

THINK GREEN NEWS

REDUCE • REUSE • RECYCLE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AT UPSTATE



For more Think Green information, visit: green.upstate.edu

June 2015

Save the Rain...

Save the Rain is Onondaga County's program to improve the environment and help Onondaga Lake by reducing the amount of storm water runoff that flows directly into our sanitary sewer system. During rain and snow events, storm water runoff flows directly into sanitary sewer systems, resulting in overflow that can send polluted storm water and sewage into Onondaga Lake.

The County's Department of Water Environment Protection leads efforts to save the rain by developing green infrastructure and environmentally friendly solutions to capture storm water where it lands. Green infrastructure solutions can reduce the amount of storm water entering the sewer system, which will lead to improved water quality of Onondaga Lake and its tributaries. There are several examples of green infrastructure solutions. Below are the most common and effective green infrastructure applications:

Green roof is a roof that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and soil planted over a waterproofing membrane. Green roofs absorb storm water and release it back into the atmosphere through evaporation and plant transpiration, while reducing urban temperatures.

Permeable paving is a term used to describe paving methods for roads, parking lots and walkways that allows precipitation to infiltrate through to the soil below.

Cistern is a receptacle for storing rain water. They range in capacity from a few liters to thousands of cubic meters. Owners benefit by reusing the water for landscaping and other activities, thus reducing their water bill.

Rain garden is a sunken garden designed to absorb rainwater from impervious areas such as roofs, driveways, walkways, and compacted lawn areas. Rain gardens reduce runoff by allowing storm water to soak into the ground, as opposed to flowing into storm drains and surface waters.

Click [here](#) for more information.



Those aren't just random rocks behind Tom Pelis and the signage in the circular entrance to Upstate University Hospital and the Upstate Cancer Center.

They're part of a collection and infiltration system that collects 90 percent of storm water from the roofs and surfaces surrounding the Cancer Center. The system releases the runoff slowly to keep it out of the combined sewer system that leads to Onondaga Lake.

It is one of three recent "green" projects established at Upstate in partnership with Onondaga County's Save the Rain program.

The Cancer Center entrance installation alone diverts about 1.3 million gallons of storm water per year, said Pelis, Assistant Vice President for Facilities and Planning and Chair of the Sustainability Task Force.

Upstate also installed similar Save the Rain measures at Geneva Tower on Harrison St., and the CNY Biotech Accelerator on E. Fayette Street. Those systems collect and divert even more than the million-plus gallons at the Cancer Center, Pelis said.

Rain Barrel Program

The County has received a grant to provide FREE rain barrels to homeowners in the City of Syracuse. To receive a rain barrel, homeowners must attend a brief rain barrel workshop. More information, click [here](#).



5¢ Returnables at Upstate Medical University



DONATE RETURNABLES HERE

Donating your empty returnable container benefits **Baltimore Woods Nature Center** and **Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital**.

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In University Hospital Downtown and on the Academic Campus, bins to collect 5¢ cans and bottles are located in major pedestrian traffic areas. Returnables in these containers are considered institutional property and are collected by Environmental Services for reimbursement. This money is used to support charities of institutional choice – the Golisano Children's Hospital and Baltimore Woods Nature Center.

Some departments, however, choose to collect their internal returnables for other charitable causes or an activity such as a department-wide breakfast or lunch. This is an acceptable practice as long as department members take responsibility for collecting only their returnables and all are aware of the process and proceeds.

Upstate encourages all returnable bottles and cans to be turned in for the deposit reimbursement. If it won't be returned, please ensure that it is recycled in one of Upstate's mixed recycling receptacles.



Bottles for Bagels in the Financial Services Department!

Upstate's Financial Services Department is located at an off-site location that does not have a returnables program operated by the institution. Instead, Freda Gall takes responsibility for routinely returning the bottles and cans from the department. Once enough money has been collected, the funds are used to purchase bagels, cream cheese and breakfast danishes for staff. This incentive increases both recycling and staff morale. Thank you, Freda, for ensuring the returnables are indeed returned!

Downtown Farmer's Market

The Syracuse Downtown Farmers' Market begins June 9 and features over 50 farmers and produce dealers selling fresh, seasonal vegetables, fruits, nuts, eggs, cheeses, baked goods, flowers, plants, handcrafted items, and more. Some weeks the market hosts live entertainment. Free Admission at Clinton Square every Tuesday through October 13 from 7am – 3pm.

Bugs Be Gone (Naturally)!

Homemade Bug Repellent takes five minutes to make, smells great, is gentle enough for sensitive skin and will keep the bugs at bay.

To Make:

1. Measure 2/3 cup witch hazel
2. Add 1 cup baby oil, soybean oil, or vegetable glycerine
3. Add 1 teaspoon PURE vanilla extract (**NO** sugar.)
4. Add 8-10 drops each of 3-5 different PURE essential oils such as Lavender, Eucalyptus, Lemongrass, Peppermint, Cedarwood, Thyme, Rosemary, Citronella, Catnip, or NEEM seed. (Do **NOT** use fragrance oils.)
5. Pour into an empty spray bottle
6. Add 4-5 whole spice cloves
7. Label – *Bug Spray*
8. **Shake well before each use and apply liberally to skin.**

Sources: *Living Well, Spending Less* (<http://www.livingwellspendingless.com/>); *Natural Living Ideas* (<http://www.naturallivingideas.com/>)