



NEWS you can use

Democracy is not a spectator sport

April 2024

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion are crucial principles for the League of Women Voters of Illinois. DEI is embedded in our bylaws (*Article II: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy*), and LWVIL is fully committed to ensure compliance—in principle and in practice—with this policy:

“Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be accepted within the League, including but not limited to race, socio-economic status, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, or marital status. The League is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging for all people. The League is an organization that respects and values the richness of our community and our members. The collective sum of our individual differences and life experiences represents not only our culture, but our reputation and the organization's mission and achievements as well.”

Lately, I have seen increasing instances of public comments being made against DEI programs, and even attempts at rolling back some DEI initiatives. It would be easy to be discouraged by this, but I have been proud to see some of our local Leagues taking a public stand in their communities to speak up for the importance of maintaining programs designed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois is committed to being an organization reflective of the community we serve, and we will continue to work for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Simon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Becky Simon, president
bsimon@lwwil.org



Catch League Events This Month

The Importance of Wetlands: Environment and Public Health

Monday, April 15, 7:00 pm, Virtual

Wetlands are one of Illinois' greatest natural assets—we must take action to protect them!

Join us to learn more about how you can support the Wetlands and Small Streams Protection Act. We will hear from Paul Botts, President and Executive Director of The Wetlands Initiative.

[Register to attend](#)

Protecting Democracy in the Age of Social Media and AI

Wednesday, April 17, 7:00 pm, Virtual

Join us to discuss the effect of social media and AI on elections—how can we protect democracy from the spread of misinformation and disinformation?

Our featured speaker is Diane Chang, Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the Brown Institute for Media Innovation at Columbia Journalism School and the former head of Election Integrity Product Strategy at Meta.

[Register to attend](#)

SAVE THE DATE LWVIL Lobby Day

Wednesday, May 1, Springfield, IL

We're headed to Springfield! League of Women Voters members are invited to join us for Lobby Day at the Illinois State Capitol.

During Lobby Day, you'll meet with your legislators and advocate for the issues you care about. Registration will be available soon.

Leagues across the state regularly hold free educational events that are open to the public. Learn more about the issues you care about—[sign up to attend an upcoming event!](#)



Happy Earth Month!

Over 20 million people participated in the first Earth Day in 1970—the day enjoyed wide bipartisan support across the U.S. and in Washington, helping to spur the creation of new policies and agencies to protect the health of humans and our planet.

By the end of 1970, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was formed. Passage of our country's first environmental laws followed, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act. Many of these laws were supported by and continue to be defended by the League of Women Voters.

Today, Earth Day is celebrated around the globe in over 190 countries, engaging more than one billion people in raising awareness and calling for policy changes designed to give us clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and beautiful places to explore outdoors.

This Earth Month, we encourage you to learn more about environmental threats facing our communities. Check out these four easy ways to engage with League resources and take action for the planet all month long:

1. Learn Something New

Visit LWV Chicago's [Environmental Action webpage](#) and check out their 'Waste Not Want Not' Blog and 'Tips & Tricks for Sustainable Living' developed by their Environmental Action Committee. Read a few entries, try out a few tips, then bookmark this page to come back again and again!

You can also visit LWVUS' [Environmental Advocacy page](#) and learn about the work LWVUS is doing to support reduced carbon emissions, environmental justice, and more.

2. Join a League Event

Sign up for one of these local League events during Earth Month:

- Thurs, April 4 (Virtual & In Person): [The Clean Air and Water Show \(LWV Glen Ellyn\)](#)
- Thurs, April 4 (Virtual): [Clean Water Forever \(LWV UMRR\)](#)
- Thurs, April 11 (In Person): [Lessons from COP28: UN Climate Change Conference \(LWV La Grange Area\)](#)
- Sun, April 14 (In Person): [Red Gate Woods: Atomic Legacy \(LWV Cook County\)](#)
- Monday, April 15 (Virtual): [The Importance of Wetlands: Environment and Public Health \(LWVIL\)](#)

- Thurs, April 18 (In Person): [DeKalb County Earth Fest and “Common Ground” Screening \(LWV DeKalb County\)](#)
- Sun, April 21 (In Person): [Guided Tour of Prospect Heights Slough \(LWV Arlington Heights/Mt. Prospect/Buffalo Grove\)](#)
- Wed, April 24 (Virtual & In Person): [Healthy Communities: Our Water and Our Watersheds \(LWV Wheaton & LWV UMRR\)](#)

3. Choose an Earth Month Resolution

Resolve to try one new environmentally friendly habit this month! Some examples: bring your own bags to the store, invest in a reusable water bottle, walk/bike/carpool.

4. Contact Your Elected Officials

Write, call, or meet with your state representatives and state senators to show your support for these environmental bills that are supported by LWVIL:

Zero Waste

Polystyrene Foam Foodware Ban (HB2376): Bans foam foodware for retailers and restaurants in the state.

Plastic Bag Ban (SB2211/HB4448): Bans all plastic carryout bags, replicating a successful New Jersey law.

Single Use Hotel Toiletries (HB4639/HB4831): Reduces plastic waste by requiring hotels to use refillable toiletry bottles instead of providing new, mini toiletry bottles every day to guests.

Food Waste Disposal (HB5592): Redefines “municipal waste” to not include food and landscape waste from commercial activities to reduce organics from landfills. Requires units of local government to prepare plans for diverting food waste and landscape waste from the landfill stream.

Large Event Facility Recycling (SB2876) : Requires facilities with a capacity over 3,500 people to participate in recycling and composting to raise awareness of the waste created outside the home and how sustainable practices are feasible even when waste is created rapidly.

Clean Air & Water

Transition to Electric School Buses (HB2287): Provides that all school buses that are newly purchased, leased, or contracted after January 1, 2028, shall be an electric vehicle.

Clean Car Standards (HB1634): Requires the the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to adopt the Advanced Clean Truck and Clean Car standards.

PFAS Monitoring (HB4702): Requires monitoring for PFAS at various water systems. Understanding where PFAS originates from is an important first step to remediation when that technology becomes available.

PFAS Registry (HB4627): Creates a registry so the public can have access to what products contain PFAS and make informed purchasing decisions.

Conservation

Illinois Wetlands (SB3669/HB5386): Protects Illinois wetlands left vulnerable by the US Supreme Court.

Safety Moratorium on Carbon Dioxide Pipelines (HB4385): Establishes a temporary statewide moratorium on construction of carbon dioxide pipelines until additional safety standards can be implemented.

Rain & Compost Systems (HB4619): Prohibits HOAs from banning the installation of a rainwater collection or composting systems.

Monarch Act (HB5296): Authorizes financial and technical assistance for the planting of native and pollinator-friendly plants. Prevents HOAs from prohibiting the planting of pollinator habitat.

Prairie Lawns (HB5433): Establishes the Prairie Lawns Program. Allows homeowner reimbursement up to \$400. Prevents HOAs from prohibiting the planting of pollinator habitats. Establishes demonstration neighborhood grants as part of the program.

Transit to Trails Program (HB5277): Establishes a grant program for projects that facilitate travel by public transportation to public outdoor recreation sites for outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, boating, picnicking, fishing, or other nature-based activities.

Climate Education (HB4895): Requires that every Illinois public high school include a unit of instruction addressing climate change in either a required science class or a required social studies class.

Climate Education (HB4319): Stops misinformation about climate change from being taught in schools.

[Find your state legislators' contact info](#)

Questions? Ideas? Want to get more involved? Email issues@lwvil.org.

And we'd love to see what you get up to this month, so please share any photos or events with us via email or on social by tagging LWVIL and using the hashtag #EarthMonth2024.



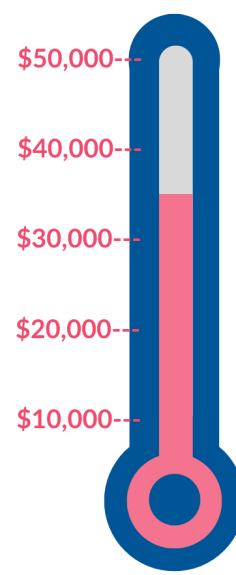
Support Our Get Out the Vote Efforts in 2024

The goal of LWVIL's [Campaign to Safeguard Democracy](#) is to raise \$50,000 for our statewide online voter guide, candidate forums, and efforts to fight misinformation and disinformation.

We're 70% of the way there! Thank you to our

growing list of generous donors who have given over \$35,000 so far.

DONATE NOW



Thank you for supporting our work to defend democracy and empower voters.

Join the League!



[View as Webpage](#)

League of Women Voters of Illinois | 332 S. Michigan Ave., , Suite 634, Chicago, IL 60604

[Unsubscribe communications@lwvil.org](mailto:Unsubscribe_communications@lwvil.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by communications@lwvil.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!