

# NWMC Community Environmental Stewardship Award

## 2007 Award Nomination Form

*Awards will be presented at NWMC Annual Banquet on June 20, 2007.*

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Municipality Village of Northbrook

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*Use additional sheets for answers if necessary*

LIST SIGNIFICANT "GREEN ACTIVITIES" YOUR MUNICIPALITY/TOWNSHIP HAS ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS (i.e., community recycling, Tree City USA, etc.).

- Named Tree City USA since 1994
- Earth Day / Arbor Day celebration since 1992
- Incorporated "Ozone Action Days" during summer months
- Participated in the ComEd Tree Giveaway – which included 339 4'-12' trees

*See attachment for further details*

LIST "GREEN ACTIVITIES" YOUR MUNICIPALITY/TOWNSHIP HAS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2006 (i.e., switching to recycling carts, joined Clean Air Counts, conducted an electronics recycling event, etc.)

- Adopted community-wide smoking ban
- Commitment to wind-generated energy
- Platinum level member of Clean Air Counts Campaign
- Purchase of hybrid vehicles for our current fleet

*See attachment for further details*

EXPLAIN WHY YOUR MUNICIPALITY/TOWNSHIP SHOULD BE AWARDED NWMC COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP RECOGNITION.

The Village of Northbrook has a long history of environmental awareness and leadership among local government agencies in support of environmental initiatives. We believe Northbrook's extensive and proactive support of a wide variety of environmental initiatives, and especially our -commitment to purchase "green tags" (equivalent to 4,500 megawatt hours of renewable energy credits annually) merits recognition of our leadership in this emerging field.

## **2007 NWMC COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD SUBMITTED BY THE VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK**

We are pleased to enclose our application for the *2007 NWMC Community Environmental Stewardship Award* recognizing our commitment and dedication to the environment.

What started out as a project in 1992 to “make something special out of Earth Day” has vastly grown throughout the years. Inquiries begin in January/February for those interested in attending or exhibiting at the annual event. An average of 35 environmental exhibits is displayed at Earth Day and the festivities have been expanded to include a joint Arbor Day Celebration. This popular event is attended by almost 3,000 residents and volunteers annually! Earth/Arbor Day accomplishments during recent years have included:

- Collected 34,000-39,000 pounds of electronic recycling annually since 1998.
- Collected a 25’ truck load of Styrofoam recycling annually.
- Participated in the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and Clean Air Counts “lawn mower buy back program”.
- Collected and exchanged approximately 150 gas cans, recycling approximately 25 gallons of gas.
- Distributed an average of 400 tree seedlings annually.
- Participated in the ComEd Tree Giveaway – which included 339 4’-12’ trees.
- Organized rights-of-way cleanup by volunteers including businesses, schools, residents and scouting groups.
- Promoted household hazardous waste collection sites.
- Initiated decal/signage at storm sewer inlets to educate and prevent the pouring of toxic substances into sewers which ultimately flow to rivers.
- Worked with area school administrators to educate and mitigate the practice of school bus and other vehicle idling at drop-off and pick-up locations.
- Incorporated “Ozone Action Days” during summer months resulting in the curtailment of certain activities which exacerbate air quality during such alerts.
- Adopted community-wide smoking ban to improve air quality in restaurants, bars and work place.

The Village of Northbrook along with the Northbrook Citizens for the Chicago River has recently been approved for the Clean Water Section 319 Grant for restoration of the Chicago River from Walters to Illinois as a continuation of an earlier Section 319 grant. In addition, the Village has also been awarded a \$1,000 scale grant from the Illinois EPA Bureau of Water to be utilized for a restoration project between Walters and Illinois, and a \$500 grant from the Lieutenant Governor’s Office to establish an educational rain garden within the Village. This builds on a very successful, award-winning \$2 million dollar river restoration project four years earlier that has brought back aquatic life to the West Fork of the North Branch of the Chicago River where it passes through the central area of the community.

Our Director of Public Works, Jim Reynolds, was notified that he was selected by the Suburban Branch of the Chicago Metro Chapter of APWA as the 2006 recipient of the Charles Walter Nichols Award for Environmental Excellence for outstanding and commendable achievements in the environmental field for Northbrook’s on-going work, including the Village’s recent wind generated energy commitment. This was followed by selection by the Chicago Metro Chapter for their Technical and Management Innovation Award and their nominee for national recognition.

In late December, President Marks accepted the Environmental Hero Award, presented by Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, at the Thompson Center in Chicago. The award acknowledged Northbrook’s long history of environmental awareness and leadership among local government agencies in supporting environmental initiatives. In 2000, the Village purchased its first renewable energy credits (REC’s), also known as “green tags,” for 155 megawatt hours of wind-generated energy from an Illinois based wind farm.

In 2006, we expanded that ground breaking, and now award winning, commitment to 4,500 megawatt hours – a quantity sufficient to run our entire water utility. Northbrook was also acknowledged for partnering with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to operate a regional air testing laboratory. Northbrook is an original and we hope soon to be “Platinum” level member of the *Clean Air Counts Campaigns*.

Northbrook is the only community in the state not situated on the shores of Lake Michigan that has its own intakes, raw water transmission mains and inland filtration/pumping facilities. The purchase of these “green tags” from Community Energy will provide enough green energy to run Northbrook’s water filtration and pumping operations which treat and supply about 2.2 billion gallons of water a year to the community. According to the Lt. Governor, that is more renewable energy than the total amount purchased by all of the State agencies combined!

That decision has prompted much interest among other regional municipalities as well as local school and park districts. NBC and CBS affiliates have done news segments and the Chicago Tribune and local papers have published supportive articles.

The wind farms are located about 100 miles southwest of Chicago in the Mendota, Paw Paw and Princeton area. Some interesting facts about this commitment to better serve our citizens and protect the environment are summarized below:

- Based on Midwest power plant averages as reported by the U.S. EPA, a commitment by Northbrook to purchase 4,500 megawatt hours of renewable wind generated power will:
  - Offset the burning of 1.915 million pounds of coal per year.
  - Offset the production of 4,992,507 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) released into the atmosphere each year.
  - Offset the production of 22,194 pounds of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) each year.
  - Offset the production of 12,182 pounds of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) each year.
  - Be equivalent to the benefits of planting 339,626 trees.
  - Be equivalent to energy savings by not driving 4,331,562 auto miles per year. (That’s equivalent to 3.5 years of total mileage driven by the combined Northbrook municipal fleet.)
  - Be equivalent to taking 738 cars off the road.
  - Provide revenue to Illinois farmers and encourage capital investment in renewable forms of energy.
  - The direct impact of this decision on Northbrook’s customers is only about 3.5 cents per thousand gallons of water to do the right thing (environmentally), although we have not yet raised rates. This is equivalent to less than \$5/year for the average residential customer.

The Village has been pleased to work cooperatively with Community Energy of Pennsylvania. Community Energy is an Iberdrola Company. Iberdrola is the largest wind energy project developer/manager in the world. Their Director of Business Development has been a pleasure to work with and very supportive about our commitment. We are planting the seeds of interest by others, and that was one of our key goals.

Northbrook continues to pursue options to clean our air and to encourage investment in alternative sources of energy; and is currently in discussions with a number of other agencies about the possibility of forming a consortium to increase our purchasing power for additional green tags.

We are also engaged in discussions with a smaller wind project developer and farmer to purchase some or all of the entire output from a proposed and permitted wind farm in Jo Davies County. One of the complementary goals of such discussion is to lock-in stable competitive energy prices for the next 20 years in this rapidly evolving era of electric utility deregulation. Another option being considered is equity ownership of one or more of the turbines.

As we are completing this application the Board of Trustees is authorizing our first purchase of three (3) hybrid vehicles for our administrative fleet.

The Village of Northbrook has a long history of environmental awareness and leadership among local government agencies in support of environmental initiatives. Examples of some of those efforts include:

- Dedicating a 3,000 gallon fuel tank to ethanol (E-85) to fuel bi-fuel vehicles – reported to be the first governmental installation of its kind in Illinois when it went into service in 1999.
- Enacting a progressive tree preservation ordinance in 1999 that has saved thousands of mature trees and requiring planting and replanting of thousands of trees on private property.
- Retrofitting diesel trucks to significantly reduce noxious emissions.
- Purchasing bio-diesel fuel years before it was mandated.
- Retrofitting all Village owned traffic signals to energy efficient LED's.
- Approving a recycling facility which will reclaim 90% of the material from building demolitions.
- Partnering with the IEPA to provide that agency with free space at our water treatment plant for operating a cutting edge regional air testing laboratory.

This is an exciting, challenging time. We believe our proactive support of “green” alternative energy merits recognition of our leadership in this emerging field. We hope the Conference agrees!