



Carroll County Environmental Advisory Council

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2024 Work Plan

EAC PURPOSE

Created under Chapter 31 of the Carroll County Code of Public Local Laws, the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is dedicated to exploration and promotion of the County's environmental management responsibilities, to providing the Commissioners with educated information and/or advice that is in the best interest of the County and the County's residents, and to assist with environmental educational efforts.

EAC FUNCTION

The EAC functions at the direction of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners and, as such, works cooperatively with County environmental staff to research environmental policy issues; to advise the Board of County Commissioners; to foster environmental education; and, generally, to act in the best interest of County residents by promoting effective environmental protection and management principles.

WORK PLAN PURPOSE

As an advisory body to the Board, the EAC provides information to the Board on emerging environmental policies and projects. Projects may be individual, discrete projects of the EAC, supplemental or supportive to staff projects, or recommend measures to mitigate environmental impacts for projects initiated by or supported by the Board.

This work plan outlines the topics, projects, and/or issues where the EAC will assist and advise the Board for the 2024 calendar year. The EAC reviewed these topics with the Board in the annual joint meeting held on January 25, 2024.



TOPICS AND PROJECTS FOR 2024

In Calendar Year 2024, the EAC will work on the following topics and/or projects:

Topic/Project	Expected Product
<p>Water Conservation – Public Outreach:</p> <p>In July 2023, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) officially declared a drought watch for central and western Maryland, which includes Carroll County. In September, MDE upgraded the watch to a drought warning. MDE is urging public water systems, citizens, and businesses in parts of the state to continue voluntary water use restrictions.</p> <p>The drought warning was based on lower-than-normal stream flows and groundwater levels for this time of year. The State increases oversight of water supply conditions and encourages voluntary water conservation practices. While the State currently has enough water to meet the needs of residents and businesses, water conservation measures are encouraged to help avoid any future water shortages.</p> <p>To raise awareness of the drought situation and provide citizens with ways for conserving water, the EAC will research water conservation best practices and develop a public outreach publication that describes what a drought situation in Carroll County looks like, the impact of drought circumstances, and measures that the public can take to conserve water. The EAC will coordinate with the Water Resource Coordination Council to ensure that the information will be relevant to residents served by public water systems in addition to those in unincorporated areas served by private wells and available for distribution in the municipalities as well.</p> <p>The publication will be made available in hardcopy and online.</p> <p><i>Target Completion: Late Spring/Early Summer 2024</i></p>	<p>Booklet</p>
<p>Reducing Food Waste: A Homeowner’s Guide</p> <p>Nationally, EPA estimates that 24 percent of the municipal solid waste that goes to the landfills is food waste and about 60 percent of food waste in general goes to landfills. Reducing the food waste stream to the landfill may help prolong the life of the landfill. It is also a strategy relevant to the update of the County’s Solid Waste Master Plan.</p> <p>The EAC will research food waste impacts and diversion practices. A public outreach document will be prepared that focuses on homeowner best practices to reduce and divert the food waste stream to the landfill(s). The publication will be made available in hardcopy and online.</p> <p><i>Target Completion: Fall 2024</i></p>	<p>Booklet</p>



Proposed EAC 2024 Work Plan

Topic/Project	Expected Product
<p>Outreach to Local Scouts:</p> <p>Carroll County Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops often participate in projects that demonstrate environmental stewardship. Many troops have assisted with tree plantings or stream clean ups.</p> <p>To help build a rapport with the local troops and support their initiatives that demonstrate environmental best management practices (BMPs) and assist with projects that help meet the mission of the Department of Planning & Land Management and its NPDES MS4 permit, the EAC will develop an outreach piece to be sent to local troops. The publication will offer ways in which the County can partner with the troops to increase the successfulness and attractiveness of doing these projects. Such partnerships will also provide information to track and account for these BMPs.</p> <p><i>Target Completion: Summer 2024</i></p>	Booklet or Brochure

ONGOING TOPICS AND PROJECTS

The EAC will address the following ongoing topics and projects:

- The EAC will participate as an exhibitor in the annual **Environmental Symposium** organized and hosted by the Carroll County Planning & Land Management Department. This includes preparation of a display and materials, as well as pursuing any additional opportunities to enhance the Symposium.
- The EAC will proceed with developing a public outreach piece for **Residential Graywater Use** in Carroll County once regulations are adopted by Maryland Department of the Environment. This publication is intended to help provide Carroll's residents with basic information regarding graywater, its residential uses, and benefits.
- In its continuing role to promote **public education and awareness** on environmental issues, the EAC will also address citizen concerns as they arise and are brought to the EAC's attention.
- A member of the EAC's **Solid Waste Committee**, who was appointed by the Board to serve on the Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC), will continue to report back to the other EAC members and act as a liaison between the Councils, as needed, if this committee is activated again.
- The Carroll County Commissioners adopted the **Environmental Action Awards** program in 1990 to recognize individuals and groups that have exemplary accomplishments in the protection, conservation, and improvement of our environmental resources through their actions or projects. Awards are presented biennially to individuals and groups chosen from nominees submitted for consideration by their peers, although self-nominations will be accepted. The public campaign to solicit nominations for the 2025 Environmental Action Awards may roll out in late 2024, depending on the timing of the opening and deadline for acceptance of nominations. If the EAC begins accepting nominations early in 2025, preparatory work will begin late in 2024.



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- From time to time, an **informational tour** is arranged for the EAC. These tours are intended to raise awareness and knowledge of various environmental issues, such as the EAC's tour of Lehigh's conveyor system in 2017. A similar tour may be arranged if the opportunity arises.
- As needed, an **ad hoc committee** of EAC members will serve to hear and decide an appeal of any of the following environmental code chapters/sections: Ch. 53 Environmental Management of Storm Sewer Systems, Ch. 150 Forest Conservation, Ch. 151 Stormwater Management, Ch. 153 Floodplain Management, Ch. 154 Water Resource Management, and Ch. 157 Landscape Enhancement of Development.

Approval will be sought from the Board to proceed on any concerns requiring significant additional time, staff, or financial resources.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

Other topics and/or projects may surface throughout the year for which the Board would like a review and/or advice from the EAC. If the Board seeks input from the EAC outside of the work plan process, the Board will request the review and input in writing. The request will specify what aspect of the issue/project should be discussed and/or the desired product from the EAC.

Other issues or projects for discussion may be brought to the EAC's attention during the year by a member of the EAC, the public, or staff. If the EAC chooses to pursue a project, a written request will be made to the Board for approval to amend the work plan with the additional project. The request will specify the scope of the project and expected product and outcome. The Board may modify the scope of the project with its approval.

At the request of the Board of County Commissioners, potential future projects, as needed and time permitting, may include public education regarding tree planting, wind energy, and/or potable water.

