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## VBCD Newsletter

The mission of the Van Buren Conservation District (VBCD) is to promote the conservation of natural resources through partnerships, providing public education, demonstrations, and technical assistance while working together for future generations.



**Join Us Sunday, May 3!**

Sunday, May 3, 2026

1:00 PM

Be a conservationist for an afternoon at the Volunteer Water Monitoring event! Join other volunteers, the Two Rivers Coalition, the Pokagon Band, Sarett Nature Center, and the VBCD for a fun time while doing good! ❤️❤️

We collect macroinvertebrates (bugs and the like) from water. These macroinvertebrates tell us the short and long term health of our water and help us respond when it's not healthy. There are different ways to participate whether you want to be on land, in the water, or somewhere in-between. 🌊🌿

No skills or experience needed! We have the supplies, the snacks and drinks, and we'll show you how easy it is to participate!

**[Tell Us You'll Join Us Here!](#)**

**RECYCLE ROUNDUP**  
 HHW, Electronics, Paint, Foam,  
 Passenger & Semi Tires

WELCOME TO THE VBCD  
**RECYCLE ROUNDUP**

Donations to Program Accepted  
 Thank you!

RESOURCE RECOVERY

**VAN BUREN CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**Van Buren Community Mental Health – Paw Paw**  
 June 6, 2026  
 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

! Registration required for tire drop-off  
 269-633-9314 or VanBurenCD.org

**Paw Paw Recycle Roundup**

to serve our community at the first Recycle Roundup of 2026.

At no-direct cost, you, our residents and landowners, can recycle and safely dispose items:

- Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) – household chemicals, oil-based paint, batteries, lightbulbs, and more!
- Foam (polystyrene, Styrofoam™) – watch our [video](#) for acceptable items.
- Electronics
- Tires ! Only tires need to be pre-registered.

! Bring proof of residency (ID, license) or landownership (tax bill)

! Pre-registration optional for all, but registration is required for tire recycling at least two-days in advance

☎ Call 269-633-9314 or fill out the form linked below

! Be sure to watch out for follow-up communication! 📧📞

Paw Paw Recycle Roundup | June 6, 2026 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Van Buren  
Community Mental Health | 801 Hazen Street, Paw Paw

[Click Here to Register](#)

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Tree Seedling Sale

South Haven Chamber Cleanup

Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum  
Invasive Species Presentation

Van Buren Youth Initiative  
Careers in Conservation



## How We Celebrated Earth Day and Arbor Day!

All of us at the Van Buren Conservation District hope you all had an amazing Earth Day and Arbor Day celebrating conservation and our planet this past month! The VBCD started our month with our big annual spring event, the Tree Sale! As always it was a massive hit this year.

With your help, we were able to distribute over 13,000 trees to local landowners, helping to make more habitat for wildlife in southwestern Michigan. That's a huge number, so thank you for helping us with that reforestation work!

Twelve awesome volunteers joined us to wrap tree seedlings and put the pre-orders together, and we couldn't have done it without them!

The VBCD was also able to get out into the community in April to share knowledge and participate in some great community events. VBCD staff spent a lot of time talking to residents to get them excited about nature and their own backyards.

VBCD team member Kalli Marshall participated at the South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals community cleanup Together with other organizations and volunteers over 560 pounds of trash and junk

VBCD's Jena Johnson also recently gave an important and well-attended presentation at the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum. During her presentation, she focused on six well-known invasive plant species currently being sold at greenhouses and nurseries across Michigan that might soon be banned for sale. These plants include the aggressive Callery Pear, Water Lettuce, and Japanese Barberry.

Another one of our teammates, Emily Hickmott, got to spend an afternoon with the after-school program - Van Buren Youth Initiative in Lawrence to talk "Careers in Conservation". They paired an overview of the VBCD's work with a walk in the woods to see how utilizing field guides can be a fun way to learn more about what is around us.

To stay involved with what we have coming up next, click the link below to visit our calendar!

[VBCD Calendar](#)



## Materials Management Planning Demystified

Big things are happening in Van Buren County and you can be involved!

VBCD's Kalli is working with our southwest Michigan neighbors on our Materials Management Plan.

Materials management planning is a program designed to guide the management of a community's materials, with an emphasis on sustainable practices and safe disposal options.

As we work on planning to meet our communities' needs you, too, can share your thoughts and engage with our budding plan. Join us as we guide our future recycling and waste services.

Don't miss your last opportunity to join!

### Geneva Township Hall

📍 62127 County Road 380, Bangor, MI 49013

📅 May 20, 2026 | 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

[Click Here to Learn More](#)





## Recycling Facility Tour

Have you ever wondered what happens when your recycling is hauled away? Join the VBCD to see firsthand!

Elkhart to Recycle Works where all the recycling in southwest Michigan is sorted. VBCD's Kalli is excited to share where our recycling goes and why recycling right is important. Donovan Kelley, Facility Manager will join to show us around.

**RSVP Required, space is limited!**

 June 24, 2026 | 8:45 AM - 1:00 PM

 Meet at Community Mental Health parking lot | 801 Hazen St., Paw Paw, MI 49079

[Click Here to Register](#)

## Mark Your Calendars!

### MAY

- Volunteer Water Monitoring | Sunday, May 3 at 1:00 PM | Lawrence River Park | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Paw Paw Conservation Club Open House | Sunday, May 3 | <https://www.pawpawconservationclub.net/>
- Antwerp Township Seniors & Veterans Expo | Monday, May 4 | [AntwerpTownshipMI.gov](http://AntwerpTownshipMI.gov)
- Electronics Recycling Event - Porter Township | Tuesday, May 5 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Electronics Transfer Station Host Drop-off - Decatur | Saturday, May 9 and Saturday, May 16 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Board Director Nominating Petitions and Certificates of Circulation Due | Monday, May 18 | 4:30 PM | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Materials Management Planning Demystified | Wednesday, May 20 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Memorial Day - office closed | Monday, May 25
- VBCD Board Meeting | Wednesday, May 27 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- VBCD at the Decatur Night Market | Friday, May 29 | [DecaturMI.org](http://DecaturMI.org)

### JUNE

- Recycle Roundup - Paw Paw | Saturday, June 6 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)

- Electronics Transfer Station Host Drop-off - Bangor | Saturday, June 13 and Saturday, June 20 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Presentation at Covert Park Beach & Campground | Saturday, June 20
- Juneteenth National Independence Holiday | Friday, June 19 | office closed
- VBCD Board Meeting | Wednesday, June 24 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Materials Recovery Facility Public Tour | Wednesday, June 24 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)

## JULY

- Independence Day Holiday observed | Friday, July 3 | office closed
- Electronics Recycling Event - City of Hartford | Wednesday, July 8 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Electronics Transfer Station Host Drop-off - Bangor | Saturday, July 11 and Saturday, July 18 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- VBCD Board Meeting | Wednesday, July 15 | [VanBurenCD.org](http://VanBurenCD.org)
- Van Buren Conservation District Annual Meeting & Director Election | Friday, July 17 | 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM | Lawrence Village Park

[Click Here for the Full VBCD Calendar](#)



The VBCD staff is working in the office and from home. You can find staff emails and phone numbers on our website [VanBurenCD.org/About](http://VanBurenCD.org/About) under "Meet Our Staff".

hybrid work setup, so if you are hoping to meet with one us specifically, please contact us ahead of time to set up an appointment.

Photo Caption: **Van Buren Conservation District Board & Staff, 2025**

Left-to-right, third row back: Joey Pietrogallo, Lucas Hartman, Grace Bianchi, Gabriel Francisco, Kyle Mead, Colleen Forestieri, Alex Florian, Erin Fuller

Second row middle: Abbie Bristol, Jena Johnson, Jacob Diljak, Emily Hickmott, Jan Petersen, Lia Will, Kim Sinclair, Kalli Marshall

Front row: Bill VanTassel, Paulette Rybarski, Ron Klein, Carl Druskovich



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Van Buren Conservation District

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