



WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

March 2026

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:

Another chock-full issue: Earth Day! Salty Water! Goose Creek Spill! Upcoming Lectures and Events! Porchfest! Flower Show! Our Volunteer of the Month! ...and a lot more



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

When – What – Where.



March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 26: Eric Guerra Lecture, WCU, 6:30-8:00 PM

For details on other March and later events, see listings beginning page 3. Also see more events at <https://wcgreenteam.com> and countywide events at <https://chescoenvt.org>.

Related groups and committees (please check online before attending, especially on or near a holiday):

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 April 2026 issue is March 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.

This and That: More Coming Attractions

March 9: Friends of Marshall Square Park monthly meeting, 7 PM, at 228 E. Biddle St., West Chester. Also Friends of Everhart Park meets at 7PM at the First Presbyterian Church, 130 West Miner Street, first room on the left.

March 14: Repair Café, Downingtown



REPAIR CAFE
DOWNINGTOWN

March 14th, 2026 10am - 2pm

Central Presbyterian Church
100 W. Uwchlan Ave. Downingtown, PA 19335

Bring Your Beloved
But Broken Items and
Get Them Fixed... for FREE*

Everyone is welcome, you don't have to be a Downingtown resident.

AVAILABLE REPAIRS
Soft Toys - Dolls & Stuffed Animals
Computers & Electronics
Jewelry
Sharpening
Mechanical & Electrical
Things Made of Wood
Clothing & Textiles
Bikes

Limit TWO items per person!
*Lamp and bike parts available for purchase at our cost

MORE INFORMATION

📄 repaircafedowningtown.com
✉ repaircafe165@gmail.com
📱 @RepairCafeDowningtown

Flyer design by Upward Arrow

Also on March 14, The Citizens' Climate Lobby Chester County group is hosting this fun event at Stargazers Winery in Coatesville.



Quizzo Brunch!

Stargazers Winery

March 14th at noon, 1024 Wheatland Dr
Coatesville, PA 610-486-0422

Cost: Free to attend
Reservations: Highly recommended as tables fill up fast!
Please call to make a reservation 610-486-0422.

March 26: Lecture and Q & A with Eric Guerra, author of *Overbuilt: The High Costs and Low Rewards of US Highway Construction*, at WCU, 6:30-8:00 PM Business and Public Management Center, Room 116.



A Lecture and
Q & A with
ERICK GUERRA
Author of **Overbuilt:
The High Costs and
Low Rewards of US
Highway Construction**

**THURSDAY
MARCH 26, 2026**

6:30-8:00pm
Business and Public
Management Center
Room 116

Co-sponsored by the WCU
Department of Geography and
Planning and the Office of Sustainability

QUESTIONS? EMAIL SUSTAINABILITY@WCUPA.EDU

OVERBUILT
THE HIGH COSTS AND LOW REWARDS
OF US HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION
ERICK GUERRA

April 20: 4th annual Zero Waste Summit
WCU

at

FOURTH ANNUAL
ZERO WASTE SUMMIT

WCU WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY

Join us for...

- ✓ Snacks
- ✓ DIYs and giveaways
- ✓ Student presentations
- ✓ Clothing thrifts
- ✓ Free lamp repair by Downtown Repair Cafe!

April 20th
11am-1pm
Sykes Balrooms

Take action this Earth Week and learn about campus resources

QUESTIONS? Email sustainability@wcupa.edu

April 22: Green Team's own Margaret Hudgings and Molly Hanford will be speaking at WCU on Porchfest and Sustainability. Wednesday, April 22, 12:00-12:50, Rm 255, Sykes Student Union or via Zoom, Meeting ID 95413261652, passcode 880242.

April 23: Will Caverly, author of *Tinicum & Eastwick: Environmental Justice and Racial Injustice in Southwest Philadelphia* (<https://www.brooklinebooks.com/9781955041140/tinicum-and-eastwick/>) will present an evening lecture at WCU. The book is a history of urban planning and environment in the city's formerly rural southwest. The Eastwick neighborhood was subject to a brutal urban renewal/slum clearance project. This project also threatened what would later become the Heinz Refuge, the last portion of (relatively) unspoiled tidal marshlands in SW Philly. The book follows two grassroots movements that formed in response - one to save the homes of humans, the other to save the homes of birds.

A LECTURE AND Q&A WITH
WILL CAVERLY
AUTHOR OF *TINICUM & EASTWICK: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND RACIAL INJUSTICE IN SOUTHWEST PHILADELPHIA*

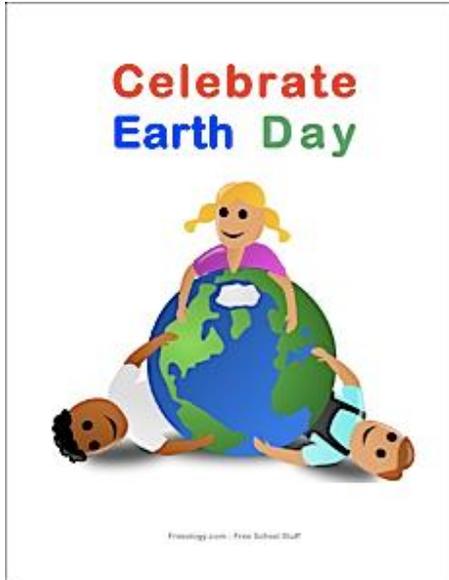
THURSDAY
APRIL 23RD
6:30-8:00PM

BUSINESS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT CENTER
ROOM 116

CO-SPONSORED BY THE WCU DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING AND THE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

QUESTIONS? EMAIL [SUSTAINABILITY@WCUPA.EDU](mailto:sustainability@wcupa.edu)

April 25: Earth Day Celebration!



Please join us (and people around the world) in celebrating the 57th Earth Day on Saturday April 25! We offer you:

- 2pm: Show your commitment to Earth on our march beginning at West Chester Friends School, 415 N. High St. Bring your own signs or use ours. The march stops to rally and hear from speakers outside Uptown Knauer Performing Arts and at the Courthouse Corner and ends at the United Methodist Church at 129 S High St. by 3:30pm.
- 2pm: Wellness Fair at 129 S High St., ending at 4pm.
- 3:30pm: A jazz trio will perform at Holy Trinity Church, 212 S. High St., ending by 4:30pm. Or is it 4:45?

- 5pm: Dinner served at 129 S High St. If you have free time before that, enjoy West Chester's amenities or help us set up the tables and chairs for dinner! *Suggested freewill offering for dinner: \$20 adults, \$5 youths. Please donate by April 20 by using the QR code or clicking [here](#).*



Parking note: You can park in the Friends School lots off High St. or Marshall St., or on the street in that neighborhood (check signs but should not be a problem on a Saturday eve). Carpooling desirable! You can leave your car there till after dinner, or retrieve and move it before dinner. Or, park at one of the public parking facilities in downtown West Chester. There is a public lot next to the Methodist Church and a few free spots are available in front of the church. A block south, there are a few free spots in front of the Baptist Church. Holy Trinity Church has its own lot, also.

Be advised that you can park in West Chester free on Saturdays **UNTIL 5:00PM** (parking garages excepted; you must pay all day if using those). After 5:00 you must pay to park, even if you were in your spot before 5:00. A parking kiosk is now in place in the lot next to the Methodist church and that may be easier to use than the current parking app (Flowbird).

OUR POWER, OUR PLANET

Come Celebrate **EARTH DAY** with the West Chester Community



WELLNESS Fair
at United Methodist
Church 129 S High St
2:00 – 4:00pm

Learn about acupuncture,
healthy eating, & tai chi.
Explore meditation &
essentials of forest bathing.

Hear the borough's
Sustainability Advisory
Committee explaining what
they are doing to make our
lives healthier.
Snacks by WC Co-op. Free



Office of Sustainability

POWER DINNER

5:00 United Methodist Church
129 S High St

Presentations, Awards, International
Foods, Dinner & Sweets

Vegetarian options, sushi, salads & mains by Kim
Stack of 3 Little Pigs & Mistral, French & Fast.
Bread by La Baguette Magique & Cake by
The Master's Baker.

Program honors environmental leaders & a
reading of Mohawk Thanksgiving, praising the
Earth on Earth Day

All Welcome Suggested free will
donation \$20 Adults / \$5 Youth



Our Power, Our Planet
MARCH

Begin 2:00 pm WC Friends
424 N High St

Bring a sign or use one of
ours - 1st come 1st served
Speakers, chants, and a
community march.

Strong turnout builds
momentum.

Prizes for creative signs &
hats

Special thank you to the
United Methodist Church of
West Chester,
to Holy Trinity Episcopal
Church and to Westtown
Meeting, Society of Friends
for co sponsorship.

Cosponsored by the West Chester Green Team; West Chester University Office of Sustainability and Westtown Meeting, Society of Friends

April 26: West Chester Garden Club Annual Flower Show, 12-4 PM, East Goshen Township Bldg., 1580 Paoli Pike, West Chester.



By the way, The WC Garden Club won a Blue Ribbon at the Philadelphia Flower Show this year!

It was a 'Community Garden Exchange' called Ben's Tool Exchange featuring Ben Franklin's garden tools and beautiful flower arrangements. The club spent 6 months planning its design, from paint colors for the walls, to flower choices and containers, signage, multiple tools, flooring, potting bench and a whiskey barrel.

The team met from August 25 on, spending hours working on the exhibit and formed a close bond as a result. On Friday, February 27th, a panel of judges met to review all exhibits in their class, and they were awarded a Blue Ribbon.

Congratulations, West Chester Garden Club!
Beautiful job!



Porchfest Performer Sign-up Now Open!

Performer sign-up is now open and will be open from March 1-April 1. Keep checking at <https://westchesterporchfest.com/> for more details.

Sign up to be a host at <https://westchesterporchfest.com/be-a-porchfest-host-for-2026/>



Gardening Help Wanted!

Let's hope we are now done with winter and looking forward to spring. WCGT will need help again with the following garden cleanup projects:

Maintenance/ Clean-up dates:

- Prescott Alley Pollinator Garden--Saturday 4/11-**9 AM**
- Justice Center - week of 4/13- @ 4-5 volunteers (time to be determined)
- Chestnut St. Pollinator strip/ Law Alley--4/18-**9 AM**

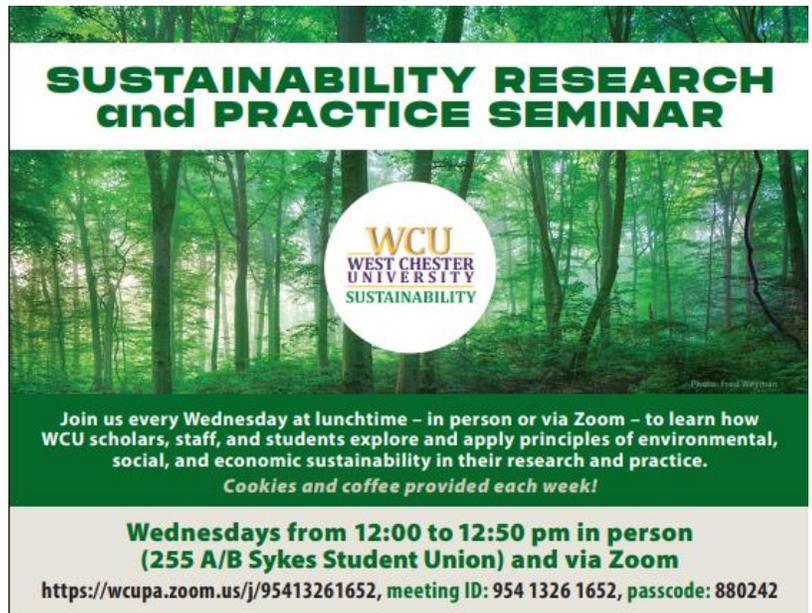
Planting:

- Church St. Towers Planting - Saturday May 9 at **9 AM** -- we will be planting and mulching existing beds including 7 containers for the residents. I'll need about 7-8 individuals--estimated time @ 2 hrs.

Please let Chris Pugliese (chrispugl@gmail.com) know if you are available for any of these dates. Much appreciated!



...and here's what else is happening at WCU:



SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH and PRACTICE SEMINAR



Join us every Wednesday at lunchtime – in person or via Zoom – to learn how WCU scholars, staff, and students explore and apply principles of environmental, social, and economic sustainability in their research and practice.
Cookies and coffee provided each week!

**Wednesdays from 12:00 to 12:50 pm in person
(255 A/B Sykes Student Union) and via Zoom**
<https://wcupa.zoom.us/j/95413261652>, meeting ID: 954 1326 1652, passcode: 880242



BIRD WALKS

MARCH 2026

Join us at the entrance to the Gordon Natural Area! Binoculars are provided.

3/21	9:00-10:30AM
3/25	NORTH CAMPUS WALK 12PM. MEET IN SYKES LOBBY
3/27	8:30-9:30AM
3/30	7:00-8:30PM

All are welcome: WCU students and employees and West Chester community members!

LEARN
MORE





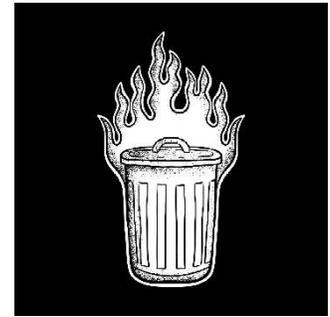
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|--|---|
| <p>FEBRUARY 4, 2026
Dr. Casey R. Schmitt
<i>Interdisciplinary Studies and Exploratory Studies</i>
Tuko Pamoja: Climate Perspectives from East Africa and Fulbright-Hays</p> <p>FEBRUARY 18, 2026
Nadine Boukhari
<i>M.S. Industrial/Organizational Psychology '27</i>
Lisa Smart
<i>Post-Landfill Action Network</i>
Return on Investment Analysis of Reusable To-Go Containers</p> <p>FEBRUARY 25, 2026
Dr. Ellie Brown
<i>Psychology</i>
Can Environmental Chaos Get "Under the Skin" to Influence Child Development? Implications for Policy and Practice</p> <p>MARCH 4, 2026
Kristopher Benedict
<i>Art + Design</i>
Landscape Painting and Contemporary Landscapes</p> <p>MARCH 18, 2026
Bruce Brockman
<i>Vice President of Operations, Goodwill Keystone Area</i>
The 4 P's of Sustainability: Prosperity, Planet, People, Perpetuity</p> | <p>MARCH 25, 2026
Paige Jones, M.Ed. School Counseling '27, Ariel Whaley, M.S. Geography '26, Lea Rubenstein, B.M. Music Education, '27
North Campus Bird Walk
(Meet in Sykes Lobby, no Zoom for this seminar)</p> <p>APRIL 1, 2026
Dr. Devin Arne
<i>Music Theory, History, and Composition</i>
Silvana Cardell
<i>Creator of TERRA: Bodies + Territories</i>
TERRA: Bodies + Territories</p> <p>APRIL 8, 2026
Dr. Carlos A. Morales-Ramirez
<i>Geography and Planning</i>
Protecting Gentle Giants: Sustainability Challenges in Whale Shark Ecotourism</p> <p>APRIL 15, 2026
Dr. Amir Golmohamadi
<i>Nutrition</i>
Organic and Non-Organic Foods, Pesticide Residue, and Sustainability</p> <p>APRIL 22, 2026
Dr. Margaret Hudgings and Molly Hanford
<i>West Chester Green Team</i>
West Chester Porchfest and Sustainability</p> <p>APRIL 29, 2026
Dan Spracklin
<i>Founder and CEO, SoMax</i>
Transforming Waste into Resources: An introduction to Hydrothermal Carbonization
(For this date only, meet in Sykes 210)</p> |
|--|---|

Sponsored by WCU's Office of Sustainability, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the Sustainability Council's Scholarship and Creative Activities Committee. For more information, visit wcupa.edu/sustainability or write to sustainability@wcupa.edu.

“Advanced Recycling” a Scam?

By Patrice Tomcik, Senior Field Director, Moms Clean Air Force. www.momscleanairforce.org

"Advanced recycling" is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Plastic industry lobbyists are pushing Congress to support this practice, which is masquerading as a solution to the plastic pollution crisis. The catch is “advanced recycling” is NOT recycling at all—it is the **incineration of plastics, plain and simple.**

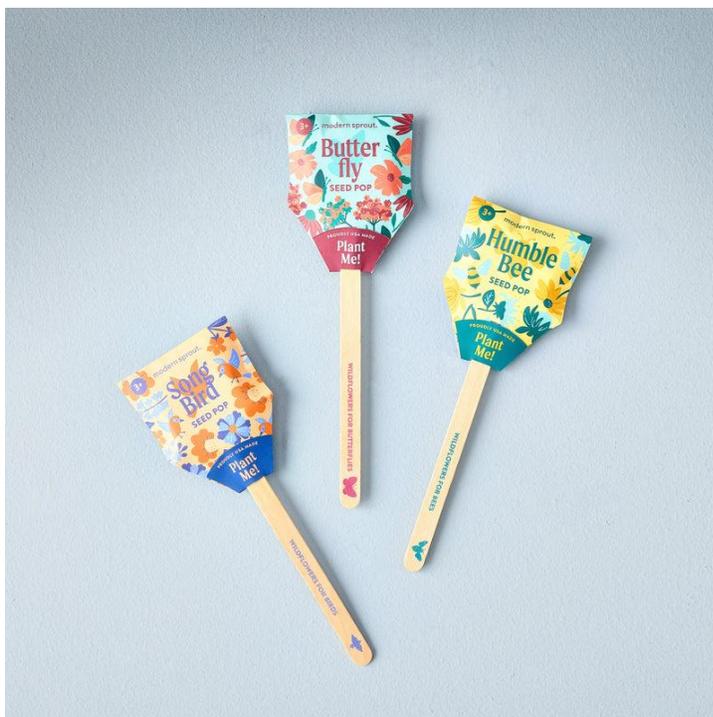


Burning plastics creates dangerous air pollution and chemical waste—and kids are the most vulnerable. Children living near these incinerators are at increased risk of health impacts affecting the brain, lungs, and heart as well as birth defects and cancer.

By using this language of "recycling," the plastic industry is trying to skirt air pollution controls that incinerators should be subject to. They are looking for a free pass to pollute our communities and our air—with heavy metals and toxic compounds, including benzene and formaldehyde. All these pollutants put our children at risk.

We need real solutions. [Tell Congress to protect our families from "advanced recycling," for the health and safety of your loved ones.](#)

Have You Seen Seed Pops?



A playful take on seed starting that supports our Pollinators! Each Humble Bee, Butterfly, and Song Bird Seed Pop includes a curated selection of perennial wildflower seeds, clay, worm-castings and planting instructions. Just unwrap, plant and grow. Once planted, the wooden stick serves as a garden marker.

Garden seed pops are also available in Strawberry, Carrot, and Sweet Basil, and herb blends such as Mamma Mia Pizza, Stir Fry, and Super Greens.

What a fun way to introduce kids to gardening (make sure they understand that these pops are NOT edible)—or just have a little fun yourself. I received two pollinator pops for Christmas, and I can't wait to plant them to see what grows.

Volunteer of the Month – Amy Johnston

Back in 1926, with the 20's roaring around them, Camp Linden was founded on wooded acreage on the banks of the Brandywine Creek. The Philadelphia Ethical Society purchased the land that the Lenape tribe had lived on for centuries and the Quakers settled with William Penn. A Quaker family, the Trimbles, had lived nearby in a small cluster of homes near today's Northbrook, with its thriving Canoe Co. During the 1770's, the Battle of the Brandywine was fought through skirmishes in the vicinity, with Trimble's Ford and Jefferis Crossing commemorated locally with historic markers. This tract of land is in the center and the heart of Chester County. It is also home of Camp Linden, a spot where children come to learn about nature and to learn to feel safe and at home in the natural world.

This coming summer, children from Philadelphia and from Coatesville and West Chester will visit Camp Linden. They will learn to garden and swim and will explore the woods and become at home in the outdoors. This coming summer marks the 100th birthday of Camp Linden, our friends and allies in environmental work in the county, whose mission is to educate city youth about the great outdoors.

Photo: Two years ago, the Green Team honored two long-time Camp Linden leaders, Sharon Wallis and Leonard Weeks, with the Green Team's Environmental Leadership Awards.



Amy Johnston, the Camp Director, is one of our allies in environmental work in Chester County. In addition to their "green" work, Camp Linden has made a commitment to honoring the area's Lenape heritage. They teach language and cooking and invite local leaders to share their stories. For the past 3 years, Camp Linden has welcomed the Green Team

for a Lenape themed dinner. It is our pleasure to extend our congratulations for 100 years of service to Camp Linden. Thank you for your outstanding work on behalf of all of us.

With an additional nod and hearty thank you to Amy Johnston, Camp Linden's new director, we would like to recognize Amy as our Volunteer of the Month for March. Amy has supported the Green Team's work in honoring the Lenape. She has attended canoeing at Westtown Lake and information sessions led by our friends from the Museum of Indian Culture in Allentown. She organized a very successful banquet featuring Eunice Alexander, Environmental Educator, and invites us every summer to visit them at the camp near Marshallton. Having a network of leaders and members of other environmental organizations support us in our work and extends the reach of all the groups involved. Thank you, Amy.

My name is Amy Johnston. I have been in the Environmental education field for about 15 years and am currently an environmental educator at Brandywine Red Clay Alliance in West Chester, PA, and have just become executive director of Camp Linden, a summer camp for inner city children, where I have been working for the last 5 years. I'm interested in environmental education in general but I'm most passionate about teaching kids about/ and connecting them to the natural world.

Does Your Water Taste Salty?

By Cara Corridoni, from *Hello West Chester*, February 27, 2026

Salt in the water. Earlier this month, Aqua put out a statement warning customers they should not be surprised by “slightly” salty water.

“Aqua Pennsylvania customers might notice that their drinking water has a slightly salty taste,” the [utility company wrote](#) on Feb. 12, about a week and a half before this latest snowstorm. The taste is caused by elevated salt levels in the drinking water due to the “runoff of road salts used on roadways, parking lots, and other treated surfaces in response to winter storms and icy conditions,” the statement continues. Neither the Environmental Protection Agency nor Pennsylvania’s Department of Environmental Protection maintains standards for either sodium or calcium, and only a



secondary standard for chlorine, the three main components of road salt. This means the elevated mineral levels are not believed to carry any health risks—but they do carry risks.

On Jan. 30, researchers from Stroud Water Research Center set up at Borough Hall with the expectation of testing dozens of local water samples for salt levels. The snow coverage and frigid temperatures led to them cancelling the public portion of the collection, but trained researchers were still able to grab cups full of water from local streams. It’s all part of a growing initiative to get a better understanding of just what impact that “slightly” salty water has on the larger ecosystem.

“This is all very recent,” said Stroud Water Research Center Senior Scientist Dr. John Jackson, who first noted the problem seven years ago with the help of a West Chester University student. “No one was paying attention to road salt,” he said.

That is no longer the case. Today, they have a network of more than 700 volunteers who have helped test the water at 1300 sites across Pennsylvania. They have used this data to create a [Snapshot Map](#) showing salt-level concentrations at various groundwater sites. West Chester shows up on the map more than four dozen times; most of those markings are in red, indicating salt levels over 230 milligrams per liter, the EPA threshold for chronic toxicity. The findings are not surprising with all the impervious surfaces that must be cleared each time snow falls.

“High salt levels are a good indication of population,” said John.

You can read more about the impact of road salt and tips for mitigating its use while maintaining safety [here](#). Want to test a stream near you? Learn how to get involved [here](#).

The Goose Creek Spill

By Megan L. Fork, PhD, Assistant Professor of Biology | West Chester University
Chief Scientist | [Goose Creek Alliance](#)

Like many of my neighbors, I was appalled to learn about the chemical spill in Goose Creek over the weekend. I've taken countless students to this creek to teach them how to measure streamflow, monitor water chemistry, and assess biological integrity. My family and I also live only a block from the stream. Goose Creek is not an abstract teaching tool or a line on a map, it's part of my daily life and the heart of our local ecosystem.

Thanks to intrepid local reporting and the quick work of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, we now know the identity of the substance that entered the creek: a proprietary product known as *Long Duration Foam AC-645*, mixed with chlorinated water. Unfortunately, what we still don't know is what is actually *in* this chemical formulation, or what effects it might have on the environment or on the people who come into contact with it.

As an environmental scientist, my first stop when evaluating a chemical is the Safety Data Sheet, or SDS, the international standard for communicating risks to people and ecosystems. But when I located the [SDS for Long Duration Foam AC-645](#), I was met with line after line of information "not available."

This is not an oversight. It is the [predictable outcome of how chemical safety regulations work in the United States](#).

Under the [Toxic Substances Control Act \(TSCA\)](#), companies are not required to disclose the full contents of proprietary chemical mixtures. They are also not required to provide comprehensive safety data for new products before those products enter commerce. In practice, this means chemicals are often used widely for decades before we understand their risks and we only test them when something goes wrong over and over.

Regardless of its contents, this spill should never have reached Goose Creek. Property owners who store industrial chemicals have a clear responsibility to prevent spills from reaching our water. This includes implementing, testing, and regularly maintaining secondary containment systems that reliably capture leaks before they reach soil or waterways. If these safeguards are ignored or allowed to deteriorate, our shared ecosystems suffer the consequences. Ensuring that chemicals stored on one's land do not pollute the community is something we should expect and require of our neighbors.

Residents deserve better. Our local ecosystems, our public health, and our peace of mind all depend on a system of chemical regulation that prioritizes transparency and safety, as well as on-site containment systems that effectively prevent spills. We need stronger protections for our watersheds and stronger authority for government agencies to act before, not after, harm occurs. Goose Creek should be a wake-up call, not just another entry in a long list of preventable misfortunes.



Photo by Courtney Finneran