

EARTH DAY Action Toolkit

Educating and Activating Communities to
End Plastic Pollution



Plastic pollution is one of the world's most complex problems. To effectively respond to this challenge, citizens must be appropriately educated and prepared.

For Earth Day 2018, communities must take the lead promoting action to end plastic pollution. Now more than ever in recent history, people around the world are hungry to engage in important environmental issues. It is up to all of us to use this unprecedented opportunity to build the change we need.

Earth Day Network has created this toolkit so that you, the environmentally-minded citizen, can create tangible change by organizing and coordinating Earth Day events in your local community.

With this toolkit, you will be able to select an Earth Day event, and create a working group to put your idea into action.

GET INVOLVED WITH EARTH DAY 2018

Every year, Earth Day Network coordinates events around the world to showcase global support for the environmental movement. Hold an Earth Day event and register it with us to be a part of the worldwide celebration of Earth Day.

Register your event at earthday.org/register



The Earth Day
2018 Theme:

END PLASTIC POLLUTION

There is a mass of momentum building behind the movement to end plastic pollution. Environmentally minded citizens are spreading the word that something must be done soon about plastic pollution or it will be too late.

This Earth day, we are launching the newest of our signature themes: Ending Plastic Pollution. We can't do this alone. Many people still do not know and understand the impact that plastic pollution has on their everyday lives, nor do they know how easy it is to have a massive impact on this problem by only changing a few minor behavior choices. That is why it is important this year to have a massive rallying cry on Earth Day 2018 to show the world we mean business when it comes to ending plastic pollution.

To learn more and to access content related to the "End Plastic Pollution" campaign for your Earth Day event, please download EDN's Plastic Pollution Primer and Action Toolkit at earthday.org/toolkits

WHY PLASTIC POLLUTION?

Human beings create plastic waste at an astounding rate, as of 2015 the total was estimated to be around 6300 million metric tons. Of that, a staggering 79% accumulates in landfills and the environment. The plastic makes its way to the ocean where it traps and is eaten by marine animals. In the ocean the plastic continually breaks into smaller and smaller pieces until it can enter the blood stream of fish and other organisms, bringing along the toxins it has absorbed.

EDN's end plastic pollution campaign is essential for bringing the momentum of Earth Day to the all-important issue of plastic pollution. Take part in Earth Day 2018 and help spread the word that it's time to end this once and for all.

How to Organize & Hold a Successful Event

In the following pages, you'll receive guidance of the various duties you will need to accomplish and templates and samples for the messaging you will need to develop to bring enthusiastic attendees and media exposure to your event. All this information is organized into the major tasks necessary to hold a successful event.

1

**REVIEW TOOLKITS
& DECIDE ON
AN EVENT**

2

**DEVELOP KEY
MESSAGES**

3

**CREATE A WORK
GROUP FOR
YOUR EVENT**

4

**LAUNCH A
SUCCESSFUL MEDIA
CAMPAIGN**

5

**ENSURE YOUR
EVENT IS
WELL-ATTENDED**

1 REVIEW TOOLKITS & DECIDE ON AN EVENT

Earth Day Network has developed one main event idea: A Teach-in on 2018's theme - End Plastic Pollution. We have also developed toolkits for educators, local governments, and faith groups available below. There are many other potential events one could hold such as picking up trash from a local park, putting on a recycling drive, or teaching people how to set up home compost bins.

In addition to a toolkit specifically for reducing your individual plastic pollution footprint we also have created specialized toolkits for colleges and universities, faith groups, and k-12 educators.

Event Ideas

Teach-In Event

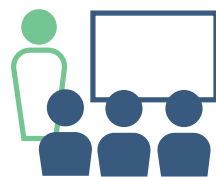
To build on our end plastic pollution goal and theme, hold a teach-in in your community.

Toolkits



WHAT TO DO ABOUT PLASTIC POLLUTION

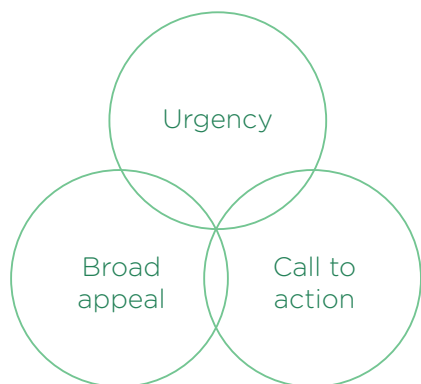
Earth Day Networks 2018 theme is "End Plastic Pollution". Use EDN's What to do about plastic pollution toolkit to learn how you can reduce your plastic pollution footprint and how to convince others to do the same.



END PLASTIC POLLUTION TEACH-IN

Focus your Earth Day event around educating your community about the problems of and solutions to plastic pollution.

2 DEVELOP KEY MESSAGES



Sample Key Messages

1

On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment in massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.

2

Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, city slickers and farmers, tycoons and labor leaders. By the end of that year, the first Earth Day had led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts.

3

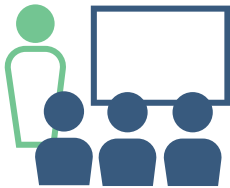
The Earth Day theme for 2018 is End Plastic Pollution. Plastic pollution is clogging our waterways, killing and injuring wildlife, and endangering our health and safety. Stand up to plastics in 2018 and we can be the generation to end plastic pollution once and for all.

4

By 2050, it is estimated that there will be more plastic in the world's oceans than fish. Every human being on earth depends on the oceans. We have the responsibility to protect the oceans and their inhabitants so they remain for future generations.

3 CREATE A WORK GROUP FOR YOUR EVENT

The members of this group will tackle the various aspects of coordinating the event. Try to build a team as quickly as possible to spread out the work. Create a Facebook group under EDN's Facebook page (see instructions on attachment 1). As your team grows, members can become specialized into the roles listed below. This group may include:



Coordinator

The person in charge of coordinating the event and delegating the tasks that the various group members putting the event together need to perform. Recruit someone with past event management experience.



Communications Team

This group will craft the message about your event and disseminate it to the press in social media to promote coverage of your event. They need to have strong writing skills and preferably have contacts in the local press, and be familiar with social media tools.



Engagement & Outreach Team

This team will promote the event to the local community to encourage attendance. Depending on the scale of your event and ability to recruit work group members, consider designating individual roles for the different aspects of Engagement and Outreach:

1. **Partnerships Coordinator**
2. **Volunteer Coordinator**
3. **Events Logistics Coordinator**
4. **Content Program Coordinator**

4 LAUNCH A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Press interest is key to building attendance and the attention of elected officials. Create a plan that includes top line messaging, a timeline for media relations, and begin drafting social media messaging.

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	TITLE	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	COMMENTS
John Smith	555-555-5555	john@smith.com	Journalist	ABC News	123 Main St	Call on 4/15, 2020
Jane Doe	555-555-5555	jane@doe.com	Reporter	XYZ Network	456 Elm St	Send press kit on 4/16, 2020
Bob Green	555-555-5555	bob@green.com	Editor	DEF Media	789 Oak St	Follow up on 4/17, 2020
Alice White	555-555-5555	alice@white.com	Anchor	GHI TV	101 Pine St	Send press kit on 4/18, 2020

See sample media list on Page 11.

BEFORE

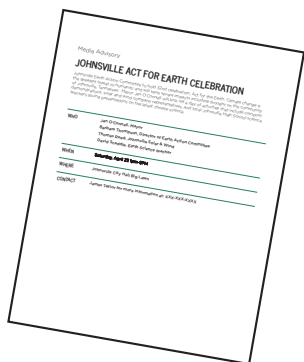
Compile a media list.

Compile the list with a broad range of reporters and outlets. Think creatively – include reporters who might cover environment, public health, community events, politics...etc. Many local outlets only provide newsroom contact information which is fine. Check local newspapers and identify reporters writing about social issues.

BEFORE

Communicate with key reporters & outlets.

Have one-on-one discussions with key reporters and outlets most likely to cover your issue to pitch them on covering the event. Share the End Plastic Pollution toolkit with them. Encourage them to follow you and EDN on Facebook.



See sample media advisory on Page 12.

BEFORE

E-mail out a media advisory.

Brief language on why this event is newsworthy and relevant. The media advisory should include:

- 1 High profile attendees
- 2 Planned activities
- 3 Location of the event
- 4 Time and date of the event
- 5 Language on the importance of learning about plastic pollution and its impacts

TIPS

- Email the media advisory in the body of the message, to remove the step of opening an attachment.
- Send the media advisory the week of the event and send it again the day before.
- Follow up each email of the advisory with a personal phone call to ensure the intended recipient received the advisory and to ask if they plan on attending.

DURING

Gather information during the event.

The communications team should gather information during the event for the event’s press release, to update reporters for their stories, and craft real-time social media posts. Some tasks include:

- 1 Tallying an estimated number people in attendance.
- 2 Photographing the various activities taking place and organizing them with captions. Share with us on social media. Use #EarthDay2018, #EndPlasticPollution, and tag us @EarthDayNetwork.
- 3 Gathering quotes from VIPS in attendance, as well as personal stories about how people were affected or inspired by your event.

AFTER

Send out a press release.

A successful press release will shape the coverage of the event and will give a full story to media outlets to republish. Your press release should include:

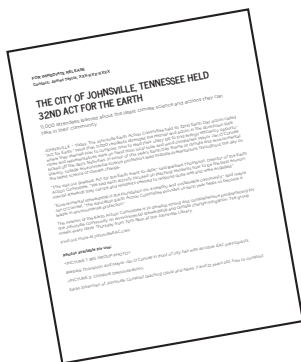
- 1 Information on the event and organizers.
- 2 Statistics compiled throughout the day.
- 3 Quotes from the organizer and a couple VIPS.
- 4 Pictures with captions.
- 5 Video clips (optional).

Draft your press release in advance of your event and fill in quotes, statistics, and any multi-media during or immediately after the event. Send out your press release immediately after the event is complete.

The sample press release on Page 13 would accompany the hypothetical event listed in the sample media advisory.

Prepare 2 or 3 Facebook posts and Tweets

- 1 Include photos or videos
- 2 Include a short message that shares useful information for your readers i.e. how the recycling program works in your city
- 3 Use #EarthDay2018, #EndPlasticPollution, and tag us @EarthDayNetwork.



See sample press release on Page 13.

TIPS

- Send the press release in the body of your email
- Follow up the email of the press release with a phone call to each outlet and reporter on the event’s media list to ensure it has been received.

5 ENSURE YOUR EVENT IS WELL ATTENDED



Start advertising early (30-40 days in advance). More time means more opportunities to spread the word.



Utilize social media platforms to promote the event. In addition to creating an event, be sure to craft content and updates to regularly post. Diversify your use of platforms. When posting, be sure to tag us @EarthDayNetwork and use the hashtag #EarthDay2018.



Utilize active advertising. Create a flier with a logo or image and the details of the event. Hand out fliers in high traffic areas and consider going door to door in your communities.



Build partnerships with local businesses who can advertise the event or provide sponsorships or products that will attract attendance.



Build partnerships with local leaders who can endorse the event on social media and in the press. Provide them with social media posts about their event and share hashtags with them.



Get information on the event to school administration if the event will take place on or near a college campus or high school. They can pass along the information to students.



Approach community clubs and organizations to partner with the workgroup and spread event information to their members and followers.



Register your event with Earth Day Network and we will help you spread the word.

www.earthday.org/register

Share via our EDN Facebook group and ask members to share with their own networks.

SAMPLE OF PREVIOUS EVENTS



British Columbia, Canada

Youth for Climate Justice Now held an environmental march and festival with speakers and musical performances.



Illinois, USA

Friends of the Parks in Chicago gathered 4,000 volunteers to clean up the cities many parks.



Croatia

As part of the "Let's Do it" campaign, 50,000 people worked simultaneously to clean up their entire country on Earth Day.



Yerevan, Armenia

The Mkhitar Sebastatsi Educational Complex gathered citizens to help plant and water trees and clean up an area to help create an educational park.



California, USA

Pacifica Beach Coalition gathered volunteers to remove trash and invasive plant species from their local beach.



Cape Town, South Africa

Oaklands High School invited people to learn from the area's environmental organizations and plant indigenous trees.



Seoul, South Korea

Thousands gathered for Korea Foundation for Environmental Movement's environmental forum and tree planting.



MEDIA LIST SAMPLE



OUTLET	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE	BEAT/ TITLE	NOTES
NBC Local	John Smith	smith.john@nbc11.com	xxx-xxx-xxxx	local politics	called on 2/1 - told him about the event, asked for info - shared the advisory. Will follow up
CBS local	Sarah Thompson	sthompson@cbs.local.com	xxx-xxx-xxxx	human interest	didn't answer - will call back
ABC local	Newsroom	news@abclocal.com	xxx-xxx-xxxx	Newsroom	Tanya answered - said they would likely send a photographer - asked for advisory



Media Advisory

JOHNSVILLE ACT FOR EARTH CELEBRATION

Johnsville Earth Action Committee to hold 32nd celebration, Act for the Earth. Climate change is the greatest threat to humanity and will have severe impacts including drought on the community of Johnsville, Tennessee. Mayor Jan O’Connell will kick off a day of activities that include compost demonstrations, solar and wind company representatives, and local Johnsville High School science teachers giving presentations on the latest climate science.

WHO	Jan O’Connell, Mayor Barbara Thompson, Director of Earth Action Committee Thomas Reed, Johnsville Solar & Wind David Scaddle, Earth Science teacher
WHEN	Saturday, April 22 1pm-6PM
WHERE	Johnsville City Hall Big Lawn
CONTACT	James Taylor for more information at: XXX-XXX-XXXX



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: James Taylor, XXX-XXX-XXXX

JOHNSVILLE EARTH ACTION COMMITTEE TO HOLD 32nd EARTH DAY CELEBRATION CALLED “ACT FOR EARTH”

11,000 attendees learned about the latest climate science and actions they can take in their community

JOHNSVILLE – Today, The Johnsville Earth Action Committee held its 32nd Earth Day action called “Act for Earth.” More than 11,000 residents attended the festival and action in the downtown park where they learned how to compost, how to read their utility bill to find energy efficiency opportunities and representatives were on hand from local solar and wind companies. Mayor Jan O’Connell kicked off the day’s festivities. In honor of this year’s Earth Day theme of climate and environmental literacy, college environmental science professors lead multiple presentations throughout the day on the latest science of climate change.

“This was our greatest Act for the Earth event to-date,” said Barbara Thompson, Director of the Earth Action Committee. “We had each activity focused on teaching residents how to be the best environmental stewards they can be and residents responded quite well and were engaged.”

“Environmental stewardship is the foundation for a healthy and sustainable community,” said mayor Jan O’Connell. “The education Earth Action Committee provides us each year helps us become a leader in environmental protection.”

The mission of the Earth Action Committee is to develop strong and comprehensive programming for the Johnsville community on environmental stewardship and climate change mitigation. The group meets every other Thursday from 7pm-9pm at the Johnsville Library.

Find out more at johnsvilleEAC.com

Photos available for use:

<PICTURE 1: BIG GROUP PHOTO>

Barbara Thompson and Mayor Jan O’Connell in front of city hall with all other EAC participants.

<PICTURE 2: Compost Demonstration>

Sarah Silverman of Johnsville Compost teaching Olivia and Newt, 7 and 12 years old, how to compost.