

Stakeholder Connection

Your news source on the Institute for Environmental Solutions projects and progress



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IES Sheridan Quincy Trail Improvements advance in spite of COVID-19

COVID-19 has affected nearly every aspect of life, including IES's 2020 Sheridan Trail Enhancement and Restoration Project (TERP). We are determining contingency plans and alternative activities to implement our project to improve the Sheridan Quincy Trail. These adjusted plans and structures will adhere to government health mandates and keep our communities safe and healthy. IES team members have eagerly met the challenges and have begun to reimagine what different aspects of the project could look like under a variety of circumstances. IES's partners, including Sheridan School District No. 2, Fort Logan Northgate School (FLN), and the City of Sheridan, will be instrumental in determining which route to take when the project kicks off this fall, originally slated for August 2020. IES has begun to prepare remote learning activities over a virtual platform rather than in-person workshops with FLN students, and smaller and more frequent planting days at the Sheridan Quincy Trail site with a maximum of 10 students or volunteers. We look forward to partnering with Xcel Energy for the 2020 Xcel Energy Day of Service on September 12. IES is committed to implementing the 2020 Sheridan TERP. Given current conditions, we must ensure that all our volunteers remain healthy and safe throughout the project. As we embrace flexibility, we look forward to moving ahead with the 2020 Sheridan TERP. More information: Carrie Martin-Haley, carrie@i4es.org.



IES hosts virtual “Reduce Your Chemical Footprint” workshop for Sustainable Eiber Neighborhood



IES’s Chemical Footprint Project team hosted a successful pilot virtual workshop on August 4 for Sustainable Eiber, a neighborhood in Lakewood, Colorado that is part of the Lakewood Sustainable Neighborhoods Program. Fifteen people joined the virtual workshop to learn new sustainable practices and how to reduce their chemical footprints. The workshop included a presentation on the human and environmental health risks of contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) and what strategies individuals can use to reduce their exposure. Many

participants were surprised to find out how prevalent contaminants are in household and personal care products.

Participants were eager to learn how to avoid contaminants such as BPA, neonicotinoids, DEET, oxybenzone, parabens, and synthetic fragrances. IES team members gave hands-on demonstrations that showed how to prevent pollution and reduce exposure to CECs by using less, shopping smart, and making do-it-yourself products using safe ingredients. Team members showed attendees how to make DEET-free insect repellent and fragrance-free hand sanitizer. IES gave a demonstration on how to use two free smartphone apps (Think Dirty and EWG Healthy Living) that scan product barcodes to quickly identify contaminants in household and personal care products. Participants were engaged, asked great questions about how to reduce chemical footprints, and took the time to scan and read the labels of their own products to see if any contained CECs. Everyone created an action plan and made a commitment to reduce their chemical footprint! The Chemical Footprint Project team looks forward to learning from this pilot workshop and to expanding to new communities. More information: John Godin, JohnGodin@i4es.org

IES’s commitment to Wheat Ridge students and parks during the COVID-19 pandemic

Despite setbacks and uncertainty due to COVID-19, IES is committed to maintaining our local environment and providing environmental education to Wheat Ridge students. We were unable to implement the original plans for the 2020 Nature Play Connections Project (NPCP) at Anderson Park this past spring with Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department (WRPRD) and Kullerstrand Elementary students. However, that has not stopped IES from working toward its goal. In place of an April classroom workshop with Kullerstrand students, IES and WRPRD Environmental Interpreter Susan Bennett provided students with four remote-learning activities to encourage students to get outdoors over the summer with ecology lessons, such as a pollinator scavenger hunt and adopt-a-tree. IES is developing more remote-learning activities for this school year when we continue our work on the NPCP. These flexible activities and contingency plans can be easily modified and implemented, whether the education is held virtually or in-person. We are excited to add remote-learning activities to the IES website, which can be replicated by parents and teachers. IES is currently considering several different locations for our rescheduled planting days this September. Options include back planting in the Greenbelt to replace unsuccessful plants, planting at Wheat Ridge Historic Park in collaboration with the Wheat Ridge Historical Society, and planting at Kullerstrand Elementary School. IES is committed to completing the NPCP while ensuring the health and safety



of all team members, students, and volunteers involved. These contingency planting plans are being developed in collaboration with WRPRD and Kullerstrand Elementary School with safety as a priority and regulations properly followed. Please stay tuned for more information about the NPCP, as new information comes to light. More information, Laura Prickett, Laura@i4es.org.

Which ingredients in sunscreens are safe and effective?



On July 17, 2020, the Wall Street Journal published an article highlighting the results of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) study of six common sunscreen ingredients including oxybenzone, avobenzone, homosalate, octocrylene, octinoxate, and octisalate. Participants in the study applied sunscreen for four days and had their blood tested for 21 days straight. The FDA reports that all the sunscreen ingredients were detectable in a person's bloodstream after a single use and accumulated when used for two or more consecutive days. Tests on the seventh day showed that all ingredients were still present and in concentrations above the FDA's safety threshold. After ten days, only two ingredients, homosalate and oxybenzone, still measured above the safety threshold. In February 2019, the FDA proposed to study twelve common ingredients in over-the-counter sunscreens to determine whether they are safe and effective. The FDA has not commented on the safety of these six common ingredients but does confirm they are effective in blocking UV radiation. The FDA will revise its stand on all twelve ingredients in 2021. If you use sunscreen, use brands that have the mineral UV filters, zinc oxide and titanium dioxide (without nanoparticles), because the FDA says they are generally safe and effective. If you are going to a popular vacation

spot, be sure to check whether the beaches prohibit some common harmful sunscreen ingredients. The U.S. Virgin Islands and Palau currently ban oxybenzone and octinoxate because they harm coral reefs. Starting in 2021, Hawaii, Bonaire, and Key West will ban stores from selling sunscreens with those two ingredients. Before heading outside, consider covering up using a hat and long sleeve shirt. More information: Courtney King, Courtney@i4es.org.

Meet Art Hertel, one of Wheat Ridge's most dedicated Tree Stewards!

Meet Art Hertel, a Wheat Ridge resident and one of IES's most dedicated Tree Stewards. Art and his family have lived in Wheat Ridge since 2008 and enjoy the small community atmosphere that it offers. Art has been an IES Tree Steward in the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt since IES began planting in 2012 and is proud to see the results of his hard work. Because of his efforts, IES plants have established themselves and become assets to the area, growing bigger each year. According to Art, "It is a very rewarding volunteer experience being a Tree Steward, as you get to see the plantings develop and mature. Another positive part of the Steward program is being among others who are interested in the environment. I encourage anyone interested in becoming a Tree Steward volunteer to seek out information on the program." Since 2012, IES has planted a thousand trees and plants in the



Greenbelt, including chokecherries, sumacs, wax currants, cottonwoods, wild roses, and native grass and wildflowers. These plants can be found along the Clear Creek Trail from Youngfield Street to Kipling Street. It is because of Art and other volunteers like him that these plants receive the care they need to thrive. IES encourages you to visit the Greenbelt and enjoy the environment that our plants provide, thanks to the dedication of Art and all our Tree Stewards. IES welcomes dedicated community volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a Tree Steward in Wheat Ridge or Sheridan, or would like more information about the program, please contact Laura Prickett at Laura@i4es.org.

Safe summer gardening practices with IES



IES is engaging its social media followers this summer to teach environmentally safe gardening practices. Fostering sustainable behavioral changes is best approached through direct contact with people at the community level. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we hope our social media news will stand in for a face-to-face demonstration. Each season, IES's social media posts will have a different theme with content for followers to try on their own. This summer's theme is Safe Gardening Practices. Weekly posts by team members use science-based information to provide helpful and accurate advice on how to build and maintain a safe, environmentally-friendly, and sustainable summer garden.

Follow IES on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn so that every Friday you can learn how to grow a more sustainable garden, be more mindful of the environment, and develop sustainable habits. Try one of IES's tips on maximizing your

space with a container garden. Not only are these practical for small spaces and accessible to everyone, but you can grow a variety of plants including tomatoes, zucchini and herbs. A great benefit of these gardens with herbs is that they can be planted year-round and are rewarding. Find out how to avoid pesticides, create compost, and save your seeds. Try out the weekly tip to make your garden environmentally friendly. Share the posts with your friends using hash tag #sustainablecommunity to show off your safe gardening practices. More information: Janel Abbott, Janel@i4es.org.

IES Institute News

IES welcomes Kelsey Paisley-Lasso and Julia Hrycyk to the Tree Project Team. Kelsey has a BS in Nursing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and is working toward an MBA at the University of Colorado-Denver. Julia has a BS in Biology from Colorado State University.

Courtney King, Kathryn Steinmann, and John Godin recently joined the Chemical Footprint Project Team. Courtney has a BS in Geosciences from the University of Arizona and a Ph.D. in Earth & Climate Sciences from the University of Maine. She is a Research Librarian at Freeport McMoRan Inc. Kathryn has a BS in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Metro State University Denver and an MS in Meteorology and Climate Science from San Jose State University. John has a BA in Political Science from the University of Colorado-Boulder, and is working toward an MPA at the University of Colorado-Denver.

IES Opportunities

IES seeks motivated volunteers and graduate interns who are passionate about protecting the environment to join our project teams. We have openings for project, development, social media, and fundraising volunteers and interns. Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to Solutions@i4es.org.

IES is looking for an energetic professional who wants to ensure the application of sound scientific solutions to our pressing environmental challenges to join the IES Board of Directors. Please contact IES at Solutions@i4es.org for a position description and application.

IES participates in 1% for the Planet, Amazon Smile, ColoradoGives, and King Soopers/City Market Community Rewards. IES is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contributions are tax-deductible.

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You can support IES at no cost with the new Community Rewards program. King Soopers will reward IES with every purchase you make. King Soopers will donate more than \$2.5 million every quarter to the community rewards program. Follow the steps below to sign up. Make sure to sign up friends and family members too!

Four Simple Steps:

1. Visit www.kingsooperscommunityrewards.com and click "Enroll Now"
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Support IES by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com.

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when customers shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to IES!

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