



## Sustainable solutions: your guide to healthier homes and communities



### **Youth educators lead activities at Blue Lake Park and Oregon Zoo**

Metro's Natural Gardening program partnered with Oregon State University's 4H program this year for summer fun at Blue Lake Park and Oregon Zoo. The Youth Environmental Educators program teaches skills to help youth prepare to enter the workforce through a paid work experience. The program is offered to middle and high schoolers from historically underserved and underrepresented communities.

The environmental educators create and lead natural garden crafts and activities at the Discovery Garden at Blue Lake Park and the Wildlife Garden at the Oregon Zoo. Through a partnership with the Reynolds school district, they also hand out free lunches for youth at Blue Lake Park. The program, formerly known as Blue Lake Young Rangers, piloted in the summer of 2015 and has expanded into a year-long program.

Visit the [Youth Environmental Educators](#) Youtube channel to learn more about the program.



### **AdoptOneBlock expands regional cleanup efforts**

AdoptOneBlock is a nonprofit organization recruiting people to keep their neighborhoods clean by “adopting one block.” Community members receive free cleanup supplies to safely pick up trash and debris in their neighborhoods. Now, thanks to state funding given to Metro through [House Bill 5202](#), AdoptOneBlock has scaled their effort to include larger groups and organizations who have volunteers at the ready, but may lack the resources to organize cleanups. When organizations sign up, AdoptOneBlock will provide them with the following supplies and services for the year:

- Up to 30 trash pickers
- Up to 30 handled buckets
- Up to 10 sharps medical containers
- Up to 10 boxes of trash bags
- Up to 30 pairs of gloves
- Free trash removal services including disposal of large items that don't fit in the bin for up to one year.

Community groups interested in signing up or learning more may contact Olivia Langly at [Olivia@adoptoneblock.org](mailto:Olivia@adoptoneblock.org).



### Natural tips for garden problems

- Remove struggling plants and replace with pest resistant varieties or [native plants](#) adapted to your location.
- Encourage natural predators and beneficial insects by creating a [wildlife friendly habitat](#) for them.
- Use tools not toxics. Pull weeds and squish pest insects instead of spraying.
- If you are considering using a pesticide, choose the safest option that will get the job done. View safety ratings for garden products at [Grow Smart, Grow Safe](#).
- After replacing toxic garden products with safer methods and alternatives, make sure to [properly dispose of your pesticides](#) at a hazardous waste facility or a collection event.

Need more assistance? The [OSU Master Gardeners Program](#) is a great resource to identify the source of your garden problems. Experts can help identify pests and answer gardening questions.





### **What's your lawn style?**

Metro has teamed up with local governments and Oregon State University on a new lawn video campaign to help residents get the lawn they want, while also protecting their family, pets and local waterways. Whether someone has a low, medium or high maintenance lawn, there are instructional videos in both English and Spanish that provide tips based on maintenance needs.

To learn more, visit [whatsyourlawnstyle.org](https://whatsyourlawnstyle.org)



### Keep batteries out of your trash

Ever received a greeting card that plays music? Maybe you have a cordless drill? More devices than ever are powered by batteries. When these batteries stop working, it's important to dispose of them safely.

There are many different kind of batteries found in products. Some can contaminate the environment or cause fires at garbage and recycling facilities. It can be a challenge to distinguish between harmless and dangerous batteries. To avoid confusion, we suggest taking batteries to a recycler.

It's free to recycle rechargeable batteries through [Call to Recycle](#), which has a handy drop-off locator on its website. Nearly any household battery can be disposed of for free at Metro's two hazardous waste facilities. For more recycling options, [try this online tool](#), or Ask Metro at 503-234-3000. Some locations may charge a handling fee.





### **Now accepting applications for 2023 Metro Central Community Enhancement Grants**

*Do you have ideas about how to enhance your community?*

Metro has approximately \$300,000-\$400,000 available in grant funding to benefit the neighborhoods of Forest Park, Cathedral Park and Linnton; the Northwest District Association; the Northwest Industrial Area; and an area directly adjacent to the St. Johns Bridge.

Community enhancement grants reinvest funds into neighborhoods and communities impacted by transfer stations. The grants are awarded annually through the [Metro Central Enhancement Program](#), and are funded by a \$1 fee on each ton of waste collected at the Metro Central transfer station, located off of Highway 30 in Northwest Portland.

Grant applications are due September 12th. Information on eligibility and how to apply can be found in the [2023 Application Handbook](#).

## Calendar of Community Events

Be sure to visit Metro's [website calendar](#) to learn more about upcoming community events, educational programs and volunteer opportunities. Follow the links below to connect directly with our Community Partners to find out how you can support their work, find upcoming events, classes and volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood.

[Oregon State University's 4H program](#)

[4H Portland Metro Area Events and Resources](#)

[4H Clackamas County Events and Resources](#)

[4H Washington County Events and Resources](#)

[AdoptOneBlock](#)

[Volunteer Support](#)

[Disposal Resources page](#)

## Stay Informed

Subscribe to Metro's quarterly newsletter, Sustainable Solutions, which provides resources for waste prevention from Metro and community partners. Learn helpful tips for recycling, gardening and reducing toxic chemicals in your home and yard.

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