



THE EARTHWAYS CENTER

The EarthWays Center of the Missouri Botanical Garden is a group devoted to an increasingly vital goal: conservation of energy and other natural resources for the future, otherwise known as “sustainability” - meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

“As a division of Missouri Botanical Garden, we embrace the Garden’s mission of protecting and preserving plants, but with a slightly different approach,” said Glenda Abney, director of the EarthWays Center. While the Garden is a botanical institution focusing on plants themselves, the EarthWays Center zeros in on what botanical researchers agree is the greatest threat to plants and the environment: people.

“Our focus is helping people understand how their behavior impacts plants, and in turn how it affects the entire environment,” said Abney. “We promote sustainability through environmental education and improving the built environment. By educating people about our dependence on plants and the natural resources that support plant communities, we are teaching adults and youth to value and protect the things that sustain our families and communities.”

EarthWays Center staff work directly with the general public and other audiences, including kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) educators and students, college and university students, instructors, staff and community educators. They also work with green building professionals, auditors, contractors, businesses and local municipality leaders, with the goal of improving the built environment.

The EarthWays Center currently offers 20 programs and projects, including:

- K-12 presentations covering topics such as recycling, energy and air quality, building improvement coordination and comprehensive teacher professional development
- College and university presentations and sustainability project coordination through a campus sustainability network supporting ongoing, varied greening efforts at these facilities
- Summer youth camps, engaging students in “green dream house” planning and design
- Special events, including the Green Homes Festival in September and an annual Green House Tour of model homes, showcasing the benefits of green-certified building
- Adult and family classes offered year-round, covering topics ranging from energy efficient home improvements to composting to backyard chickens
- Contractor training and certification in whole building science
- Promotion and coordination of residential energy audit programs for homeowners
- Resource advice on the greening of businesses
- Extensive consultation on the building of new green homes
- Coordination of the U. S. Green Building Council’s Missouri Gateway Chapter, with its goal to transform commercial and residential building practices; and much more.

One of the EarthWays Center’s most popular offerings is the Green Resources Hotline – anyone can call or e-mail with questions related to green resources, and the Green Resources Manager will help them find the answer.

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“People ask, ‘What can I do to make my home more energy efficient? Where do I take my recyclable items? What can I do about indoor air quality?’ and we provide answers and resources,” said Abney.

Useful tips and local product and service sources can be found online at www.earthwayscenter.org. The EarthWays Green Resources Hotline is available at greenresources@mobot.org or (314) 577-0246. In late 2010, the EarthWays Center will move from its previous location at 3617 Grandel Square to the Missouri Botanical Garden’s campus. Existing EarthWays Center programs and projects will continue, and together with new efforts, will expand the Garden’s voice in the community as innovative leaders in promoting sustainability in the St. Louis region.

“This is a great opportunity to bring the sustainability messages of the EarthWays Center to the Garden and make them available to more than 970,000 annual Garden visitors,” said Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson, president of the Missouri Botanical Garden. “This move strengthens the Garden’s commitment to showcasing how one’s choices and behaviors impact the environment and plant conservation.”

The EarthWays Center’s new location is 4651 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, Mo. 63110, in the Garden’s Commerce Bank Center for Science Education building. For more information about the EarthWays Center, call (314) 577-0220 or visit www.earthwayscenter.org.

For more information, contact the Public Relations Department at (314) 577-0254 or (314) 577-5141 or check the Missouri Botanical Garden’s Web site at www.mobot.org. For 24-hour recorded visitor information, call (314) 577-5100 or 1-800-642-8842 toll free.

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The Missouri Botanical Garden’s mission is “to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life.” Today, 151 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science and conservation, education and horticultural display.