

**Rockford Park District
Rockford, Illinois
Environmental Policy**

Because environmental challenges develop and new information is discovered on a regular basis, this document is of a working nature. Items in red ink are those in transition. Once turned to black, they are an official part of the policy as approved by our Board of Directors.

Recognizing the increasing public awareness and concern about environmental and conservation issues within our community, we have adopted this Environmental Policy to help guide our decision-making in environmental practices and will:

- assume a leadership role in the development and use of sound environmental policies, practices and opportunities
- encourage staff and set an example in the promotion of sound environmental practices and lifestyles
- use this document to reflect our environmental concerns, political realities, funding and natural resources of our parks system

This is in support of Executive Limitations, 2.5, Asset Protection

The Executive Director shall not allow the RPD's assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained or unnecessarily risked.

Accordingly, he or she may not: ...

13. Engage in practices, procedures or purchases, which are not environmentally responsible, except in instances where there is excessive added cost.

Ron Butler, Deputy Director, Operations

Tim Dimke, Executive Director

Document as of October 2007

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Environmental Policies of the Rockford Park District

Policy 1.0 RECYLING/DISPOSAL - Reduce waste and practice safe waste disposal. Recycle materials and purchase recycled materials when feasible.

Reduce, reuse and recycle materials.

Investigate source reduction of waste including; purchasing in bulk, minimizing packaging and reducing excess use of paper. Continue to explore ways to reduce waste production by minimizing the creation of waste, especially hazardous waste. Investigate ways to reuse office, recreation program and maintenance/construction materials.

Policy 2.0 ENERGY - Conserve resources through energy efficiency and conservation in operations.

Continue to actively seek and implement ways to conserve energy resources. Investigate methods of applying alternative energy technologies. Discover conservation through energy audits.

Policy 3.0 PURCHASING/PRODUCTS - Purchase and use environmentally safe and sensitive products.

Purchase products which minimize negative environmental impacts and which take into consideration the effects of product production, use, storage and disposal that could contribute to pollution of the air, water and soil and which avoid causing the destruction of natural communities, plants and animals. Choose green products when feasible.

Policy 4.0 OPEN SPACES - Preserve and restore our open spaces and water features.

Protect and restore indigenous natural communities such as grasslands, woodlands and wetlands and promote the reclamation, acquisition, preservation and management of other open space areas, including river corridors, green ways and trails. Monitor and maintain a balance of wildlife in natural settings. Blend the natural environment or recreation areas to preserve natural habitat and provide community assets. To avoid negative impacts on the environment, utilize the environment committee and its citizen advisory group to perform a review of new programs and developments.

Policy 5.0 EDUCATION -Provide public education and interpretation of environmental issues.

Facilitate urban educational and interpretative opportunities and provide information sources for citizens and staff, which increase appreciation of our natural resources and promote environmentally conscious lifestyles.

Policy 6.0 GREEN TECHNOLOGY

Discover the potential environmental impact of green technology on existing and future facilities.

Policy 7.0 EMPLOYEE PROTECTION

Consider environmental factors in relationship to protecting employees' health.

Environmental Policy of the Rockford Park District

Policy 1.0 RECYCLING/DISPOSAL

RECYCLING/DISPOSAL - Reduce waste and practice safe waste disposal. Recycle materials and purchase recycled materials when feasible.

Reduce, reuse and recycle materials

Reduce, reuse and recycle materials. Be environmentally sensitive by using safe products, which do not create adverse environmental impacts.

- Investigate source reduction of waste including; purchasing in bulk, minimizing packaging and reducing excess use of paper. Continue to explore ways to reduce waste production by minimizing the creation of waste, especially hazardous waste.
- Investigate ways to reuse office, recreation program and maintenance/construction materials.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recycling:

A One-Sort recycling program is in place at the Downtown and Administrative offices, Sportscore I & II, Carlson Ice Arena, Riverview Ice House, Alpine & Sand Park Pools, Guilford Tennis Center, Lockwood, Greenhouse, all golf courses, the Music Shell, Washington Park Community Center and Magic Waters for the collection and recycling of (as appropriate) paper, cardboard, glass, aluminum, tin and plastic. One-Sort recycling event support program is used at numerous festivals and events. 2005

- Pilot program "Recycling in Parks" was implemented 2004
- All shops recycle scrap metal. 2003
- Composting is done at the Greenhouse and golf courses. 2002
- Recycling is now done at areas largest festival (On The Waterfront). First year's diversion was 3.35 tons, second year 8.24 tons. 2005
- Bids (wherever possible) are distributed electronically reducing the use of paper. 2006
- Shredding of records that no longer need to be kept. Shreds are properly disposed of. 2006

Waste Reduction / Disposal:

- Used computer equipment is donated or sent to auction or recycled through our vendors to avoid placement in landfill. 2003
- Used small batteries are collected for proper disposal. 2005
- Vendors are used who properly dispose of all hazardous waste including used oils, oil filters, antifreeze, batteries, tires and Freon. 2005
- Earth friendly fluorescent bulbs are purchased that meet or exceed minimum mercury requirements to landfill disposal. Proper disposal procedures are followed for obsolete light bulbs, ballasts and batteries. 2005
- Electronic mail and voice mail are encouraged to reduce use of paper products. 2005
- Waste oil is recycled at both ice facilities. 2005

- Employees have access to personal computer/electronic recycling program through Office Depot. 2006
- Rechargeable battery recycling program has been implemented through Rock River Service for rechargeable batteries including: nickel cadmium, nickel metal hydride, lithium ion, and small sealed level batteries. Identifying marks are Ni-Cd, Ni-MH, Lhon or Pb. 2006
- Comprehensive Soil Testing allows accurate analysis and forecasting of pesticide needs and prevents applying unneeded components at golf courses. 2005
- In-house print shop uses only soy based inks and does not generate hazardous waste. 2005
- Investigated purchase of EPA approved waste oil furnace and discovered it is best to recycle our waste oil through a vendor who pays us .40 per gallon. 2006
- At dog parks and other collection points of feces, degradable collection bags are used. 2005
- At Sinnissippi, Aldeen, Elliott and Sandy Hollow golf courses, rinse pads collect water used to wash various pieces of equipment. Water is then reapplied to the courses for irrigation. 2005
- Rinse pads were purchased for Sportscore Complexes and Ingersoll Golf Course. 2007

Reuse:

- A Christmas tree recycling program is in place in cooperation with Winnebago / Rockford Clean and Beautiful and the City of Rockford. Trees are mulched and made available to the public at no charge. 1998
- Trees and limbs from trimming are chipped and used for mulch in landscaping beds and pathways. 1998
- Grass clippings are composted when possible. 1998
- Toner cartridges are returned to the manufacturer for reuse. 2001
- Employees are encouraged to use duplexing printing whenever possible. Paper scraps of appropriate sizes are turned into scratch pads. 2003
- 100% of all ink jet cartridges from all printers / fax equipment, are recycled through our vendor. 2005

ACTION PLANS

Recycling:

- Continue to investigate and explore additional materials to be integrated into the recycling program.
- Continue to phase in facilities/areas following the expanded recycling plan. .
- Include Environmental Policy in all employee orientation sessions along with a yearly update to existing personnel.
- Include Scrap/Salvage Policy in all employee orientation sessions along with a yearly update to existing personnel.
- Employees to examine incoming mail to discover mailing lists they can have their names removed from. Consider direct mail registry to eliminate incoming mail of a useless nature.
- When trash is collected, use the least number of plastic bags possible to collect and dispose of regular trash. Consider biodegradable bags.
- Introduce more information to the intra-net website to eliminate use of paper.

Waste Reduction / Disposal:

- Monitor the increasing levels of dog feces and the inherent challenges involved. Consider replacing solvent tanks with environmentally friendly solvent tanks to reduce hazardous waste generated by maintenance shops.
- Reduce the use of disposable products by staff, concessionaires and park/facility users. (use biodegradable bags, or reduce number of bags when possible). This item to become a boilerplate in vendor bids.

Reuse:

- Develop water recapture and reuse designs for future construction projects.
- Evaluate program to filter and separate grease, oils and other chemicals.

Policy 2.0 ENERGY - Conserve resources through energy efficiency and in operations.

Continue to actively seek and implement ways to conserve energy resources. Discover conservation through energy audits. Investigate methods of applying alternative energy technologies that will slow our energy needs and keep in mind a long-range goal of taking our facilities off the grid.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Energy Efficiency:

- Energy costs have been reduced by paying ground mowing maintenance contracts on a per occurrence basis. 2003
- Retrofit systems have been installed at Riverview Ice House and Carlson Ice Arena to save energy costs. 2004
- More efficient lighting has been added at Sinnissippi Maintenance Shop. 2003
- Ballasts and lamps have been replaced in the Downtown Administration building and the Sinnissippi Administration building. 2004
- Regular tune-ups and other applicable vehicle maintenance is performed to reduce vehicle emissions. It is estimated the district saves over \$4,000.00 a year by staff making sure tires are properly inflated during maintenance inspections. 2002
- The district has received three grants totaling \$20,484 for upgrades to interior lighting to increase energy efficiency. The grants from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation were awarded for upgrades at Atwood Outdoor Education Center, four aquatic facilities, Riverview Ice House and the Indoor Sports Center. 2002-2006
- Electric golf carts have been purchased for Aldeen, Elliot and Sinnissippi Golf Courses. (Electric carts for Ingersoll and Sandy Hollow Golf courses would require indoor storage.) 2003
- **Two Flexible Fuel Vehicles and one electric assist vehicle purchased bringing total to 12 FFV or Hybrids in the fleet. 2007.**
- **“Go Dark” principles introduced at DTO. Cost savings in downtown building estimated at 3%. 2007.**
- **New power strips purchased will recognize when computers are off and automatically cycle accessories off. 2007-2008**
- **CFL light bulbs are being used to replace incandescent bulbs. The objective is for no A bulbs, no R bulbs, and no long-life incandescent bulbs to be purchased or use except in cases where CFLs offer challenges. 2007**
- **Soft drink vendor requested to use Energy Star rated equipment. They are in compliance on 75% of the vending machines used. 2007**
- **All laserjet printers powersave mode settings have been adjusted to 15 minutes instead of 30 minutes. 2007.**

Conservation:

- All underground fuel tanks have been removed and replaced with above ground tanks, or brought into compliance through the use of monitoring systems. 2005
- Use of biodiesel was implemented district-wide. 2006
- Use of E-10 fuel was implemented district-wide. 2006

ACTION PLANS

- Apply for additional grants to upgrade interior lighting to increase energy efficiency.
- Continue to work towards updating of new irrigation systems for maximum efficiency.
- Continue to purchase efficient energy rated electrical appliances and low water use toilets and faucets.
- Continue to gather information in regard to energy efficient vehicles (electric, hybrids, or vehicles that run on fuel cells) and their potential use in short distance driving within the district. Examine new transportation devices (i.e. Segway).
- Seek grants to help implement energy efficiency around the district.
- Research conversion of an older model mower to E-85.
- Investigate use of our used vegetable oil as fuel in off-road equipment.
- Seek Illinois Green Fleets designation.
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Policy 3.0 PURCHASING / PRODUCTS

Purchase and use environmentally safe and sensitive products.

Purchase products which minimize negative environmental impacts and which take into consideration the effects of product production, use, storage and disposal that could contribute to pollution of the air, water and soil and which avoid causing the destruction of natural communities of plants and animals.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Toilet paper purchased is 20% post consumer content. 2003
- Most Rockford Park District publications are printed on recycled paper. 2004
- All newly purchased memorial benches are 100% recycled plastic boards. 2004
- Some newly purchased picnic tables and park benches and band shell benches and child-sized picnic tables are 100% recycled plastic boards. 2004
- Soy based ink (biodegradable and non-toxic) are used by the in-house printing. 2004
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program implemented for pesticide use. 2002
- Slow release and organic fertilizers are used and programs have been established that will allow the use of fewer chemicals. Biologic control products are used. 2004
- Integrated Pest Management program is part of Pest Control bids and contracts. 2004
- Content of new signage at various locations is recycled plastic. 2005
- Mosquito control machines are being used at several locations instead of chemicals. 2005
- Discontinued the use of D-Con to control rodents. Glue boards are now offered through central stores. 2004
- A “soda blaster” is used to remove graffiti avoiding the use of chemicals. 2003
- **A transitional paint plan put in force working to decrease the use of enamel paint. 2007**

ACTION PLANS

- Purchase more signs of plastic material as needed.
- Consider implementation of the U.S. EPA’s Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Program that assists businesses in purchasing environmentally preferred products and services. The five guiding principles below serve as a guideline for purchasing.
 1. Environment + Price + Performance = EPP
Include environmental considerations as part of the normal purchasing process.
 2. Pollution Prevention
Emphasize pollution prevention as part of the purchasing process.
 3. Life Cycle Perspective/Multiple Attributes
Examine multiple environmental attributes throughout the product and service’s life cycle.
 4. Comparison of Environmental Impacts
Compare environmental impacts when selecting products and services.
 5. Environmental Performance Information
Collect accurate and meaningful environmental information about environmental performance of products and services. (See EPA website at www.epa.gov/opptintr/epp/).

Develop method of evaluation of “environment” in statement #1 above. Continue to use Green Seal guidelines to select products for purchase wherever possible. Continue to examine “At What Price Green”.

- Consider packaging when purchasing. Packaging increases the cost of a product and has an “environmental cost” to the earth too, especially in disposal.
 1. Buy in bulk whenever possible
 2. Seek out products in refillable containers
 3. When possible, select a product with less packaging if the packaging is not needed to protect the product.
 4. Whenever possible, choose products wrapped in glass, paper, cardboard and aluminum, which are preferable to plastic because these materials can be recycled into themselves.
- Consider purchase of mosquito attractant machines for Getaway, Marinelli, Camp Conestoga and Eagle Hill. (No spraying is done with exception of Music Shell area.)
- The use of Styrofoam products should be eliminated in our programs (cups and plates) and limited by our concessionaires. Add request not to use Styrofoam to the boiler plate of all concessionaire bids.

Policy 4.0 OPEN SPACES

Preserve and restore our open spaces and water features.

Protect and restore indigenous natural communities such as grasslands, woodlands and wetlands and promote the reclamation, acquisition, preservation and management of other open space areas, including river corridors, green ways and trails. Monitor and maintain a balance of wildlife in natural settings. Blend the natural environment or recreation areas to preserve natural habitat and provide community assets. To avoid negative impact on the environment, utilize the environmental committee and its citizen advisory group to perform a review of new programs and developments.

Ensure careful stewardship of our trees by managing potentially harmful species, conditions and diseases. Establish a tree planting program with diverse species.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Open Spaces:

- Approximately 600 acres of green space added for recreational activity. 2003
- Comprehensive tree replacement program for parks and facilities replaces 65 trees per year plus shrubs and flowerbeds at various facilities. 2003
- 45 acres returned to natural environments, which provides habitats and decreases energy costs. 2003
- 500 trees (native species) are given away each Arbor Day. 1999
- Brush piles and snag areas are allowed to remain in non-playable areas of golf courses. 2002
- Tree nurseries have been developed to assist in the tree replacement program. 2003
- Perennial and native plant areas have been established. 2002
- Birdhouses and feeders have been installed. 2002
- Prairie areas are maintained at Atwood, Searls Park, Reuben-Aldeen plus other smaller sites. 1999
- Hall Memorial woods area set aside for ongoing study of garlic mustard. 2003
- Invasive species control has begun including Garlic Mustard and Purple Loosestrife. 2004
- General dandelion spraying is only performed as a part of a specific turf management program. 1999
- Natural areas have been established at Searls, Atwood, Talcott-Page, Blackhawk, Aldeen, Shorewood and Levings Park. 1999
- All golf courses belong to the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary program. Some have received, and others are working towards certification. 2003
- All five golf courses are members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America that are members of the PESP program. The Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) is a voluntary program that forms partnerships with pesticide users to reduce the potential health and environmental risks associated with pesticide use and implement pollution prevention strategies. 2005
- Naturalization has been done at golf courses, which includes no-mow areas and taller grasses. Natural “no mow” areas on five golf courses are now 135 acres. While there is

expense to the original planting of these areas, cost savings include labor, fuel, and pesticide application (fertilizer & weed control) 2001

- Plans for dealing with environmental disasters such as chemical spills and floods have been included in the Crisis Management Plan. 2004
- Clean-up of Alpine Dry Dam was performed to satisfaction of Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The time-honored tradition of painting the dry dam can now be followed after obtaining a Special Use Permits and the use of only biodegradable products such as water based (regular latex paint) paints, sidewalk paint made by Crayola[®], chalks, or homemade sidewalk paint. 2004

Water Features:

- Wetlands are being allowed to continue natural development at Shorewood Park. 1999
- Water sources, soil and tissue are tested. 1999
- Erosion along creek banks reduced with boulder walls at Aldeen Golf Course. 2000

ACTION PLANS

Open Spaces:

- Practice solid management and appropriate landscaping to prevent erosion
- Reestablish a tree management and replacement program to reforest park areas to reach for a better ratio of planting to removal.
- Consider a tree audit.
- Create buffer zones comprised of native plantings along all waterways and ponds.
- Consider development of a land use and classification system.
- Examine all future landscape or site plans as they relate to the Canada Goose management.
- Continue to integrate plantings of native species plantings that attract wildlife desirable in an urban park district (or that deters them where their presence creates challenges).
- Create a plan to eliminate invasive and poisonous species, while limiting entry of escaped species that inhibit ecological diversity and integrity.
- Continue to integrate drought resistant native species into plantings.
- Protect special habitats.
- Continue to expand usage of slow release and organic fertilizers.
- Use chemicals to prevent growth along fences, backstops, trees and planters only.
- **Seek grant monies to deal with the challenge of Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth.**
- **Establish a “natural areas” department to plan/conduct prairie burns, remove and treat undesirable and non-native species, collect and propagate native seed, expand plantings and no-mow areas, and in general to develop and implement natural area management plans.**

Water Features:

- Develop a plan to reclaim shorelines.
- Develop a water conservation education program for employees and park/facility users.
- Reconstruct ponds that have become too shallow.
- Construct water retention lots for use in watering.

Policy 4.1 USE OF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

It is the intent to use policies and practices that protect the food supply and the environment from unintended adverse effects, while at the same time reducing environmental and human health risks, as well as protecting natural resources.

A policy adopted by the Board of Commissioners on April 19, 1990, requires us to eliminate or restrict the use of pesticides and herbicides. We have determined that pesticides should only be used in critical areas.

Critical areas are defined as:

1. Circumstances where destructive pests (insects, diseases, funguses, etc.) either create health hazards for human beings or damage to the environment.
2. High-use turf areas that require specific management practices for their intended use (irrigation, fertilization, weed control, aeration, reseeding, etc.) such as golf courses, athletic areas, special use facilities with high impact such as Magic Waters, riverfront esplanades and parks. However, general dandelion spraying is not performed in neighborhood parks unless it is part of a specific turf management program.

During the spring and fall when we normally receive calls from citizens requesting dandelion spraying in neighborhood parks or in other areas that will not be sprayed, staff should explain that we have adopted an environmental policy, will review their request and make a determination based on approved policy.

The following list of sites are sprayed for broadleaf weeds: 2006

<u>Athletic Fields</u>	<u>Golf Courses/Practice Centers</u>
Gambino Park (soccer)	Elliot
Carlson Nelles Park (soccer)	Sinnissippi
Beyer Park (soccer & football)	Sandy Hollow
Blackhawk Park (soccer & rugby)	Ingersoll
SC 1&2 (soccer & baseball)	Aldeen Golf Club
Searls (soccer & baseball)	
Elliott Soccer Fields	
Ridge Park (baseball)	
Rockford Flight Field (model airplane fields)	
Brown Park (baseball and football)	
Collins Park (baseball)	
Williams Sports Field (baseball and soccer)	
Talcott-page Ball Diamonds	
Don Schmid Ball Diamonds	
Bloom School Park (baseball and soccer)	
Highland Park (baseball and soccer)	

High Maintenance Areas

Ballard Building	Waterworks Esplanade	Waterside Plaza
Riverview Ice House	Davis Park	Luther Esplanade
Carlson Ice Arena	Field of Honor	Downtown Office
Civil War Memorial	Sinnissippi Gardens	Sinnissippi Admin Office
Wester Park	Library Esplanade	Riverfront
Corner of State & Avon Streets	Beattie Park	Magic Waters
Sand Park Pool (inside fence)	LZ Peace Memorial	Franklin Place Blvd.
Y-Blvd. turnaround (Haight Park)		

Policy 4.2 PROCEDURES FOR PESTICE MANAGEMENT

These procedures apply to pest management that in this application refers to control of insects, plant diseases, and weeds. A multidisciplinary approach to solving pest problems involves chemical, cultural, biological, and mechanical methods to manage pests and their dangers below economic thresholds. Procedures are developed that will help protect humans as well as trees, plants and grasses on Rockford Park District properties, at all facilities and in all programs that will be sensitive to ecological issues. It is the intent to use procedures and practices that protect the food supply and the environment from unintended adverse effects while at the same time reducing environmental and human health risks as well as protecting natural resources. as funding and time allows using priorities established below and sound environmental practices and procedures. 1999

Pest Management in regard to Human Issues:

With an increasing prevalence in regard to the possibility of contracting West Nile Virus from mosquitoes, the Rockford Park District has added insect repellant to the suggested list for all child participants in outdoor programs. Wide-scale public health publicity should assist in making the common sense of bringing and using insect repellant prevail in regard to this issue.

Because some areas of the district do have an increased predisposition for the insect, the Rockford Park District has prioritized potential control/spray sites. Chemical will be sprayed on an as-needed basis following these priorities: 2006

Site Priority 1:

High traffic facilities in deep woods settings where programs involve participants under the age of 18. (i.e. Getaway Playground).

Site Priority 2:

High traffic facilities in deep woods settings open to the public for evening hour activities (i.e. Sinnissippi Park Band Shell, Marinelli Field).

Site Priority 3:

At sites and facilities, and in areas where programs take place and where, if no spraying takes place, would mean diminished recreational opportunity.

Site Priority 4:
Parks and facilities with general usage by adults and children.

Pest Management in regard to Destructive Pests/Diseases:

There are various destructive pests which can threaten plant material (i.e. Japanese Beetle, Gypsy Moth, and Emerald Ash Borer) much like the Dutch Elm disease of the 50's and 60's. The District will protect its plant material using the following list of priorities and following integrated pest management practices. 2005

Site Priority 1:
Sites where pests, diseases or fungus can create health hazards for human beings or damage to the environment.

Site Priority 2:
Sites that require specific management practices for their intended use (irrigation, fertilization, weed control, aeration, reseeding, etc.) such as golf courses, athletic areas, special use facilities with high impact such as Magic Waters, riverfront esplanades, etc.

Site Priority 3:
Main office buildings with large visibility in community. The Park District recognizes it's role in the community as a leader in beautification. As such, trees and plants in this environment need to be maintained in the best possible condition.

Site Priority 4:
Neighborhood parks and facilities

Policy 4.3 PROCEDURES FOR PESTICE MANAGEMENT OF DANDELIONS

It is the purpose of this policy to establish the guidelines and practices for the pestice management of dandelions.

This policy applies to management of dandelions. Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) is one of the most common and problematic weeds infesting turf grass and ornamental plantings, forming dense circular mats of leaves that crowd out desirable species and reduce the vigor of those plants. In turf, it forms clumps that cause poor footing for athletic fields and golf courses. Dandelion's texture and color vary from that of normal turfgrass and the yellow flowers can reduce the aesthetic quality of some turfgrass. Dandelion can be considered an *unwanted weed but is not noxious nor invasive*.

Definitions:

Weed is the generic word for a plant growing in a place where it is not wanted. The dandelion can be considered a troublesome weed.

A *noxious weed* is a plant that is growing in such a manner that it is causing problems by interfering with other desirable plants or contaminating the harvest of useful plants. Noxious weeds are especially problematic because they spread rapidly, are hard to kill, are toxic to cattle and/or humans, or cause other serious problems. Generally (but not always) noxious weeds are invasive species. ***Invasive species* is a term applied when a plant is an introduced species that invades and disturbs natural ecosystems, displacing species native to the target eco-region and causing harm.**

The Rockford Park District seeks to be an organization that is sensitive to ecological issues. It is the intent to use policies and practices that protect the food supply and the environment from unintended adverse effects while at the same time reducing environmental and human health risks as well as protecting natural resources.

Guidelines and Practices: The Rockford Park District will not use herbicides and pesticides for the control of dandelions except in circumstances where the dandelions may either create health hazards for human beings or cause damage to the environment. General dandelion spraying will not be performed unless it is a part of a specific turf management program.

Specific turf management programs may include high use turf areas that require specific management practices to maximize their intended use (irrigation, fertilization, weed control, aeration, reseeding, etc.) including golf courses, athletic areas, special use facilities with high impact such as Magic Waters, riverfront esplanades, Wester Park etc.

Application of Practices:

In all cases, Rockford Park District will demonstrate its knowledge and implementation of Integrated Pest Management, a system of practices designed to choose the most economical and environmentally friendly course of action when controlling dandelions. 1999

Policy 5.0 EDUCATION

Provide public education and interpretation of environmental issues.

Facilitate urban educational and interpretative opportunities and provide information sources for citizens and staff, which increase appreciation of our natural resources and promote environmentally conscious lifestyles. Offer pertinent information to employees through payroll envelope inserts, e-mail, and intranet.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- A smoke-free environment resolution has been implemented. 2005
- Copies of hazardous materials guidelines updated and sent to local Fire Department. 2005
- Right to know training has been provided for all employees. 2002
- The Greenhouse at Aldeen Golf Course is used for class study projects on plant growth. 2002
- Sportscore I is mentioned on the Illinois State website as a successful recycling program. 2005 (www.illinoisbiz.biz/com/recycling/success_bus.html)
- Curriculum involving environmental issues is being added to camps and programs. 2005
- The Enhanced Recycling Program has an educational component that includes press releases, annual guide article, signage at facilities and recycle information staff shirts and in program brochures. 2005
- Atwood Park offers diverse ecosystems, which are perfect settings for hands-on learning. 21 environmental education programs meet State of Illinois teaching standards. Weekend retreats are available. An annual event is held called Fabulous Fall Day, which includes a guided hike through woodlands, prairie and meadows. 2003
- Patrons are encouraged to recycle in program brochures, guidebooks and on signs. 2004
- We continue to improve awareness of the Integrated Pest Management program. 2004
- An Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grant written by an intern has provided energy efficient replacements. 2004
- Training sessions have been held for outside organizations regarding implementation of successful recycling programs. Advised and assisted Jefferson High School with implementation of an aluminum can recycling program. 2005
- Training session held at Illinois Recycling Associations (IRA) 2003 Conference regarding successful recycling programs. 2005
- Received “Outstanding Community Leadership” award presented by Illinois Recycling Association 2005
- Our motto (reduce, reuse, recycle – at work, at home, at play) was quoted in North American Recycling & Composting Journal in article entitled “Recycling Goes Public”. 2005
- Canada Goose Management / Maintenance program presented at Illinois Park & Recreation Association Annual Conference, 2002, as well as 2003 National Recreation and Park Association Annual Conference, 2004
- The On The Waterfront Recycling Partnership received a Second Place award for the environmental partnerships with the Rockford Park District at the 2004 International Festival & Event Association Meeting. 2004

ACTION PLANS

- Work with other interested community agencies and organizations to develop and enhance a strong environmental ethic, participating in as many environmental education projects as possible. Provide community leadership and serve as a role model.
- Develop an environmentally related community project.
- Consider developing a method/plan to reach teachers/schools within the Rockford Park District boundaries in the K-6 environmental education programs.
- Involve agency staff in an environmental education program that explains the commitment of the agency to the environment, provides information about environmentally conscious lifestyles and workplace choices and habits, and stresses the need for staff input and involvement. Use existing methods of communications to provide information to staff including, intra-net e-mail, forms, policies, procedures, employee bulletin boards, etc.
- Encourage District employees to do recycling and use recycled products outside the working environment.
- Increase golfer understanding of wildlife and environmental quality on the golf course including the Integrated Pest Management Program.
- Prepare wildlife inventory lists.
- Continue to heighten public awareness of environmental issues through regular press releases on environmental issues, posting environmental information in facilities, printed materials, educational programs, recycling program, and other environmental programs implemented throughout the District.
- Continue to act as a resource to the community on how to implement successful recycling programs.
- Develop an environmental link on the Rockford Park District website.
- Consider providing printed lawn care, tree planting, shrubs, flowers and grasses tips for the public that includes recognition of the agency environmental policy.
- **Develop a resource list for hazardous products and where they can be properly disposed of or recycled. (make available on intranet)**
- **Send representative to City Committee working on Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Plan.**

Policy 6.0 GREEN TECHNOLOGY

Green Technology offers a more environmentally friendly solution compared to existing technology. The Park District will strive to discover and introduce the potential environmental impact of green technology on existing and future facilities and in purchasing and bidding practices including investigation of all alternative fuels for use in all fleet vehicles and equipment. 2006

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Dilution Control bid included a request for alternative green product. 2005
- Rockford Park District staff attended green technology tours of local sites using wind, solar and thermal renewable energy sources. 2005
- Staff investigated solar thermal available for pools and heaters in regards to a DECO grant. 2005
- Earth friendly lubricants were evaluated with a determination that our current vendor oil recycling program is effective. 2005
- Golf courses are using biodegradable hydraulic oil. 2005
- Design and Construction process on Nicholas project is working to LEED Certification. 2006

ACTION PLANS

- Accumulate information, follow the progress in other park districts and begin our exploration of Green Technology and its potential environmental impact on existing and future facilities particularly in regard to building healthy, smart and green considering the sun, water, air and land. Examine both positive and negative impacts of:
 - Water conservation
 - Renewable Energy Sources:
 - Wind
 - Geothermal
 - Passive
 - Photo Voltaic
 - Green products
 - Efficient lighting/energy management
- Direct the Purchasing Department to offer a “Green” option in bidding procedures. Determine a guideline for “at what price green”.
- Work to discover new green systems that could be put in place to reinforce a commitment to Green Technology.

Policy 7.0 EMPLOYEE PROTECTION

The park district is committed to providing employees a safe and healthy work environment by maintaining an effective Hazard Communication Program consistent with federal, state and local health and safety regulations. All employees are expected to comply with these requirements as an essential consideration in all phases of their work.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Hazardous/Toxic Materials - The Rockford Park District protects employees against the dangers of hazardous/toxic materials on the job using a comprehensive Hazard Communication Program. This program is designed to ensure that information on the hazards of chemicals used in our operations is communicated to employees. This program meets the requirements of the Toxic Substances Disclosure to Employees Act, commonly referred to as the Illinois Employee Right-to-Know Law. A “hazardous chemical” is any chemical, which can be a physical or health hazard such as; pool chemicals, custodial supplies, fuels, paints, pesticides, automotive products, compressed gases and fertilizers.

The park district’s Hazard Communication Program is in place at all work areas where employees have the potential to be exposed to chemicals during routine operations, non-routine tasks and chemical spill emergencies. The program consists of the following basic elements:

Posting of Right-To-Know sign

A written Hazard Communication Program

An inventory of hazardous chemical products

An inventory of Material Safety Data Sheets

Submittal of a list of acquired MSDS to the Illinois Department of Labor

A labeling procedure for hazardous material containers

An employee training program

The detailed Hazard Communication Program is included in the Employee Safety Manual. 2004

Smoking Policy – For the protection of its employees Rockford Park District has a smoking policy in force. The State of Illinois has enacted a new smoking policy for the State to begin January 1, 2007 and for municipal organizations. This will be incorporated into this policy at that time.

In keeping with the State of Illinois Public Act 095-0017, smoking is prohibited in indoor public places and workplaces unless specifically exempted by Section 35 of this act. Smoking in public places, placements of employment, and governmental vehicles is prohibited. No person shall smoke in a public place or in any place of employment or within 15 feet of any entrance to a public place or a place of employment. (Law in its entirety can be viewed at <http://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=095-0017> -- 2007

Environmental Policy Team

Cindy Bacher, Administrative Assistant

Ron Butler, Senior Manager, Maintenance Services

Ken Giesler, Superintendent, Sandy Hollow Golf Course

Jan Herbert, Special Projects Coordinator

Ron Himes, Asst. Superintendent, Sinnissippi Golf Course

Curt Johnson, Manager, Park Services

Lynn Olsen, Internal Audit Manager

***We have not inherited the earth from our fathers,
we are borrowing it from our children.***

Native American Saying

Highlights of changes added since document last reviewed by board:

Additions:

Policy 2.0 – ENERGY – Conserve resources through energy efficiency and in operations.

Accomplishments:

- Elimination of incandescent light bulbs.
- Go Dark program introduced.
- Use of biodiesel implemented district-wide
- Use of E-10 fuel implemented district-wide

Policy 3.0 – PURCHASING/PRODUCTS

Accomplishments:

- Request for non-use of Styrofoam added to the concessionaire bid boilerplate.
- Transitional paint plan is in force. Use of enamel paint will be gradually eliminated.

Policy 5.0 – EDUCATION – Provide public education and interpretation of environmental issues.

Accomplishments:

- Assisted Jefferson High School with implementation of aluminum can recycling program.
- Training session held at Illinois Recycling Associations (IRA) Conference.

Policy 6.0 – GREEN TECHNOLOGY

Accomplishments:

- Design and Construction process on Nicholas project is working to LEED Certification.

Policy 7.0 – EMPLOYEE PROTECTION (new policy)

- Hazardous/Toxic materials
- Smoking Policy