



# Carroll County Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)

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## 2018 Work Plan

### EAC PURPOSE

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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 advice that is in the best interest of the County and the County's residents, and to environmental educational efforts.

### EAC FUNCTION

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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

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As an advisory body to the Board, the EAC provides recommendations to the Board on emerging environmental policy 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 2018 calendar year. The EAC reviewed these topics with the Board in the annual joint meeting held on February 8, 2018.



## TOPICS AND PROJECTS FOR 2018

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In Calendar Year 2018, the EAC will work on the following topics and/or projects:

Topic/Project	Expected Product
<p><b><i>Carroll County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase 1 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Public Education Requirements – Public Education Workshop for Commercial and Industrial Business Community:</i></b></p> <p>Carroll County’s MS4 permit requires the County to implement a public education and outreach program to reduce stormwater pollutants. One requirement of the permit is to provide information regarding the following water quality issues to the regulated community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ NPDES permitting requirements;</li> <li>◆ Pollution prevention plan development;</li> <li>◆ Proper housekeeping; and</li> <li>◆ Spill prevention and response.</li> </ul> <p>The first business workshop was first held on January 5, 2016. This workshop is held every other year, with the next workshop to be held in 2018. The 2018 workshop will be specifically geared toward holders of 12SW industrial stormwater permits. These permit holders will be invited to attend.</p> <p>As part of its public outreach charge, the EAC members will continue to work closely with the County’s EAC Staff Liaison and the NPDES Compliance Specialists to plan and implement an educational workshop. The purpose of the workshop will be to equip these businesses with knowledge of the good housekeeping and best management practices (BMPs) that will protect water quality and prevent issues for these businesses in the future. The workshop will be held in February 2018.</p> <p><i>Target Completion: Mid-February 2018</i></p>	<p>Educational workshop for County’s general public + related educational materials</p>



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### **Community Solar in Carroll County:**

“A community solar project—sometimes referred to as a solar garden or shared renewable energy plant—is a solar power plant whose electricity is shared by more than one household. Community solar’ can refer to both ‘community-owned’ projects as well as third party-owned plants whose electricity is shared by a community... The primary purpose of community solar is to allow members of a community the opportunity to share the benefits of solar power even if they cannot or prefer not to install solar panels on their property. Project participants benefit from the electricity generated by the community solar farm, which costs less than the price they would ordinarily pay to their utility... Community solar allows people to go solar even if they do not own property on which to put their own system.” (Energy Sage, <https://www.energysage.com/solar/community-solar/community-solar-power-explained/>, Oct 30 2017).

The Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in 2015 to allow community solar projects. Implementing regulations were subsequently adopted and final in July 2016. The Maryland Public Service Commission has set up a three-year pilot program to allow subscriber organizations, which own and/or operate the [Community Solar Energy Generation System] CSEGSs, to apply and implement a program. CSEGSs are limited to 2 MW of electrical output.

In Carroll County, solar facilities other than accessory are currently only allowed in the Business and Industrial zoning districts, although ground-mounted systems are not permitted in the Business Neighborhood Retail zone. No size limit is imposed for ground-mounted systems in the other zones.

The EAC will research CSEGSs to determine the pros and cons of allowing these facilities in other zoning districts and make a recommendation to the Board on potential further action.

*Target Completion: Summer 2018*

Report + findings



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**Reducing Polystyrene Use in Carroll County – Research:**

In October 2017, Commissioner Frazier expressed his desire to pursue legislation in the 2018 legislative session to reduce the usage of EPS (more commonly but incorrectly known as Styrofoam™). The Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) members will research EPS and options available to Carroll County to reduce its usage. A report will be prepared with findings and possible recommendations. Topics to address in the report include:

- ◆ What is expanded polystyrene (EPS)?
- ◆ What are the pros and cons of EPS usage?
- ◆ What are other Maryland jurisdictions doing?
- ◆ What are the options for reducing EPS usage in Carroll County?
- ◆ What are the pros and cons of reducing EPS usage in Carroll County?
- ◆ What might be the costs of implementing this reduction in Carroll County?
- ◆ What are the EAC’s findings?

The EAC anticipates forwarding a report to the Board in early September 2018.

*Target Completion: September 2018*

Report + findings

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**Reducing Plastic Shopping Bag Use in Carroll County – Research:**

The trend toward reusable shopping bags provides benefits to the County, including less clogging of storm drains and less waste in the landfill. Recycling of plastic bags can be challenging, due to cost as well as the interfering with recycling sorting equipment.

At the Board’s request, the EAC will research options available to Carroll County to reduce the use of plastic bags, as well as possible options for feasible recycling of plastic bags. The EAC will review pros and cons of the options and provide its findings to the Board in a report.

*Target Completion: Fall 2018*

Report + findings



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**Residential Greywater Use in Carroll County – Research & Public Outreach:**

Greywater is untreated water collected from a clothes washing machine or a bathroom sink, tub, or shower. While not drinkable, it is suitable, and even beneficial, for irrigating certain areas of the yard, which also helps to conserve water usage.

At the Board’s request, the EAC will research homeowner greywater usage and prepare public outreach materials to help provide Carroll’s residents with basic information regarding greywater, its residential uses, and benefits. The materials will be made available in hardcopy and online.

*Target Completion: Fall 2018*

Brochure or booklet

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**SolSmart – Application for Designation:**

SolSmart is a national designation program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy through the Solar Powering America by Recognizing Communities (SPARC) initiative. It is designed to recognize communities that have taken key steps to address local barriers to solar energy and foster the growth of mature local solar markets. The program seeks to reduce solar soft costs. The designation is meant to send a message to the community is “open for business,” attracting new businesses and helping designees share in the economic development benefits attached to the solar industry.

Upon receipt of the application, the Designation Program Administrator conducts a baseline assessment to determine which criteria the community currently meets and which actions are still required before designation can be granted. Communities could be eligible for no-cost technical assistance (NACo participates as a technical assistance provider) to help meet the criteria, or the community may choose to identify additional actions needed to be eligible for designation and implement these actions prior to applying for designation.

The EAC will work with the Staff Liaison and other relevant staff to complete the application for program designation.

The EAC anticipates bringing a completed application to the Board in August 2018 for approval to move forward with submittal. The application requires the Board develop a statement of solar goals, areas of focus, or community priorities.

*Target Completion: August 2018*

Completed SolSmart application, ready for submission



## ONGOING TOPICS AND PROJECTS

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The EAC will address the following ongoing topics and projects:

- › 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.
- › The Carroll County Commissioners adopted the Environmental Awareness 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 EAC began in fall 2017 with the preliminary work and preparation of materials to launch the 2018 Environmental Awareness Awards process in January 2018. Nominations will be due March 1, 2018; award presented with the Board in April 2018; and a tree ceremony held on Arbor Day to honor the winners.
- › Members of the EAC's Solid Waste Committee 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 liaisons between the Councils.

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

## ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

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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, 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.

