

Wellesley Natural Resources Commission

Insights from Outside

An Update from the NRC
April 2017

NRC Launches Grow Green Wellesley Campaign

With our [Landscapes for Living](#) event on May 13 (see below), the NRC launches our new **Grow Green Wellesley** campaign to help Wellesley residents find beautiful and healthy solutions for their lawns and gardens.

Each month, we'll feature events, tips, and information on how to create a green lawn, a gorgeous garden, and a safe and healthy home environment without the use of harmful chemicals.



[Doug Tallamy](#) to speak on transforming your garden with native plants on May 13!

Saturday, May 13: Join Eco-Experts to Learn How You Can Transform Your Lawn and Garden!

Whether you're a beginning gardener or a long-time green thumb, join us for [Landscapes for Living: A Forum on Eco-Friendly Gardening and Lawn Care](#), on Saturday, May 13, 10:30 am to 3:00 pm, at the Wellesley Free Library.

Keynote Speakers:

- **Dr. Doug Tallamy**, author of the book [Bringing Nature Home](#), on transforming your home garden with native plants.
- **Chip Osborne** of [Osborne Organics](#) on caring for your lawn organically without harmful chemicals. Chip developed the organic lawn care program for the Town of Wellesley.

How-To Workshops:

- **Backyard Composting: Everyone Can Do It!**, Ann McGovern, EPA
- **Gardening with Ornamental Edibles**, [Home Harvest](#)
- **Landscaping for Bees and Pollinators**, [The Best Bees Company](#)

Wellesley's own **Cricket Vlass**, landscape planner for the Department of Public Works, will be

on hand to explain to you can learn by taking a soil sample in your yard. You can also order an [Earth Machine](#) compost bin at a bulk purchase price. (As Cricket says, "Everyone in Wellesley should be composting!") And enjoy "The Art of Nature," an exhibit featuring 17 local artists, presented by [Wellesley Women Artisans](#).

This event is FREE and open to the public.

Register before May 12 to be eligible for prizes, including a book signed by Doug Tallamy, a professionally-designed patio planter, a gift from [New England Wildflower Society](#), and more. Co-sponsored by the NRC, Health Department, Recreation Department, Wellesley Free Library, and Sustainable Wellesley.

[Click here to learn more and sign up!](#)



Order your rain barrel before May 28

Order a Rain Barrel for June 3 Pick Up!

Using a rain barrel to collect rainwater conserves energy, reduces storm water runoff and pollution, and may even help you save money on your water bill. The NRC has arranged a community discount of 40% off the retail price from the [Great American Rain Barrel Company](#). Residents can purchase a green, brown, or gray rain barrel for \$69; an unpainted barrel is \$64.

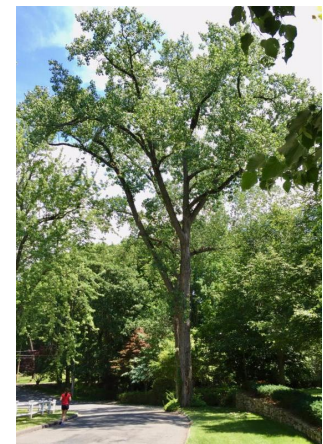
Rain barrels will be ready for pick up on Saturday, June 3, 2017, 9:00 to 11:00 am, at the Wellesley Department of Public Works, 30 Municipal Way. Please do not order if you are not able to arrange for pick up.

[Click here to order](#) or call (800) 251-2352. Orders must be placed by May 28, 2017, at 5:00 pm.

Please Avoid Spraying Trees for Winter Moths

Invasive winter moth populations continue to decline in Wellesley thanks to thousands of moth-killing parasitic flies released by the Town as part of an on-going study with entomologists from UMass Amherst Extension. Wellesley has had the most successful results among the 17 sites in the first phase of the study. **You can help by not spraying your trees** unless they have already suffered significant moth damage and won't survive another infestation. Spraying trees kills the parasitic flies that control the invasive moths!

[Click here to learn more about the predator fly program](#)



Spraying trees kills beneficial flies that help control winter moth!



Bring Your Own Bag: Wellesley Bag Bylaw Takes Effect for All Retailers on April 12

No more plastic shopping bags in Wellesley as of April 12! One year after the bag bylaw was approved by Wellesley Town Meeting, the measure takes effect for all retailers in town. Paper shopping bags are now required to be fully recyclable and made of at least 40 percent post-consumer recycled content.

The Health Department is enforcing this new bylaw. Businesses not in compliance will receive a written warning, followed by a \$50 fine for a first violation after the notice, and a \$100 fine for a second violation and any subsequent violations. (Business owners may file for a six-month extension, as needed.)

[Click here to learn more about the Wellesley bag bylaw!](#)

What's Next for Gas Leaks in Wellesley



On March 21, the NRC organized and co-sponsored a public forum on gas leaks in Wellesley, drawing more than 150 people to the main library. The Board of Selectmen presided as experts explained why gas leaks - mostly made up of methane - are dangerous to our health and our environment.

Nathan Phillips of Boston University spoke on the scope of the problem, the impact on climate change, and the damage to trees. **Audrey Schulman** of [HEET](#) discussed efforts to improve coordination between towns and utility companies to fix the leaks. NRC board member **Dr. Regina LaRocque** described the health impact of gas infrastructure and the link between methane leaks and respiratory disease such as asthma. We also heard from National Grid representative **Sue Fleck** concerning the company's plans to address the problem. [Click here for a full video of the program.](#)

Next steps will include follow-up with National Grid to ensure that they continue to improve the speed of leak repair and coordination with scheduled street paving. The NRC is also exploring the option of conducting an independent survey of the leaks in town, and an analysis of the content of the gas that is emitted.

If you smell gas in Wellesley, call National Grid at 800-233-5325 - or call 911!

[Click here to see a map of the gas leaks in Wellesley in 2016](#)

[Click here for the video of the March 21 gas leaks forum](#)

[Click here for the slides shown at the March 21 the forum](#)



Packed house for the public forum on gas leaks on March 21.



The Selectmen presided as experts outlined the problem and potential solutions.



Sue Fleck of National Grid gave an overview of the company's efforts to address Wellesley gas leaks.

NRC Joins Effort Asking Gov. Baker to Drop Support for More Gas Pipeline Projects

Recently, [the NRC joined a group of 74 conservation commissions in signing a letter](#) authored by Eugene Benson, Executive Director of the [Massachusetts Association of Conservation](#)

[Commissions](#), asking Governor Charlie Baker to drop his support for building more costly and environmentally unsound fracked-gas pipelines. The letter called upon Governor Baker to invest in renewable sources of energy and increased energy efficiency rather than encouraging construction of more fossil fuel infrastructure that will increase greenhouse gas emissions and scar the natural landscape.

"The gas companies should fix the 16,000 gas leaks in our state instead of expanding dangerous natural gas pipelines and [destroying our public land to build them](#)," said **Lise Olney**, chair of the NRC. "We have 193 gas leaks right here in Wellesley that are killing our trees and contributing to global warming."

In February, [Synapse Energy Economics released an independent study](#) projecting a major drop in natural gas use in New England under current state renewable energy policies. Expensive new pipeline infrastructure does not make sense in the face of dropping demand and the high rate of lost and wasted gas from leaks throughout the state.

[Click here to read the letter to Governor Baker](#)

Spring Volunteer Opportunities!



Springtime brings wood frogs back to local vernal pools.

Monitor a Vernal Pool This Spring

Help the NRC conduct an informal wildlife survey at our local vernal pools. These fascinating habitats are crucial to the survival of native amphibians and other small invertebrates. Listen for wood frogs, search for egg masses, and help monitor wood frogs and salamanders as they begin their annual migration to vernal pools to breed.

[Click here to contact the NRC for more information!](#)

April 29: Celebrate Earth Day at the Charles River Cleanup in Wellesley!

April 2017 is "Keep Massachusetts Beautiful Month!" You can do your part on **Saturday, April 29, from 9 am to 12:00 pm**, by joining the NRC for the annual **Earth Day Charles River Cleanup**, sponsored by the Charles River Watershed Association. Each year more than 3,000 local volunteers from Wellesley and neighboring communities pitch in to protect the river we love. Bring your family and friends, pick up litter and enjoy a day on the water. Clean up supplies, snacks and t-shirts are provided by the NRC.



Volunteers collect trash from the riverbank at last year's Charles River Cleanup.

[Click here to sign up by email](#)

**Dr. Regina LaRocque Elected to the NRC
New Staff Members Join Our Department**



Dr. Regina LaRocque was elected to the NRC in the Town Election on March 7, 2017. Regina is an infectious disease specialist at Mass General Hospital.



Julie Meyer joins the NRC staff as Wetlands Administrator; jmeyer@wellesleyma.gov.



Danielle Marini is the new administrative assistant for the NRC; nrc@wellesleyma.gov.

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Events

NRC events and those of NRC committees appear in **bold**.

- April 11: Sustainable Wellesley screening of the film "[Cowsspiracy](#)," 7:30 pm, Showcase Cinema Deluxe at Legacy Place, Dedham.
- **April 12: NRC Meeting, 6:00 pm (before Annual Town Meeting), Wellesley Middle School, Room 319.**
- **April 13: Wetlands Protection Committee Meeting, 6:30 pm, NRC office, Town Hall.**
- **April 25: Wellesley's Green Collaborative Meeting, 9:15 to 11:30 am, Wakelin Room, Wellesley Free Library.**
- April 27-30: [Friends of the Wellesley Free Libraries Spring Book Sale](#), Wakelin Room, Wellesley Main Library.
- **April 29: Earth Day Charles River Cleanup in Wellesley, 9:00 to 12:00 pm. [Click here to register and receive location information.](#)**
- **April 30: Wellesley Trails Committee 2017 Spring Trails Walk, 10:00 am, Carisbrook Reservation.**
- **May 13: Landscapes for Living: A Forum on Eco-Friendly Gardening and Lawn Care, 10:30 am to 3:00 pm, Wellesley Free Library.**

Web Site

NRC Meeting Agendas

Permit Applications

Community Gardens

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Wellesley Natural Resources
Commission
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SIGN UP FOR EMAILS



