

City Talk Column for Sept. 11, 2024  
Sustainability Department  
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Sustainability initiatives in the community continue to grow and adapt, and bolster resident connections, regional collaboration and programming offerings. These offerings span across a wide range of subjects and partnerships. The Sustainability Department has expanded programming offerings to foster community connections in sustainability, waste diversion, watershed education, arts and climate action, and energy. A few of the new projects and upcoming events follows.

### **Sustainable Neighborhoods Program**

To foster local neighborhoods to become active partners in building vibrant, resilient communities, Sedona joined the cities of Denver, Portland, Fort Collins, Lakewood, and Wheat Ridge to launch the [Sustainable Neighborhoods Program](#) in the Spring of 2024. Participating neighborhoods use guidance from city staff to organize workshops, projects and events that enhance neighborhood connections and reduce their ecological footprint. Credits are received for these efforts, earning additional recognition through the community and the city. The city of Sedona is proud to collaborate with Les Springs as the program's first neighborhood. Their first project consists of holding an information session on an upcoming solar co-op opportunity for their Homeowner's Association.

### **School sustainability education and climate action artwork projects**

The efforts to improve opportunities for community connection don't stop with the Sustainable Neighborhood Program. City staff connected with West Sedona School to enhance school curriculum with sustainability initiatives and support its amazing teachers and students. Earlier this year, the Wastewater Department led a presentation on microorganisms. The Community Development Department led a dark sky symposium and the Sustainability Department led a climate action artwork project that was recently on display at the Sedona Public Library. The student created artwork is also installed on new smart recycling receptacles in partnership with Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). We'll be looking for ways to involve more students and even community members in this initiative in the future, so keep watch as more artwork is displayed over time.

### **ADEQ Recycling Receptacles**

Through ADEQ, the city was awarded a recycling grant to implement 10 smart waste recycling stations that expand waste diversion options, improve recycling opportunities and collect waste data. The stations were installed in July at the Posse Grounds Park and Ride and nearby picnic ramadas, Sunset Park and the SR 179 Park and Ride. The receptacles provide fullness level alerts that help optimize the collection efforts.

### **Arizona Water Festival**

There are additional upcoming events and opportunities for local schools and community members to participate in as well. As an expansion of the [Ripple Effect](#) campaign, the city is partnering with University of Arizona's Project WET, Arizona Water Company and Big Park Water Company to host an Arizona Water Festival for fourth and fifth grade students on Thursday, Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>. The event provides engaging educational activities on watershed functions, groundwater systems, the water cycle and technology.

### **Northern Arizona Solar Co-op**

Our work also extends to energy and efficiency programming. The city is partnering with Solar United Neighbors, the city of Flagstaff and Coconino County for the launch of the fourth round of the northern Arizona solar co-ops in late September. This program allows home owners interested in getting solar installed to join a free co-op that with the group's buying power, negotiates cheaper solar installation rates than if they were to do it individually. Through the first three rounds, the co-ops have seen an investment of \$3.5 million in solar installations from 151 northern Arizona community members and an estimated reduction of 15,700 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e and \$6.6 million in utility costs, over the solar panel's lifetime.

### **Household Hazardous Waste Event**

On Saturday, Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> at West Sedona School, the sixth annual [Household Hazardous Waste Event](#) will be held. The city is excited to partner with Yavapai County and West Sedona School and continue waste collection efforts for those hard to dispose of items to keep them out of landfills and potentially the watershed. Electronics, pesticides, paints, acids, cleaners, various oils, batteries and other household items will be accepted as usual. In addition to those items, paper document shredding and medical waste (liquids, pills, sharps, vitamins etc.) will be collected for the first time. The 2023 event saw a record 375 participants and collected over 30,000 pounds of materials.

For more information on this event or any other sustainability initiatives listed, visit [www.sedonaaz.gov/sustainability](http://www.sedonaaz.gov/sustainability).