce is always best, many parents turn to dried fruit and fruit leathers for easy after-school snacks for kids. But EWG's test results show dried fruit snacks contain worrying levels of pesticides. [See the results here.](#)

[Green beans](#) join the [Dirty Dozen™ list](#), too, tainted by a pesticide EPA banned over 10 years ago. The latest green beans tests found some especially toxic pesticides that are allowed in the U.S. but banned in the EU because of their known toxicity to humans.

But wait, there are cleaner foods available too. There's a Clean Fifteen list where you'll find such foods as watermelon, carrots, and mushrooms! Want to take the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen™ lists with you to the grocery store? You can get [EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™ e-guide](#) with a donation of \$15 or more.

Happy shopping!



## Eastern monarch butterfly population nearly doubles in 2025

Protection of forests where monarchs overwinter also improves

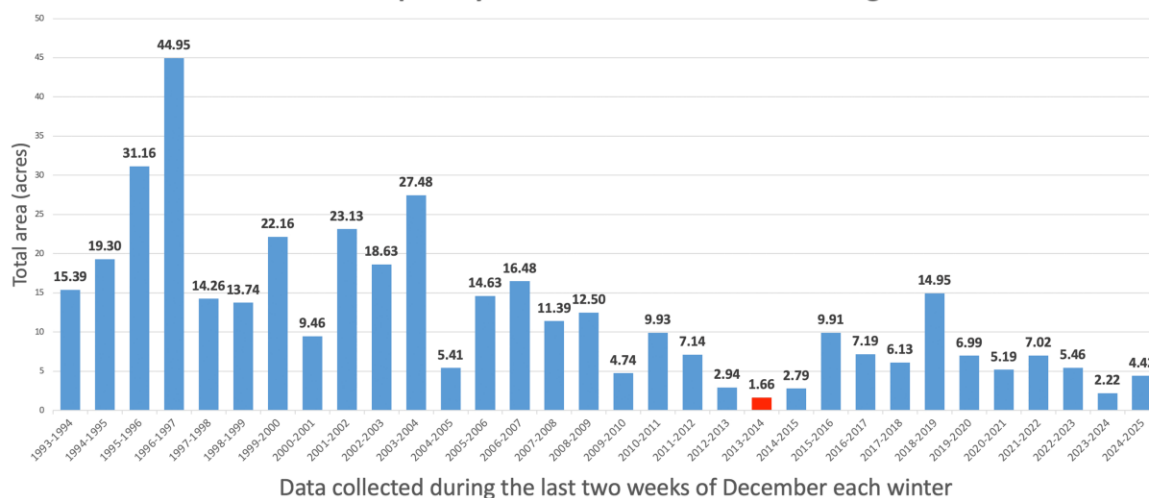
From WWF (World Wildlife Federation)

In encouraging news, the eastern [monarch butterfly](#) population nearly doubled in 2025, according to a new report announced in Mexico. The population wintering in central Mexico's forests occupied 4.42 acres, up from [2.22 acres during the previous winter](#). While monarchs occupied nearly twice as much forest habitat as last year, populations remain far below the long-term average.

The survey, *Forest Area Occupied by Monarch Butterflies Colonies in Mexico During the 2024-2025 Hibernation Season* is conducted annually by WWF-Mexico and Mexico's National Commission of Protected Natural Areas in collaboration with local communities, and it serves as an important indicator of the [butterfly's overall population health](#).



Area of forest occupied by monarch butterflies hibernating in Mexico



“We recognize the key role of local communities, as well as the support of the government of Mexico in conserving the forest and providing this iconic species with the opportunity to thrive,” said Jorge Rickards, director general of WWF Mexico. “It’s now time to turn this year’s increase into a lasting trend with an all-hands approach where governments, landowners, conservationists, and citizens continue to safeguard critical habitats along the monarch’s North American migratory route.”

Scientists attribute much of this year’s population growth to better weather conditions in 2024—with less severe drought than in previous years—along the butterflies' migration route from the United States and Canada to Mexico.

To read more, click here: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/eastern-monarch-butterfly-population-nearly-doubles-in-2025>





## Pre-Order Doug Tallamy's New Book

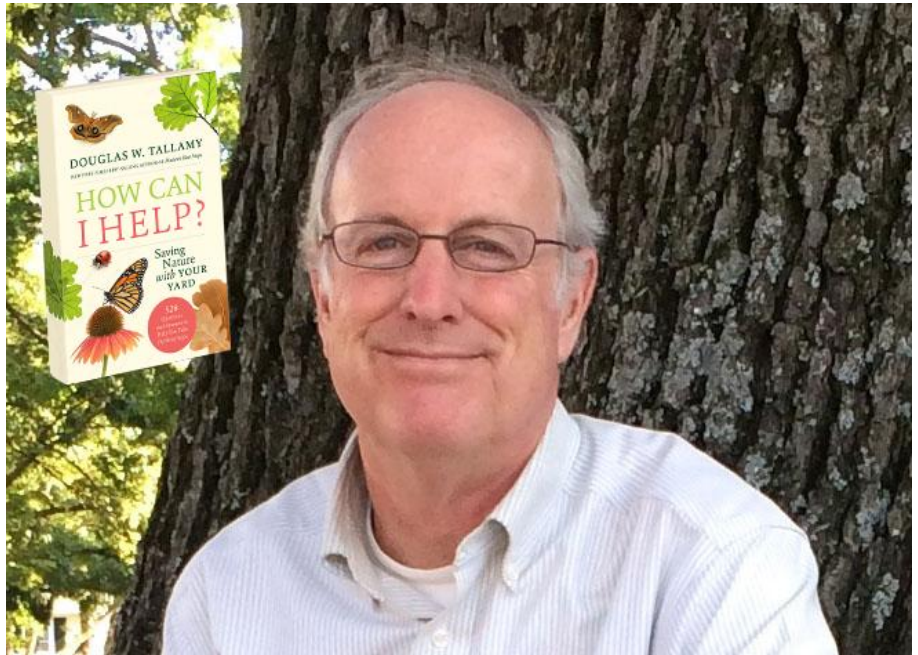
This special edition of [How Can I Help? Saving Nature with Your Yard](#) features Doug Tallamy's signature on a bookplate inside the cover. These signed copies are available at the regular book price (\$30 + \$9.99 S&H). Numbers are limited, so once they're gone, they're gone.

### Book Overview

In *How Can I Help?*, Tallamy tackles the questions commonly asked at his popular lectures and shares compelling and actionable answers that will help gardeners and

homeowners take the next step in their ecological journey. Topics range from ecology, evolution, biodiversity and conservation to restoration, native plants, invasive species, pest control, and supporting wildlife at home. Tallamy keenly understands that most people want to take part in conservation efforts but often feel powerless to do so as individuals. But one person can make a difference, and *How Can I Help?* details how.

Whether by reducing your lawn, planting a handful of native species, or allowing leaves to sit untouched, you will be inspired and empowered to join millions of other like-minded people to become the future of backyard conservation.



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## A lovely thank-you from a Green Team supporter:

Writing to thank you for encouraging Courtney and Chester county food bank to come out and talk about the school garden success at Hillsdale Elementary.

The entire workshop was insightful and gave me great confidence on working towards getting the garden to Pickering Valley school.

The community here definitely needs this grassroots level projects to create a more sustainable society.

Thank you once again for sharing the knowledge.

Regards,  
Shruti





# Safe Streets, Light on the Salt

From *Hello West Chester*, March 28, 2025

By Cara Corridoni

I first noticed the salt, really noticed the salt, this winter. It was our first winter with a dog and the road salt irritated his paws, leaving him limping halfway through a walk. We tried to avoid it, but it was everywhere. Of course, the winter ritual of salting the roads is nothing new. The practice began in the 1940s. Praised for its effectiveness at lowering the freezing temperature of water, salt use has doubled and doubled again and again (and again.) According to [Penn State Extension](#), in those early years, 5,000 tons of salt were spread on roads annually. Now we use 20 million tons of salt annually, or roughly 123 pounds for every American.

The practice has become so ubiquitous, states that experience a sub-32 degree winter are called [the Salt Belt](#). Pennsylvania falls right in the middle of this 21-state region, and our waterways are starting to show it.

"I have been working on the salt question [at Stroud] for a while," says Stroud Water Research Center Senior Scientist Dr. John Jackson, but it was a research project by a West Chester University student six years ago that really opened his eyes to the severity of the problem. She had set up a sensor to measure the salt level of Plum Creek as it flows near S. New St. (photo below).

"It was the first time we measured water as salty as ocean water," said John - and it was Sept. Salt was supposed to be a winter problem.



To help raise awareness around this growing problem, this winter Stroud scientists, West Chester University students, and volunteers headed out to their local streams - the smaller the better - and measured salt concentrations using chloride-specific test strips.

In total, 630 sites were tested and mapped, including more than 80 West Chester locations. Below is a list of where streams were saltiest. The results were consistent with what scientists already know: areas with lots of impervious surfaces that need to be cleared quickly in a snowstorm have waterways with higher salinity.

“Our salt problem is only a problem because we’ve asked for it,” said John.

#### **West Chester Top 10 -**

| <b><u>Salinity reading (mg/L)</u></b> | <b><u>Watershed</u></b> | <b><u>Sample location</u></b>                |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 6064                                  | Plum Run                | Rt. 202 (West Goshen)                        |
| 6064                                  | Goose Creek             | Paoli Pike (West Goshen)                     |
| 6064                                  | E. Branch Chester Creek | West Chester Pike (West Goshen)              |
| 4722                                  | Goose Creek             | E. Washington/Garfield Ave.                  |
| 2920                                  | Goose Creek             | Aldi (West Goshen)                           |
| 2684                                  | Goose Creek             | Turner Ln. ( West Goshen)                    |
| 2280                                  | E. Branch Chester Creek | Spring Ln. (West Goshen)                     |
| 1582                                  | E. Branch Chester Creek | Spring Ln. (West Goshen)                     |
| 1427                                  | Goose Creek             | Cedar Alley (West Chester Borough)           |
| 1320                                  | Goose Creek             | E. Barnard St. (West Chester Borough)        |
| 1320                                  | Goose Creek             | Henderson High School (West Chester Borough) |

***Note on baselines:*** 5- 10 mg/L is considered a natural chloride level for freshwater. Few areas in West Chester tested under 50 mg/L.

Ok, sure, that seems high, but how big a deal is a little extra salt? The ocean seems fine. I guess that depends on whether you like fish and wildlife in your streams, or bridges to drive over them. Salt - which breaks down into sodium and chloride - poses a significant risk to both surface water and groundwater quality. Chloride levels above 230 mg/L are toxic to



wildlife. They also stunt aquatic growth, impact food sources, and can lead to oxygen depletion, which can be detrimental to fish. That's just what it does to the water supply. High levels also cause concrete to dissolve quicker, erode bridge infrastructure, and cause rust-resistant cars to rust. The problem has grown to such an extent that people are starting to confuse the Salt Belt with the Rust Belt.

Ok, fine. So, how do we fix this problem?

We use less salt. (You kind of walked into that one.) While the answer is simple, getting there is not. Road salt has proven an effective (and cheap) way to de-ice roads and sidewalks in winter and we like our roads, sidewalks, and parking lots clear at the first sight of snow and often before.

"The people using more and more salt have done it for all the right reasons," said John. "But they weren't looking at the full picture." Now he would like to see a little recalibration.

"We're not going to stop. We're going to use salt for the right reasons. We are just going to have to be more careful about it," he said.

#### *5 Tips to Reduce Salt Use:*

- Shovel or plow first
- Check your deicer instructions to avoid over-salting. Clean up leftover crystals after storms.
- Be proactive and treat walkways before ice forms
- Use natural materials (sand or grit) instead
- Talk to local contractors about reducing salt use