

JULY NEWSLETTER



background photo credit: Adobe Stock Martha Marks

"As America nears its 250th birthday, climate change presents more than an environmental challenge. It is a test of whether a free people can still face reality together, argue honestly about what to do and act before the problem becomes even harder to solve." - Susan Atkinson, Durango CO

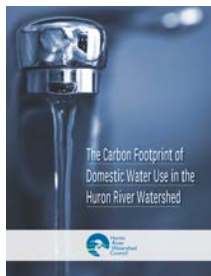
SAVING WATER AND DECREASING CO2 EMISSIONS

The District water benchmarking shows that many buildings use **20-40%** more water in the summer months. This increase in use, tracks with outdoor landscape irrigation. As much as **50 percent of the water used for outdoor landscape irrigation is wasted** due to evaporation, wind, overspray, and poor system maintenance, according to the EPA.

CO2 Impact of Water

A statement in the Huron River Watershed Council report remains true today:

"...Better decisions related to water treatment and use can help reduce the amount of energy used throughout the water use cycle. By focusing on water conservation, efficiency, and reuse, we can minimize energy use, reduce the associated carbon footprint, and protect our freshwater resources."



"Water utilities and residents within the Huron River watershed contribute approximately 178 million lbs of CO2 annually through the production, use and treatment of drinking water. This is equivalent to the annual emissions from nearly 17,000 passenger vehicles. It takes more than double the combined areas of the Pinckney and Waterloo Recreation Areas to sequester this much carbon each year."

Local Action

Ann Arbor to power vital city infrastructure with its biggest solar installation to date

The City of Ann Arbor has constructed its biggest solar installation to date at Steere Farm Wells, providing power to vital city infrastructure. Steere Farm, on Ann Arbor's south side, is one of the city's top-10 electricity users, working to pump water uphill to the Water Treatment



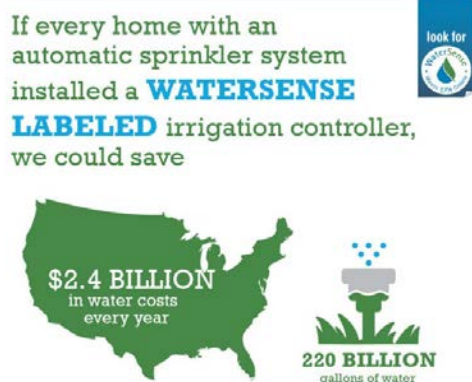
Facility, a critical part of city infrastructure that keeps water moving and clean. This 480 kW AC system is part of the city's work to power all municipal operations with clean, renewable energy. Read more [here](#).

Michigan State University

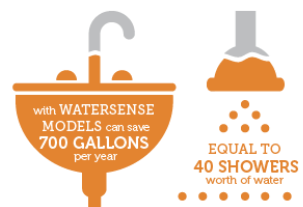
Michigan State University replaced 30 acres of turf with native pollinator meadows, reducing maintenance costs and eliminating irrigation and fertilizers. The new landscape supports diverse plant and animal life while improving soil and water systems. Within a short time, butterflies, birds, and native bees returned, showing how simple land-use changes can restore ecosystems and cut costs at the same time.

Source: Michigan State University sustainability reports and ecological restoration data (2024).

Key resources for you to reduce your indoor and outdoor water use



REPLACING FAUCETS AND AERATORS



Indoor Water Use in the United States

Indoor Water Guzzlers and Tips to Fix!

Read more [here](#).

Weather-Based Irrigation Controllers | US EPA

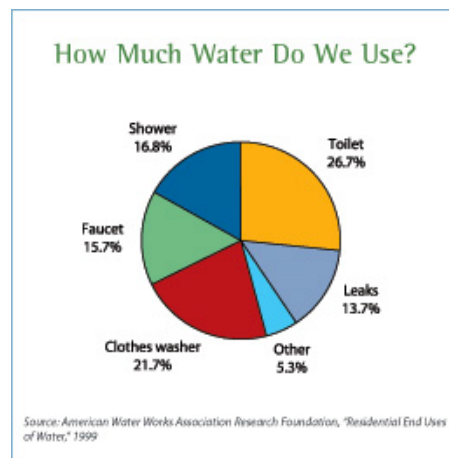
If you have an automatic irrigation system, it probably has a controller you can program to water your landscape regularly. But if that controller is not programmed to adjust during seasonal or weather changes, you could waste water or damage your plants.

[Read More](#)



The 7 Best Smart Sprinkler Controllers to Help Your Garden Grow | The Spruce (Anton Galang)

Save time (and water) with one of our favorite controllers [Read More](#)



WaterSense Indoor and Outdoor Products | US EPA

WaterSense makes it easy to find and select water-efficient products that can help your wallet and the environment. Just look for products bearing the WaterSense label at your local retailer.

[Read More](#)



AquaHawk is a free service for City of Ann Arbor water customers that will enable them to efficiently manage their water usage and possibly lower their bills.

Leak Detection & Notification

After you register, AquaHawk will analyze your water usage and notify you when:

- A potential water leak is detected.
- You are likely to exceed the water consumption limit of your choosing.

Learn more [here](#).



Native Plants - Planting, Sourcing, Resources

Native plants are adapted to Michigan's soils and climate, and they provide food and habitat for our native animals. Using native plants encourages a broad array of plants in the landscape, and since these plants are well-adapted to our local growing conditions, they require little or no special treatment after establishment. That means you save, time, money, water and sweat, so you can sit back and enjoy your landscape.

[Read More](#)

HNP - Homegrown National Park - Regenerate Biodiversity

"If half of American lawns were replaced with native plants, we would create the equivalent of a 20-million-acre national park, nine times bigger than Yellowstone."

Why Plant Native?

The plants you choose determine how much life your space can support.

[Read More](#)

Water Reduction Case Studies at Houses of Worship



First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor

- Higher efficiency steam boilers installed in 2013
- Replaced automatic water faucets reducing water waste in 2023-2024
- In 2024, cut summer water usage in half by reducing sprinkler run time
- 31% water use reduction



Westminster Presbyterian Church

- Water use was reduced from 320,000 gallons to 270,000 gallons annually—a 15.6% reduction
- This reduction was accomplished by fixing leaks and limiting landscaped irrigation.



Genesis of Ann Arbor

- In 2022, water usage reduction began by replacing leaking faucets, leaking toilets, adjusting flush quantities, and installing dual flush toilets
- Battle of the Buildings 2023 Winner in the Water category - 60.23% reduction

ICYMI - Washtenaw 2030 District 2025 Impact Report

Read the report [here](#).

View the Honor Roll [here](#).



SEU Update

It was a busy month of June for the SEU, with continued installation of solar in the Bryant neighborhood pilot and preparing for expansion city-wide in 2027!

Bryant neighborhood:

- On June 2nd, as part of the [A2Zero Week](#), the public was invited to “watch the SEU be built.” More than 20 community members joined at an installation in Bryant to watch the panels go up and chat with SEU staff, vendors, installers, and fellow residents.
- As of this writing, there are 40 Bryant residents officially signed up for SEU service, with 10 installations complete and many more in queue. Many residents participating in the SEU are also receiving roof repairs and weatherization through additional grant funding with the Office of Sustainability and Innovations.
- More than a quarter of the Bryant participants so far are in rental homes. This is exciting because historically rentals have been very difficult to serve with renewable energy upgrades. The SEU's model makes this clean, affordable energy accessible to homeowners and renters. We're thankful for the Bryant landlords and tenants joining the SEU!

City-wide:

The SEU is preparing to scale city-wide in 2027. The initial offerings in 2027 will be solar and solar-plus-storage. Many residents are asking what to expect. They are still working on details but here's a rough anticipated timeline:

- Mid Fall: SEU will propose rates to City Council and ask for authorization
- Late Fall: Residents who have signed up on the “[expression of interest](#)” form will be invited to begin an intake process to gather all the details necessary to assess viability and get you officially signed up
- With more than 1,000 residents on the interest list, we expect to take all of 2027 to complete installations (did you know, for comparison, the City has had about [200 residential solar installations](#) per year for the last 5 years?)

Energy is getting a lot of buzz:

Ann Arbor is talking a lot about energy. We love that! But we also know it can be confusing to understand the different options. If you're interested in learning more, please see this study, commissioned by the City in 2023, to evaluate potential pathways to renewable energy in Ann Arbor: [Renewable Energy Pathways](#)

Check out the SEU Newsletter [SEU Newsletter June 29 2026.pdf](#)

Events

ENJOY SUMMER!

Monthly Lunch and Learn
Sessions will resume in September on the
2nd Tuesday of each month.

SAVE THE DATE
Green Fair Downtown Ann Arbor



New Members



[Hideaway Apartments
Ann Arbor](#)



[Sheraton Ann Arbor](#)



[Michigan Commercial
Realty](#)



[The Ark](#)



[St Paul United
Church of Christ](#)



[Walden Village
Homeowners Association](#)



Arbor Party Store



Barclay Park



[Hampton Inn by Hilton Ann
Arbor West](#)



[Holiday Inn Express &
Suites
University South](#)



**Intech Ventures
of Ann Arbor**



[Liberty Lofts
Condominium Association](#)

News



Harnessing the Hyperscale Wave: The Data Center Evaluation Checklist - Architecture 2030

As global demand for digital infrastructure and AI accelerates, data centers are consuming unprecedented amounts of energy, water, and land. To meet our global climate targets, we must fundamentally rethink how these massive facilities are sited, designed, and integrated into communities.

[Read More](#)



MPSC sets goal to lower the energy burden on low-income households and revamp energy assistance programs

The Michigan Public Service Commission established a new energy affordability goal for low-income Michiganders, setting a target to reduce the energy burden of income-constrained residential customers to not more than 6% of household income and realigning energy assistance programs around that objective.

[Read More](#)



Plug-In Solar Advocacy Campaign | GLREA

GLREA believes that everyone deserves access to clean, safe, and affordable energy, and we acknowledge that there are many barriers preventing equitable access to rooftop solar energy systems. We are advocating for Plug-In Solar (also known as Balcony Solar) as a solution to expand solar access and utility bill savings to more communities.

[Read More](#)

Green Light 20 - First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor

Sandy Simon and Ed Lynn, congregants at First Unitarian Church Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor discuss the work on which the church and the congregants have been working together for sustainability, such as the installation of solar panels and a wind turbine.



Resources

MI 2030 Districts Case Study Hub

Attention engineers and architects - You are invited to contribute your high performing/renewable energy projects. Please use the template (Submit a Case Study) to add yours. <https://migbc.org/green-building-case-studies/>



Tax Credits For Tax Exempt Entities

Elective Pay allows tax-exempt entities to take advantage of federal clean energy tax credits and receive payment for a portion of their clean energy projects that meet the program requirements.

Examples of eligible projects and purchases include:

- Solar power
- Geothermal & Wind
- Energy storage/batteries
- EV purchases

Eligible Entities:

- Local and Tribal governments
- Non-profits
- Rural electric co-ops
- Houses of worship
- Public School Districts

Do you think you have an eligible project?

Contact Kim Heumann heumannk@2030districts.org Washtenaw 2030 District's Elective Pay Ambassador for Livingston, Jackson, Washtenaw, Hillsdale, Lenawee, Monroe for details and to find out if your **current** or **future** project qualifies.



New Resource:

[Existing and Emerging Strategies to Decarbonize Construction Materials](#)

DTE

**2026 Business Program*****Small Business platform***

- Major changes are the expansion of the Small Business catalog to include New Construction measures. These measures are designated by a wrench icon on the fact sheets.
- For the Midstream Lighting Program the major 2026 change is the removal of the Downlight Retrofit Kit from the program. These are no longer available due to the 2026 MEMD removing energy savings.

Large Business platform – the bonuses are stackable

2026 customer bonuses

- 10% bonus on long life measures (ends Nov 30, 2026)

Energy Management Grants

Washtenaw 2030 District 2024 Energy Management Grant Program. Member buildings are eligible for grant funding for Energy Audits, Retro Commissioning and Electrification Plans. We support you wherever you are on your carbon neutrality journey. Contact: jculbertson@2030Districts.org if you are interested in learning more.



The Washtenaw 2030 District is funded by our members, DTE, the City of Ann Arbor and EGLE. We are accelerating our work locally because climate change is a serious and immediate threat. Science, our community, and the global market place will not be deterred in accomplishing the energy transformation that is required for our planet's and nation's resilience.

**Membership/
Support Info**

Thank you to our Michigan 2030 Statewide Sponsors





Stay up to date with A²ZERO's newsletter and events [HERE](#)



BEACON Newsletter - Architecture 2030

Spotlighting the leaders who are designing built environments that support healthy, vibrant and equitable living, highlighting pockets of the future alive and thriving in the present. [Check it out here!](#)



Washtenaw 2030 District | 115 E Liberty St | Ann Arbor, MI 48104 US

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