



Engaging Our Community in Caring for Our Environment.

Annual Report

2017-2018



A Letter From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

This year we've noticed an increase in the number of news stories that report on environmental issues and climate change. While there is still much room for improvement, for organizations such as ours, this is a welcome change. We can't say for sure, but it's possible that more frequent stories about climate change and how it is already impacting our daily lives has attracted more people to our work. This year, we received more unsolicited calls about volunteering and interest in our nonprofit than in previous years. As interest, engagement, and motivation increases, the collective commitment of Arlington residents can move us closer to reversing the effects of climate change in our community and our lives.

Twenty-eight also marked a significant milestone for our organization—forty years of improving and enhancing Arlington's natural resources. As you might imagine, we've experienced a few changes during our four decades of existence. Significant milestones, such as this, give us a chance to step back and examine how far we've come as well as a path to establish a course for future success. Our board of directors did just that giving considerable time and thought to what changes might have the most significant impact on our future endeavors. Establishing a clear, concise and resilient approach to communicating who we are, what we do, and how we achieve our mission was viewed as the most critical need to carry us into the future. In 2018, we changed our name and transitioned from Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment to EcoAction Arlington.

Our new name more effectively spotlights the purpose of our efforts. And, our tagline, "Engaging Our Community in Protecting Our Environment," captures the role of the broader community in our programs and our handiwork. Each accomplishment is the result of working with volunteers for the greater good: advancing energy efficiency in Arlington and Alexandria's underserved communities, removing hundreds of bags of litter from our parks and waterways, and supporting hands-on environmental education in classrooms throughout the county. You'll read more about the results of our work aided by volunteers and partnerships in our Achievements section of this report.

We see this time as a period of renewal and new beginnings. Our goal is to expand our reach and increase our impact, and we invite you to join us. Look for more partnerships, more engagement, and more opportunities to get involved in our activities!



Sincerely,

Elenor

Elenor Hodges, Executive Director

The Case for Rebranding ACE to EcoAction Arlington

First impressions are everything. For most of us, we initially become familiar with a business, organization or a product by hearing or seeing its name. Simply put, it is "an identifier." A name tells us what we should expect from a company or at least it should. According to a Nielsen research study, a name can be "one of the most valuable assets a company can possess."



Engaging Our Community in Caring for Our Environment.

As we approached our fortieth anniversary, we wondered if our name—Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment, was accurately communicating what people should expect from our organization. And, so we began the process of researching, polling, and assessing what people thought of our name, whether it accurately represented the work we currently do and whether it would align with our future goals.

What we discovered from some of our most ardent supporters was that

they were often confused by our name. For some, it was unclear what it meant, and others felt it didn't accurately represent the work our organization contributed to the community.

A secondary research report conducted by the George Mason University

Center for Climate Change and the Yale Project on Climate

Change that offered

detailed insight on Americans' viewpoints on the environment across age groups, interests, beliefs, and influences revealed perspectives for and against environmental protection critical to communicating the need for individual actions.

Forty years of service also encompassed forty years of changing communities, priorities, and preferences as well as an expanded portfolio of programs and projects targeted toward protecting Arlington's environ-

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ment. From a singular focus on picking up trash, we were now working in the schools delivering hands-on environmental education to students, partnering to advance the adoption of solar energy, advocating for improved recycling, promoting energy efficiency and much more. As we embraced the need to engage more Arlingtonians in tackling more environmental threats our name and our work were less connected.

It became clear we needed to do a better job of connecting people with our entire story and position the organization for long-term success. We started by defining what we want our brand position to be and how we want people to see us and what we do. The board of directors agreed it was time to strengthen our brand beginning with a name change. Whatever direction we chose, it had to be inclusive. Our organization has always been powered by our partners, volunteers, members, and donors. In addition to more accurately communicating our purpose,

including the force that makes our work possible was a must.

We retired Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment on April 22, 2018, and introduced our new name, new logo, and a new tagline.

The “eco” in our new name, EcoAction Arlington, emphasizes the broader focus on protecting the environment, especially from pollution. Action describes how we engage the community. And, Arlington speaks to who gets involved and the place we support. Our new tagline defines what we do in more detail: Engaging our community in caring for our environment.

We’re excited about reaching more Arlington residents, expanding our work even further to inform Arlingtonians and our neighbors why we must care for our environment, inspire each of us to preserve and enhance our natural resources, and offer easy everyday choices to improve, deliver and sustain our environment for future generations.

2017-2018

Achievements

Year after year, EcoAction Arlington offers straightforward solutions to support the health of our planet, acts as a catalyst to bring community members together to achieve positive outcomes, and reveals the power of individuals to reverse harms to our natural resources. These actions contribute to maintaining clean water and air, and they shine a light on our responsibility and the possibility to improve the health of our planet. When we reflect on these actions, we see progress. While the work of protecting and enhancing our home here on Earth is ongoing, our 2018 achievements show us we're moving in the right direction, making Arlington more sustainable and setting the bar higher for an even better tomorrow.

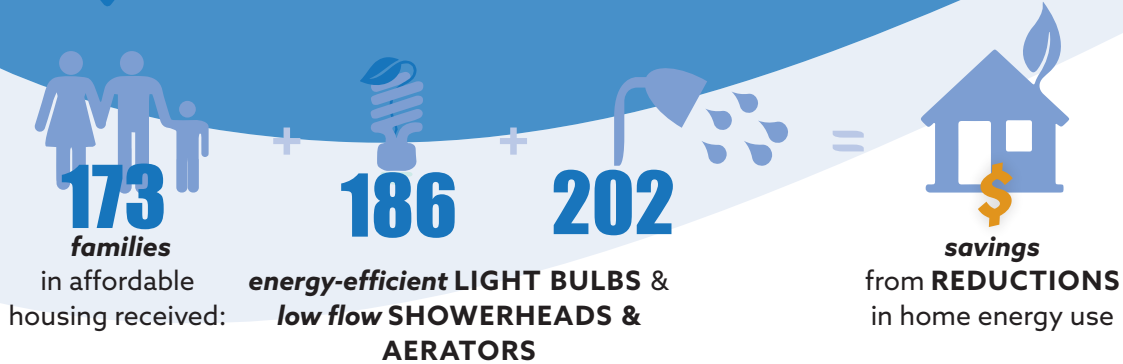




Advancing Energy Efficiency

Energy Masters' unique approach to expanding energy efficiency multiplies its impact throughout our community by training volunteers in hands-on practices that decrease the use of energy and conserve water. Trained volunteers increase their impact by applying their skills in the homes of residents living in affordable housing communities throughout Arlington and Alexandria.

ENERGY MASTERS



THIS SAVES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



26,765

lbs. of CARBON DIOXIDE eliminated from the air each year

=

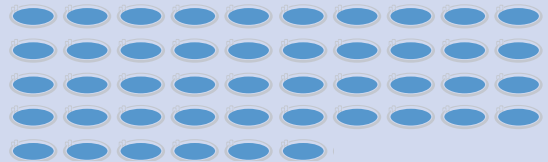
EQUAL TO TAKING 2.6 CARS OFF THE ROAD



1,383,900 GALLONS of WATER saved

= 46

BACKYARD SWIMMING POOLS



FACT

One-third of the 10 million tons of carbon generated by every person *comes from home energy use*, with more than half resulting from heating and cooling.



TIP

Reducing home energy use offers the most significant opportunity to *decrease carbon emissions*.

Advancing Energy Efficiency



HOME ENERGY REBATES

We partnered with Arlington County to help residents increase energy efficiency through the **Home Energy Rebate Program**.



536

*Home Energy
Rebates delivered*



\$200

Average savings
per household
through rebates



8%

REDUCTION
in *energy bills*

Increasing Tree Canopy

Few natural resources can claim the environmental, social, economic, health and energy benefits that trees offer. Each year, the Tree Canopy Fund program expands the county's tree cover, making it possible for hundreds of property owners to get a tree planted. From the reduction of noise, to carbon capture, to energy savings, and happier communities, trees are one of nature's most valuable resources.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Each year this **ELIMINATES**

8,304

POUNDS of CARBON DIOXIDE

CO₂

FACT

Healthy, mature trees add an average of **10%** to your property's value.

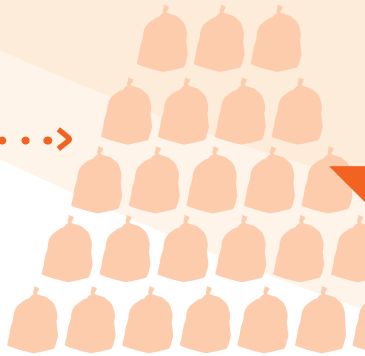
TIP

When you plant a tree on the west side of your home, you can **drop your energy bills** over time. In five years your energy bills could decrease by 3%, and provide savings as high as 12% in 15 years.

Reducing Litter



Removing litter from parks, streams, and along roadways may seem like an inconsequential act, but cleanups prevent polluted materials, chemicals, and debris from endangering our waterways, the soil, and the habitats of animals. Volunteers and environmental advocates take on the dirty work of cleaning up our lands, rivers, and streams, because ignoring it would result in detrimental health consequences for humans, wildlife and our natural resources.



590
bags of trash
REMOVED from
Arlington
streams and
parks

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

18% of ALL LITTER ends up
in streams and waterways.

FACT

Plastic trash is the most detrimental form of debris for the environment



TIP

Adopt a plastic-free lifestyle: carry a reusable cup, take reusable bags to the grocery store, and refuse plastic straws. Get tips on how to decrease your use of single-use plastic on our website.

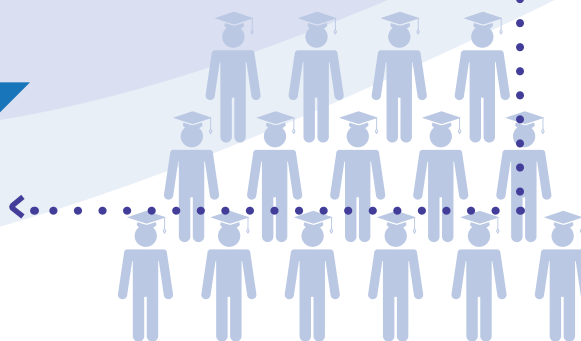
Preparing the Future

Preparing students to become better stewards of our environment is something we take seriously. When students connect with hands-on environmental applications and facts about what actions matter and why, it equips them with lifelong habits that help them become guardians of our planet—today and in the future. We share knowledge about the implications of careless littering, the benefits of reducing, reusing, and recycling, and how using renewable energy can contribute to a better, healthier world.



2,706

STUDENTS took part in
*hands-on energy efficiency
and environmental
activities*



**1 HIGH SCHOOL &
1 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
collaborated with our
R4 Action Group on solid
waste reduction and
recycling activities



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

FACT

Students exposed to environmental education benefit from [active learning](#), [citizenship](#), and [student leadership](#). Youth feel [empowered](#) to share their voice and contribute to their school and community.



TIP

EcoAction Arlington offers many opportunities for families and students to [participate in volunteer activities](#) and students attending high school have [internship opportunities](#), and they can apply to serve as student board members.

Engaging the Community

EcoAction volunteers make our work possible. Many of our achievements would not reach the level of success attained without the support of community members who are committed to improving Arlington's environment. Whether they be individuals, organizations, corporations or families, the in-kind support and volunteer hours devoted to enhancing and safeguarding our natural resources demonstrate a commitment to reversing harmful impacts in support of a healthier and safer planet.



38 ENERGY MASTERS
volunteers trained

61

Neighborhood
storm drains marked



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

882
VOLUNTEERS



3,674
VOLUNTEER
hours worked

FACT

We think **Jane Goodall** states this fact best:
"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make."

TIP

There's no one way to **volunteer** or contribute to improving the environment. Visit our website and **explore these options**: Get Involved, Community Programs, About Us (for board openings), and if you **want to become a member**, click Join.

Biking the Trails to Enhance and Enjoy the Beauty

On Earth Day 2018, a group of dedicated volunteers combined their love of biking with their commitment to preserving Arlington's environment. They set out on their bikes to clean up trash along some of the county's bike trails, continuing the cleanup efforts EcoAction Arlington conducts throughout the year at various sites in the county.

These efforts aid in the reduction of trash that both mar our outdoor experiences and often end up in our streams as pollutants. The idea for this event originated with Allan Shneron, a co-chair of our Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot (R4) Action Group. He loves riding his bike on the series of trails known as the Arlington Loop, and as Earth Day was nearing it occurred to him that it would be a good idea to do something substantive to recognize the meaning of the day.

The Arlington Loop isn't just one trail but a combination of four including the Four Mile Run, the W&OD, Custis and Mount Vernon trails. The Earth Day Cleanup by Bike focused on cleaning up three of these four trails.

EcoAction Arlington collaborated with several organizations including the Washington Area Bike Associa-

tion, Bike Arlington, and the Rails to Trails Conservancy. These organizations joined us in promoting the event. And, the three bike groups provided gloves, jerseys, reusable water bottles, and badges as thank you prizes. Mom's Organic Market provided food for the riders.

Approximately 30 people rode their bikes along The Loop, picking up about 30 bags of trash, which was documented using the Litterati app. Allan is excited about repeating this event. "Being outdoors becomes a spiritual thing—it's good for the soul. Supporting EcoAction Arlington gets me outside and helps the environment; it makes me feel like I'm involved in the community and giving back. That's important to me, and it sets a good example for others to follow."



FEATURE

Nottingham Elementary School Raises the Bar on Recycling

It's been 50 years since recycling began as an organized movement in the U.S., yet, many people remain confused about what can be recycled and which items go where. Four years ago, Arlington County decided to commit to tackling its waste disposal problem by implementing a plan to divert 90 percent of waste from landfills and incinerators by 2038 as part of a Zero Waste plan.

By 2038, today's school-age students will be between 25 and 37 years old and comprise a sizable portion the population who will help to determine the success of the county's Zero Waste plan. What better way to create more awareness about the perils of improper waste disposal than by helping today's youth understand its impact and the benefits of proper recycling, reusing and composting.

To change the current paradigm for recycling and waste disposal, EcoAction's Reduce, Recycle, Reuse, and Rot Action Group (R4) volunteers began working with Arlington County school students to improve solid waste management. Before the team could recommend solutions, they needed to understand the current state of recycling in the schools. After identifying Kenmore Middle School,

Wakefield High School, and Yorktown High School as partners, the team began assessing waste handling at each school.

Several members of the R4 Action Group delved a little deeper by focusing on waste disposal at a single school, Nottingham Elementary. The more intensive process required the team to connect with all members of the school community—teachers, students, administrators, and custodians—offering the team a more accurate perspective of the challenges and opportunities concerning Nottingham's waste disposal habits.

Mimi Shah, an R4 Action Group volunteer, and a Nottingham Elementary School parent worked with other volunteers and school leadership to pilot a program to improve recycling in Arlington schools. This was no cursory exercise: the R4 Action Group went all in, surveying a sample of students at all grade levels, conducting a waste audit, and meeting with key constituent groups like the school's Planet Partners Club, faculty, the custodial staff, the student government association and holding lunch hour discussions on recycling with all grade levels.

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The assessment delivered a mixed outcome revealing clear signs of improvement and easy fixes to improve awareness, demonstrate appropriate actions, and achieve success for Nottingham Elementary School's recycling program. Their work concentrated on specific steps to promote recycling to the Nottingham school community.

The process uncovered an opportunity to multiply impact by developing a toolkit to improve waste disposal within the entire Arlington County School system. Developing a toolkit would not be a turnkey process because it requires some level of customization for individual schools and the need for a person, possibly a teacher, to assume a leadership role in managing the toolkit, as well as the support of teachers who would be open to using the tool. The R4 Action Group also discovered additional uses of their findings that could support the creation of zero waste facilities in the County.

The work of the R4 Action Group exemplifies the impact individuals can make in creating a more sustainable world. Mimi Shah says, "This is just one piece of R4's focus—the

recycling rate in schools is a little low—we think it's an opportunity and it's a ripe community for change. If we can get the kids on board, I think they can be the motivator for change.

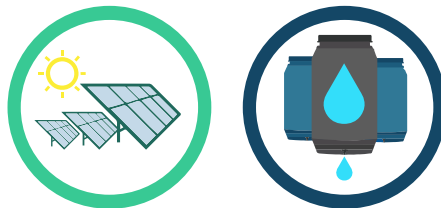
"Teachers have a lot to cover these days, and as community members, I think it's on us to jump in and help on things that there just isn't time to get covered." When you see the potential impact of volunteers delving deeper to improve recycling at one school, it's easier to see how individual actions play a beneficial role in improving the health of our planet, our community, and even show that the county's zero-waste goal may be within reach.



2017-2018

Partnerships

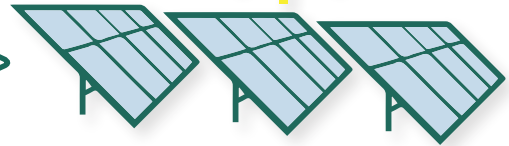
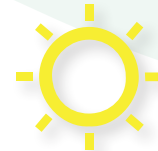
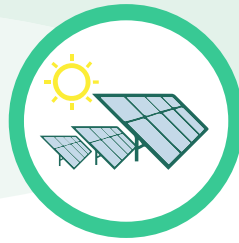
We're strong believers in the power of partnerships. Teaming up with others who also seek to improve the environment extends our mission beyond our existing circle of supporters, volunteers and friends. What could be better than a chance to do more good with partners who share a common goal? Take a look at how our partnerships help strengthen our work and connect us to more people.



Promoting Renewable Energy

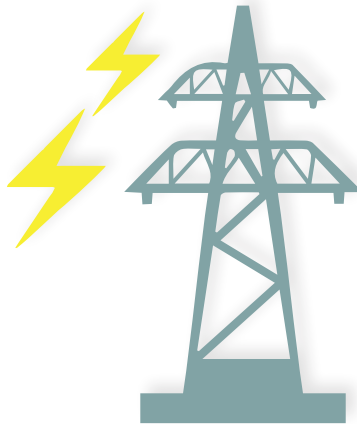


We're building relationships that support and improve Arlington's environment. The Arlington Solar Co-op demystifies the renewable energy transition process for Arlington homeowners. Our partnership with Solar United Neighbors of Virginia and the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy offers expert knowledge, resources, and a collaborative community of members interested in decreasing carbon emissions.



32

solar photovoltaic
systems installed
PRODUCING



220

KILOWATTS
of installed capacity

FACT

Renewable energy sources create very few pollutants. Solar adoption by a broad number of people would substantially decrease the percentage of greenhouse gases, reducing health issues created or exacerbated by air pollution.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



TIP

Transitioning to a renewable energy source like solar not only positively impacts our environment, it delivers savings through lower energy bills and tax incentives.

Conserving & Protecting Water

Our collaborative relationships increase awareness and expand the adoption of water conservation and preservation strategies for local residents.



Combining Efforts to Preserve Water

Water is something we can't live without. Individuals play an important role in keeping our water safe by minimizing polluted runoff and conserving water use. When municipalities and organizations like the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, EcoAction Arlington, Clean Virginia Waterways, Arlington County, the City of Alexandria, the City of Falls Church, the Reston Association, Fairfax and Arlington chapters of Virginia Naturalists, Fairfax County Public Schools, and the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services join forces the safety and availability of our water supply improve across the region.

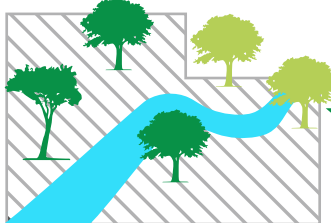


RAIN BARRELS SOLD



37

PROJECTS COMPLETED



15,755
SQUARE FEET OF
LAND IMPROVED

THE STORMWATERWISE PROGRAM

The EcoAction Arlington and the Arlington County Department of Environmental Services partnership helps homeowners enhance the aesthetics of their home and deliver innovative options to reduce the transference of pollutants from paved surfaces into our waterways.



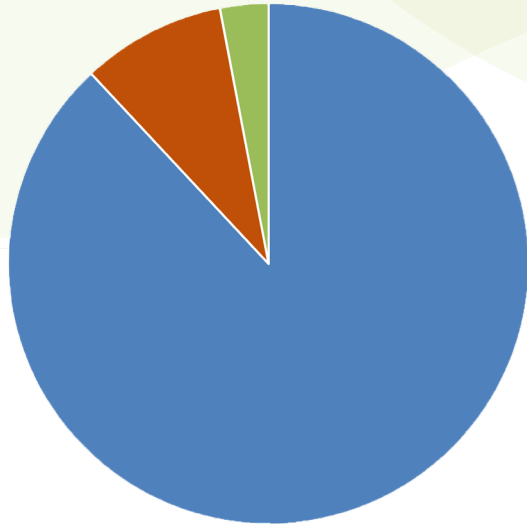
FACT

Stormwater runoff is the number one cause of water pollution.

TIP

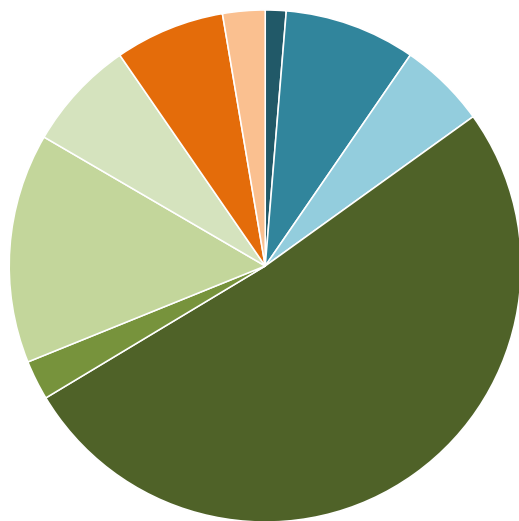
Reducing stormwater runoff improves the quality of our water and decreases the dangers flooding causes to public health.

2017-2018 Financials



FY18 Revenue

- Arlington County **88%**
 - Individuals **9%**
 - Businesses and organizations **3%**
- Total \$630,488**



FY18 Expenses

Environmental Education 15%

- School Projects
- Public Projects
- Communications

Community Engagement 75%

- Action Campaigns
- Service Projects
- Tree Canopy Fund
- Energy Masters

Support 10%

- Management & Governance
- Fundraising

Total \$605,767

2017-2018 Partnerships

EcoAction Arlington appreciates the support of all our sponsors, funders and partners.

350 Fairfax

Alexandria Housing Trust

Alice Ferguson Foundation

Amicus Green Building Center

Amplify for Change

Amy Thomas Design

Anderson Tax

Anya Felch Design

Arbelo Apartments

Arlington Chamber of Commerce Community Action Committee

Arlington Chamber of Commerce Sustainability Committee

Arlington Cinema and Drafthouse

Arlington Community Development Fund

Arlington County Civic Federation

Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development

Arlington County Department of Environmental Services

Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation

Arlington County Public Schools Sustainability Advisory Committee

Arlington County Urban Forestry Commission

Arlington Dentistry by Design

Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE)

Arlington Public Libraries

Arlington Public Schools

Arlington Public Schools School Health Advisory Committee

Arlington Public Schools Science Program

Arlington Thrive

Bee's Wrap

Ben & Jerry's

Bike to Work Day

BikeArlington

Billy Buck and Company

Capital City Sound

Casual Adventure

City of Alexandria Office of Housing

Clean Fairfax Council

Clean Virginia Waterways

Cook Bros.

Dental Lace

Donaldson Run Civic Association

Eagle Bank

EarlySpace

EcoBags

EcoCaters

Elizabeth's Gone Raw

Enventive Consulting

Fairlington Civic Association

Falls Church Distillers

Fillmore Gardens Apartments

First Citizens Bank

Friends of Accotink Creek

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Greater Prince William Climate
Action Network

Green America

Greenstreet Gardens

Harris Teeter

Heavy Seas Ale

Heritage Brewing Company

Hogblast! Productions

Home Energy Medics

JBG SMITH

JDM Associates

KeepCup

KPMG

Life Without Plastic

Longview Terrace Apartments

Loving Cup Vineyard and
Winery

Miss Earth USA Pageant

MOMs Organic Market

Mount Olivet United Methodist
Church

National Park Service

National Wildlife Federation

Northern Virginia Community
College

Northern Virginia Rain Barrel
Program

Northern Virginia Soil and Wa-
ter Conservation District

Northern Virginia Trash Action
Work Force

Northrop Grumman

NOVA Parks

NoVA PRISM

Pacers Running

Prince George's County
Materials Recycling Facility

Rails to Trails

Sekoyia

Sierra Club, Mt. Vernon
Chapter

Simply Straws

Smithsonian Institution,
National Museum of Natural
History

Solar United Neighbors of
Virginia

St. Matthews United Methodist
Church

Stantec

Sushi-Zen

The Nature Conservancy
Transurban



TreeStewards

Unitarian Universalist Church
of Arlington

US Department of Defense

US Patent and Trademark
Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Department of
Forestry

Virginia Dept. of Conservation
and Recreation, Division of
Natural Heritage

Volunteer Arlington

Walker Chapel

Washington Area Bicyclist
Association

Waterford, Inc.

Whole Foods

Wild Birds Unlimited

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Stay Connected

Thank you for making 2018 a year of notable achievements for EcoAction Arlington. Each year your contributions—financial, in-kind, and volunteer—move us a little closer toward our vision: All Arlingtonians are collectively engaged in creating a sustainable community. Our primary focus is to make a difference for the greater good of the Arlington community and to improve the health of our planet. No other conservation organization is solely working to fortify Arlington's environment. We're counting on your continued support to help us engage with more residents and to expand our work. Please help us continue enhancing and preserving our natural resources by contributing financially and supporting upcoming events and volunteer activities.

Here's how you can help:

INCREASE your annual giving

BECOME a monthly donor

GIVE A GIFT of an EcoAction Arlington membership

GET INVOLVED ... volunteer!

SUBSCRIBE to our e-newsletter and blog

ENGAGE with us on social media





Engaging Our Community in Caring for Our Environment.

3308 S. Stafford Street, Arlington, VA 22206

www.ecoactionarlington.org

Combined Federal Campaign #83504