



Sustainability Guide

for Richfield Residents



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Sustainability Guide for Richfield Residents	1
Letter from the Mayor	1
Letter from the City Manager	1
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy	2
Conserving energy use in your home	2
Renewable energy options for homes	3
Home electrification	3
Transportation	4
Metro Transit	4
Paratransit	4
EV Charging Stations	5
Bike routes	5
Bicycle education and safety	6
Natural Resource Management & Green Spaces	7
Rain barrels	7
Rain gardens	8
Sustainable lawns	9
Creating habitat for wildlife	10
Invasive plants and pests	11
Wood Lake Nature Center	12
Waste Reduction and Management	13
Curbside recycling	13
Organic waste recycling	13
Composting at home	14
Recycling drop-off locations	15
Thrift stores	15
Donations/Waste Reduction	16
Local and Healthy Food	17
Growing your own fruits and vegetables	17
Backyard Fowl	18
Richfield Farmers Market	19



Introduction

■ Sustainability Guide for Richfield Residents

Do you ever find yourself wondering...

- How can I reduce my energy use in my home?
- Where in Richfield can I charge my electric car?
- What plants can I grow in my yard to attract pollinators?
- What can I put in my organics recycling curbside bin?
- Am I allowed to keep chickens in Richfield?

You will find the answer to these questions and many more here, in the Richfield Sustainability Guide. This guide is meant to provide a quick reference for Richfield residents' everyday sustainability questions, including facts, tips, and references with further information. The guide was written by the Richfield Sustainability Commission in partnership with city staff with the goal of saving residents time by providing a 'one-stop shop' for locally-relevant sustainability information.

Thank you to Commissioners Jeremy Barthels, Helen Burk, Adam Burnside, Santwana Dasgupta, Matt Dobratz, Craig Heinen, Amanda Kueper, Amanda McKnight, and Logan Thein and Sustainability Specialist Rachel Lindholm for their work in creating and sharing this document.



Letter from the Mayor

Thank you so much to the Richfield Sustainability Commission and city staff for sharing this Sustainability Guide with the community. Working together, we can make a difference for our planet. Every action helps – no matter how small. Many of us have already enjoyed the benefits of the Richfield Farmers Market or Wood Lake Nature Center. Now we can learn about backyard fowl or creating habitat for wildlife. It is great to have a one-stop resource for information about everything from bike routes to organics/recycling. I am looking forward to learning more about sustainable lawns and renewable energy options. I hope you find something of interest as well.

— **Mary Supple**



Letter from the City Manager

Environmentalism and sustainability have been important to me since I was a kid. I grew up camping and canoeing and my parents worked on environmental efforts through the Sierra Club, Rails to Trails, and the Citizens' Climate Lobby. I am grateful to now work to advance progress on sustainability as city manager. Sustainability isn't just a buzzword in Richfield; it's a deeply held value of many residents, staff, and community members. By embracing sustainable practices, we safeguard our environment and enhance our quality of life and economic vitality. I am excited to see the variety of resources available from many partners and to share this knowledge with as many Richfield residents as possible.

— **Katie Rodriguez**

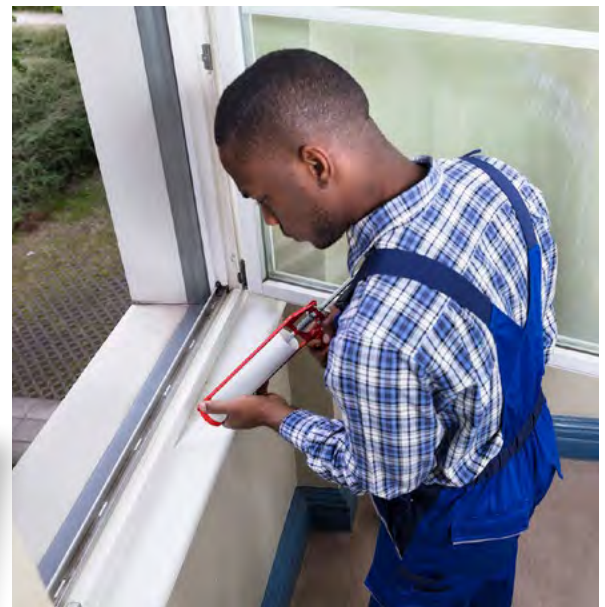
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

■ Conserving energy use in your home

If your home is not properly insulated and sealed, you could be spending much more than you need to on heating and cooling costs. There are also types of lighting that use less electricity and ways to reduce how often your water heater needs to kick in. Conserving energy goes much farther than just turning out the light when you leave a room!

- Richfield will cover half the cost of a “home energy audit” to test the insulation in your home and provide energy saving items like LED bulbs, weatherstripping, low-flow faucet heads, and more. Learn more [here](#).
- Simple ways to save energy!
- Program your thermostat to not work so hard when you’re not home or are sleeping
- Pull the shades on sunny summer days or turn on a fan to save on cooling costs
- Replace any old light bulbs with LEDs
- Wash your clothes in cold water
- Set your water heater to no hotter than 120 degrees
- Unplug electronics when not in use

[Click for a full list of energy savings tips](#)



Drafty windows?

Most people assume window replacement is the place to start but it is expensive and not the most effective first solution. Read more [here](#).



■ Renewable energy options for homes

There are several renewable energy options for residents depending on their specific lot, budget, and project desires. These include more labor and cost intensive projects like geothermal or solar as well as signing up to participate in off site renewable programs. Check out [this guide](#) for more information on installing solar at your home!

“With just a few clicks several years ago, I signed up my home for Windsource. Now that whole time I’ve known my electricity usage isn’t contributing to burning more fossil fuels. It only costs a couple extra dollars a month, which my family thinks is worth it.”

— **Ben Whalen, Richfield resident and City Council member**

Did you know?

You don’t need to install solar panels or a windmill on your property to take advantage of renewable energy! You can sign up for [Xcel Energy’s “Renewable Connect”](#) or [“Solar Rewards Community”](#) to source your electricity from wind & solar farms.

■ Home electrification

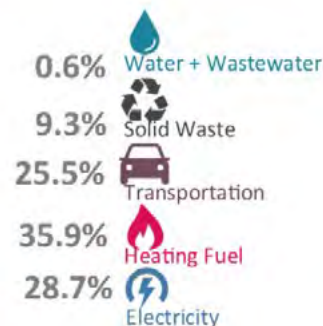
The highest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Richfield - above electricity and transportation - is the natural gas used to heat and cook in our buildings. As the sources of electricity become increasingly renewable and carbon-free, an important step for all our homes will be to switch from appliances powered with fossil fuels to electric ones like heat pumps and electric ovens. This can seem expensive but recent grant funding may cover up to half the cost of new electric appliances. The next time you replace an appliance, consider going electric!

Did you know?

Even before electrification, weatherization projects can help you save money and energy usage. Insulation and air sealing saves 18% in heating and cooling costs in the average Minnesota home (Source: Energy Star).

A great resource is [“Electrify Everything”](#) hosted by the Center for Energy & Environment. It includes introductions to the topic, descriptions of the different kinds of appliances, and information about rebates and grant funding to make it affordable!

City-Wide GHG by Sector



Check out Richfield’s citywide greenhouse gas emissions. Would you have guessed the breakdown shown here?

Transportation

■ Metro Transit

MetroTransit, operated by the Metropolitan Council, is a comprehensive public transportation system that operates throughout the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. MetroTransit offers riders the ability to quickly, reliably and affordably move about the Twin Cities along one of their many buses and light-rail trains. Whether commuting for work or attending events downtown, MetroTransit is an efficient, more sustainable, way to get to your desired destination.

The opening of the D-Line in December 2022 marked the exciting conclusion of a 5-year, \$75 million investment in the expansion of BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) throughout Richfield. BRT is an effort to combine the traditional advantages of rail systems with the ease and usability of bus systems. By providing passengers with faster, more reliable, and more comfortable experience we aim to increase MetroTransit usage across the region, Richfield included. This shift to more eco-friendly means of transit not only lowers greenhouse gas emissions but also contributes to cleaner air, reduced traffic congestion, and a healthier environment for generations to come. This exciting addition to our transit system complements the Orange Line, which opened in late 2021, connecting the South suburbs, through Richfield to downtown Minneapolis.

Plan your next trip [here](#)!



Did you know?

There is an app for that! The **MetroTransit app** allows you to track schedules, plan your trip, and purchase tickets directly from your smartphone. Making your ride even more convenient, and 'greener' than it already was!

■ Paratransit

For individuals with disabilities or people with permanent or temporary mobility limitations, there are paratransit options available in Richfield. Metro Mobility is a shared curb-to-curb service that is operated by the Metropolitan Council. While you must make arrangements directly with the service in advance, it is a useful, affordable public transit option.

DARTS is a private nonprofit that operates throughout the Twin Cities, they similarly offer door-to-door pickup services for transportation to medical appointments and other essential activities. Affordable and easy to book, DARTs also runs several transit 'loops' throughout the Twin Cities.

To learn more and book your rides with MetroMobility [here](#).

Book your rides with DARTS [here](#).



Image: metrocouncil.org



■ EV Charging Stations

The ability to charge an electric vehicle is a major point of consideration for those exploring a purchase. Generally speaking there are 3 main types of charging for your EV:

- **Level 1** – The lowest level charge, often used for overnights at home, this uses a traditional 120-volt household outlet.
- **Level 2** – Significantly quicker than Level 1, this charging method is also for at home use, but requires a 240-volt outlet.
- **DC Fast Charging** – The fastest charging option, and most common in ‘public’ charging, this type of charging can often fully charge your vehicle in 30-minutes or less.
- **In Richfield there are currently two public charging locations.** One at the Hennepin County Library at Augsburg Park (7100 Nicollet Ave), and another at Richfield Bloomington Honda (500 W. 78th St.). Both charging options are part of the ChargePoint Network.
- **Charging at Home?** Remember to check with your electric company on what credits or discounts may be available to you for specific charger installation costs.
- **Don’t know where to charge?** Download the Chargepoint app to find public charging options wherever you go and pay for your charge. [Plugshare](#) also has a map of charging stations across the world!
- **Interested in learning more** about EVs and potential tax credits associated with a purchase? Check out [federal](#) and [state](#) resources.



■ Bike routes

Richfield’s Bicycle Master Plan is helping to safely connect residents of the City with its many amenities. Currently, there are about 29 existing miles of bike routes for residents who want to peddle to parks, shopping, and restaurants—with about 24 miles of additional routes coming! The additional bike routes will be placed on the streets that have undergone the mill and overlay project.

Additionally, Richfield has a bike park at Taft Park, a partnership with Three Rivers Park District, which has different off-road bike features, like berms, rock features, rollers, jumps, pump track (including a smaller one for the tots), sloped wood decking, and more.



[City of Richfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning](#)

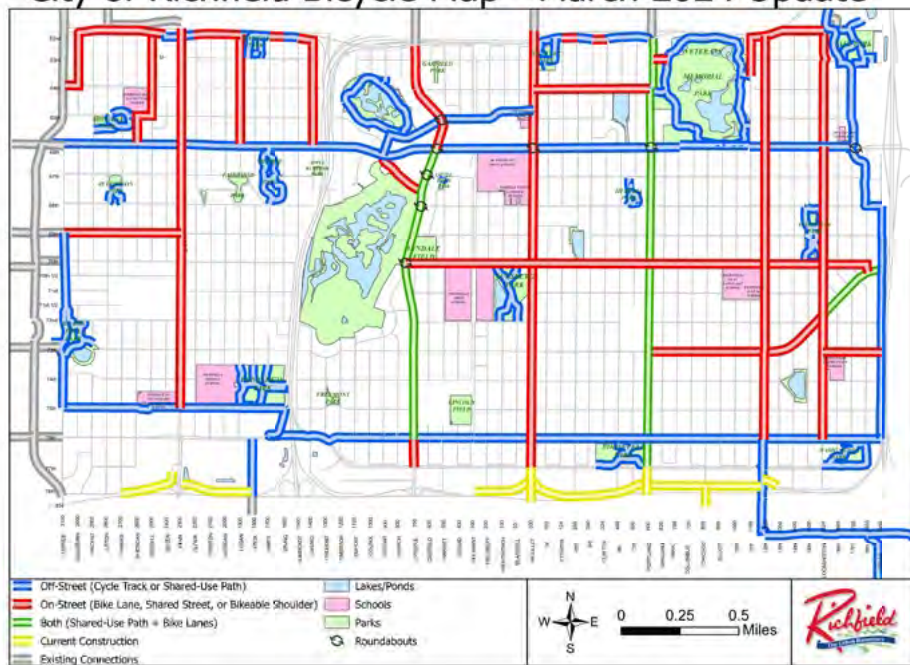
[Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail](#)

[Taft Bike Park](#)

[Bike Walk Richfield](#)

The Richfield Bicycle Master Plan was approved by the City Council on June 12, 2012. The full document is available [here](#).

City of Richfield Bicycle Map - March 2024 Update



Did you know?

E-bike rebates are coming to MN in 2024!
Learn more [here](#).

Other resources:

[Richfield Sweet Streets](#)

MN Dept. of Transportation:
[bicycle safety and education](#)

[Commuter biking resources](#)
from 494 Commuter Services

■ Bicycle education and safety

Safe biking in an urban area requires a combination of awareness, preparation, and adherence to traffic rules. Always wear a properly fitted helmet for protection and make sure your bike is well-maintained. Stay visible by wearing bright clothing and using lights, especially during low-light conditions. Plan your route beforehand, favoring bike lanes and designated paths whenever possible.

When on the road, follow traffic laws and signals, signal your turns, and stay in the correct lane. Be cautious at intersections, yielding the right of way when necessary. Maintain a safe distance from parked cars to avoid getting doored. Stay vigilant and anticipate the actions of pedestrians, motorists, and other cyclists. Avoid distractions like using your phone while biking. Lastly, always be courteous and patient, promoting a harmonious coexistence with other road users.



Did you know?

Minnesota's Department of Transportation has a handy [pocket guide](#) to state bicycle laws and best practices.

Natural Resource Management & Green Spaces

■ Rain barrels

Rain barrels come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but the most common (and best value) are 50 gallon, food-grade drums which can be found online and in stores. Use rain barrels to water trees, plants, grass, and gardens. They help lower your water bill and can be a crop-saver during a drought.

The City of Richfield recommends watering your lawn and garden in the morning and/or at night. By watering your plants during these cooler periods, it allows the soil and the vegetation to more effectively absorb the water. This method will help you reduce your water consumption and get your plants the vital replenishment they need during our hot summers.



Did you know?

It's common for about 1/8" inch of rain to fall each hour during a moderate rainstorm. That means that a 500 square foot roof can fill a properly installed 50-gallon rain barrel in about one hour.

Resources:

[Richfield Utilities and Water Resources](#)

[Local Rain Barrel Resources](#)

[How to Install a Rain Barrel](#)



"We have 8 rain barrels that we installed ourselves on our property. We use them to water our gardens, grass, and apple trees. With the dry summers we have been having, it's been imperative to keeping our water bill manageable."

– **Craig Heinen, Richfield Sustainability Commissioner**





Rain garden photo courtesy of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

■ Rain gardens

A rain garden is a depressed area in the landscape that collects rain water from a catchment area such as a roof or driveway and allows it to soak into the ground. Planted with grasses and flowering perennials, rain gardens can be a cost effective and beautiful way to reduce runoff from your property. Rain gardens can also help provide food and shelter for wildlife. A rain garden can mimic the natural absorption and pollutant removal activities of a forest, meadow, or a prairie and absorb runoff more efficiently.

Since runoff can contain high levels of pollutants, State

Resources:

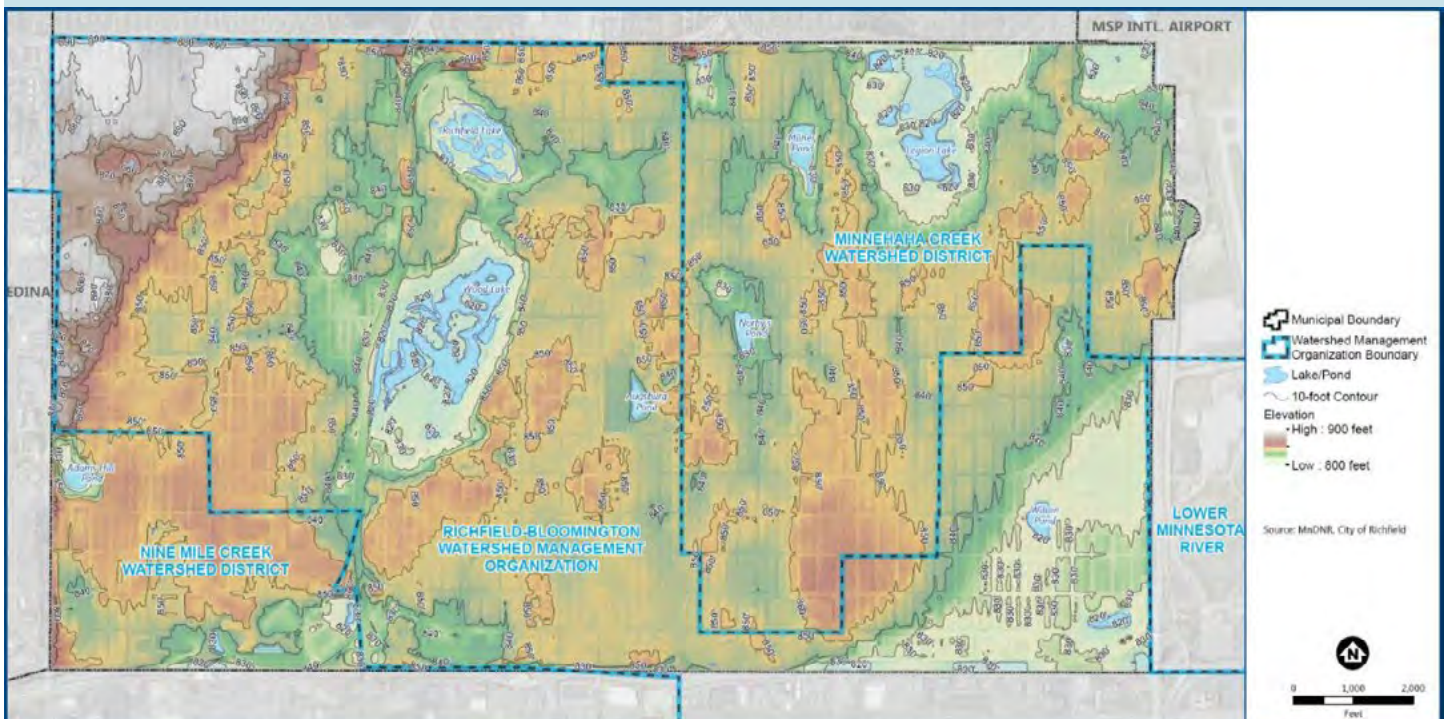
[Call Before You Dig](#)
[Richfield Rain Garden Info](#)
[Keeping Rainwater in Your Yard](#)

regulations limit infiltration of stormwater in areas where groundwater vulnerability is a concern. Infiltration as a constructed stormwater management practice is prohibited within a drinking water supply management area (DWSMA) classified as having high or very high vulnerability, **unless** a regulated MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Permittee performs or approves an engineering review sufficient to ensure functional treatment and to prevent adverse impacts to groundwater.

Richfield's DWSMA covers a significant portion of the City. Residents interested in installing a rain garden should contact City staff to determine whether infiltration is permitted in their area. In areas where infiltration is prohibited, alternative practices such as bioswales, native landscaping, and impervious surface reduction can provide similar benefits to rain gardens.

Did you know?

Richfield contains parts of three watershed districts: [Nine Mile Creek](#), [RBWMO](#), and [Minnehaha Creek](#). Visit their websites to learn more about their various grant programs and resources.

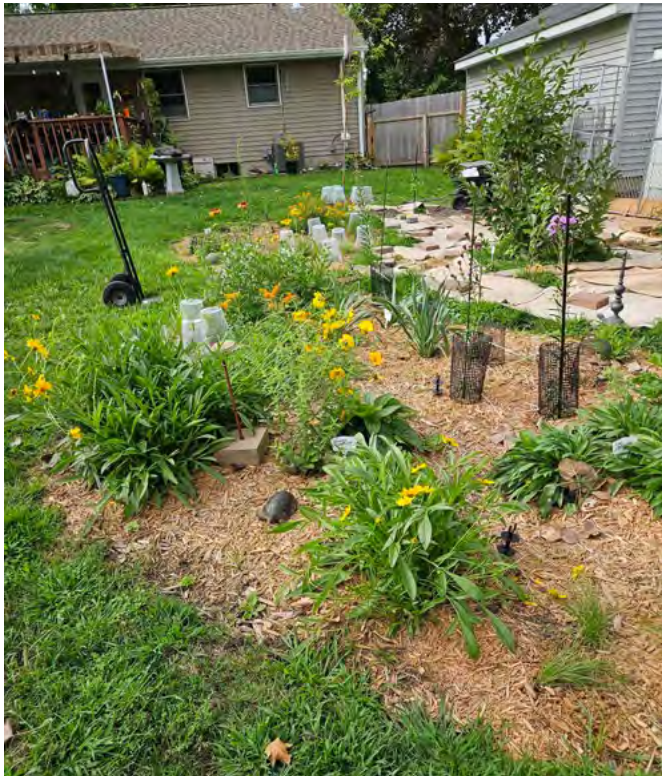


■ Sustainable lawns

Approximately 76.5% of Minnesota is privately owned land. In the metro area, approximately 20% of all treated drinking water is used outdoors, with a majority of this being used on lawns and landscapes. Nationally 200 million gallons of gas, a fossil fuel, is used for mowing and 70 million pounds of pesticide per year is

used for lawn upkeep.

A lot of the water lands on impervious surfaces and goes directly into our storm water systems. Research shows that turfgrass is essentially an ecological dead zone, especially with the fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides many spray on it.



There's an estimated 40 million acres of turf grass in the U.S., much of that concentrated in urban and suburban locations, so there exists a huge opportunity to replace that with much-needed habitat and a network of corridors to protect and support our wildlife, with native plants being key. Native plants and trees are drought-resistant, stabilize soil, provide water filtration, and sequester carbon at higher rates than non-native plants. Additionally, they provide habitat for native pollinators, including specialists who depend on specific plants for their survival.

Resources:

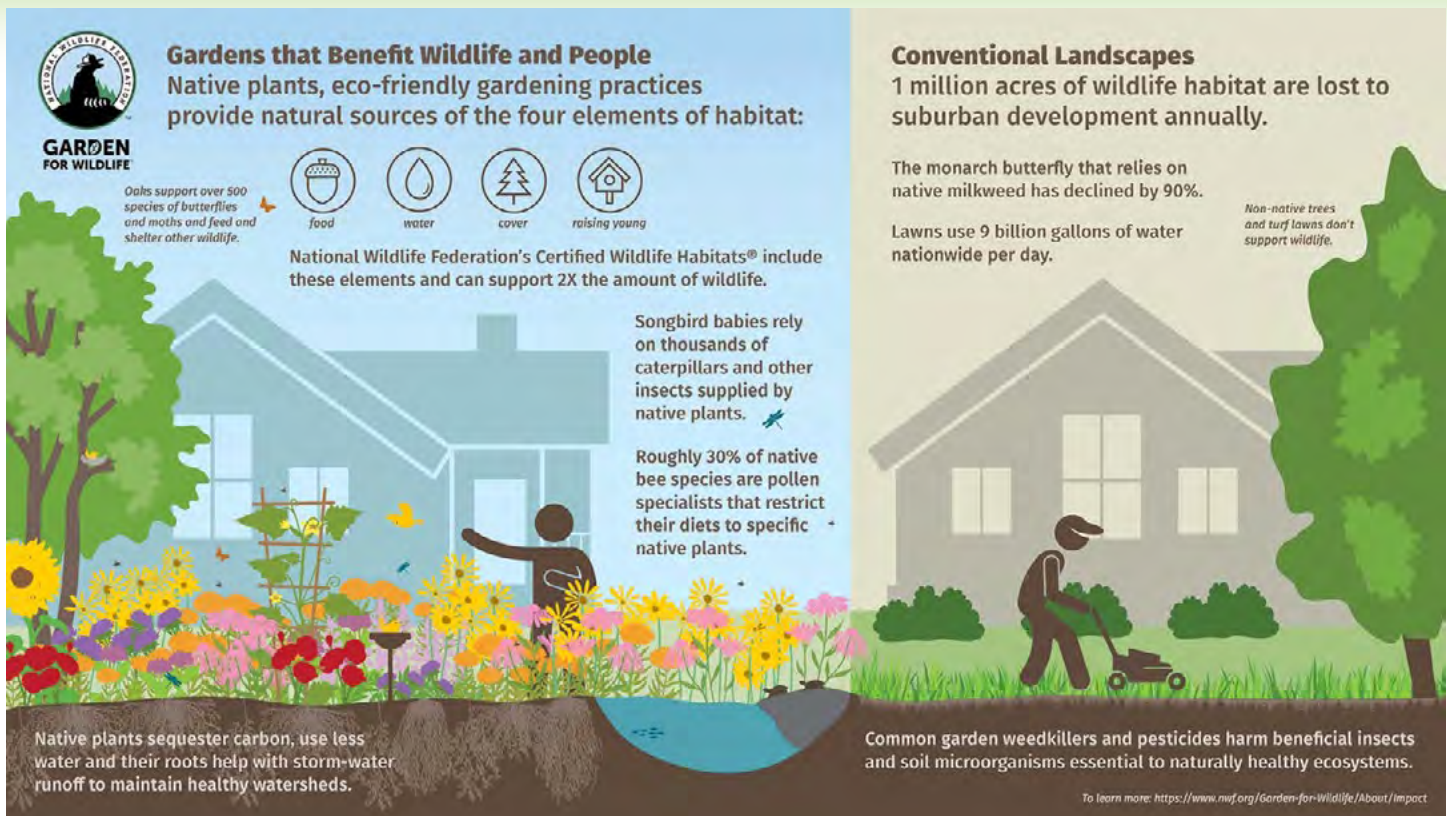
- Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources runs the *Lawns to Legumes* program which offers a combination of workshops, coaching, planting guides and cost-share funding (individual support grants) for installing pollinator-friendly native plantings in residential lawns. Find details at the bottom of [this webpage](#).
- Join the [Facebook group Atlawns of Richfield and Bloomington](#) where complete novices to experts support each other in moving towards sustainable yards. You can also find more information [here](#).
- The metro area chapter of nationally recognized Wild Ones is housed at Richfield's Wood Lake Nature Center. The organization has [extensive resources](#) on sustainable landscaping and runs workshops throughout the year.

Did you know?

- Start your journey on re-imagining your traditional lawn into a climate resilient landscape and to see suggestions for native garden designs [here](#)!

Steps for a climate resilient sustainable landscape

- Plant native trees and shrubs
- Reduce the size of your lawn
- Plant native grasses, sedges, and flowers
- Leave your leaves
- Give your soil – and yourself – a rest
- Use water wisely
- Avoid runoff
- Eliminate toxic synthetic fertilizers



■ Creating habitat for wildlife

Conservationists agree that the solution for continued species extinction lies in creating a patchwork of native habitat creating homes and food year-round for a wide range of wildlife. These habitats also become critical landing sites during migration. By reducing the size of our lawns and replacing them with native plants and a multi-storied tree canopy, we also reduce stormwater runoff, eliminate chemical use, and decrease ground surface temperatures.

There are numerous resources to support transitioning to a sustainable landscape in which you can switch from turf to native plants, you can put those power tools, pesticides, and sprinklers away and instead sit back and enjoy the birds, bees and butterflies flocking to your yard. These include places where you can source your seeds, plants, trees and shrubs from and know that are native, organizations that will design a customized native landscape for you, gardening groups that you can belong to and join the increasing numbers of Richfield residents making the switch, and websites you can go to do your own research and learn.

Resources:

[Minnesota Native Landscape](#)

[Native Landscape Design and Consultation](#)

[Prairie Moon Nursery for sourcing native plants for gardening and restoration](#)

[Richfield public library with a huge collection of books on habitat restoration in Minnesota](#)

[Follow Minnesota's own nationally recognized expert on habitat restoration - Heather Holm](#)

[Richfield's guidance and resource list on sustainability through pollinator practices](#)



■ Tree care

Richfield is lucky to have a beautiful, mature tree canopy. However, older trees can be more susceptible to disease and damage and require care and maintenance. You can prolong the life of your trees with regular pruning; watering during hot, dry times; mulching or planting native vegetation around the roots; and (depending on the species) preventative treatment for certain insects or diseases, such as treating ash trees for emerald ash borer. When choosing a new tree to plant in your yard, choose the right tree for the right location, choose native species or cultivars when possible, use appropriate planting techniques, and water regularly for the first three years after planting.

Resources:

[MN DNR Tree planting and care](#)

[MN DNR list of native trees](#)

[UMN Extension Tree selection and care](#)

[Contact your local Tree Care Advisor](#)



Did you know?

You can request a free tree for your boulevard by contacting Richfield Public Works at 612-861-9190.

■ Invasive plants and pests

Invasive plants and pests are plants, animals/insects, and microorganisms introduced from elsewhere that either directly kill or aggressively compete with Richfield's native species. These invasive species include tree pests and diseases such as emerald ash borer, oak wilt, and Dutch elm disease; garden pests such as jumping worms, spotted wing drosophila, and Japanese beetles; and landscaping plants and weeds such as buckthorn, non-native honeysuckle, Japanese knotweed, and garlic mustard. You can help slow the spread of invasive species by never moving firewood from one area to another, carefully washing roots before sharing plants with neighbors, using caution when bringing soil, compost, or mulch to your yard to make sure it is free from pests and weed seeds, and removing invasive plants from your yard and replacing them with native plants.



Resources:

[Richfield Forestry, tree pests and diseases](#)

[Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pests Center](#)

[MN DNR, invasive plants](#)

[UMN Extension, jumping worms](#)

[How to report invasive species – DNR](#)

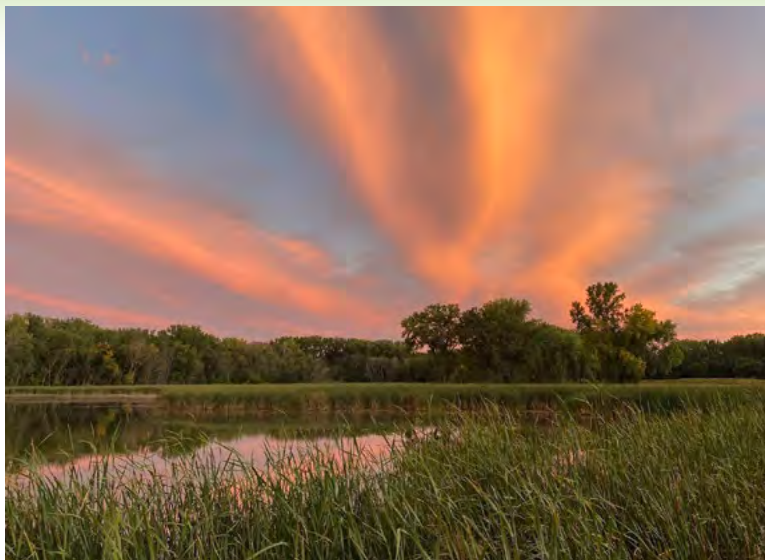
Get Involved: You can [volunteer](#) to remove invasive plants at Wood Lake Nature Center in spring and fall! For more information, call 612-861-9365

Did you know?

You must treat your ash trees every two years with insecticide to prevent infestation from emerald ash borer. Untreated trees should be carefully monitored and you must make a plan to remove them when they become infested ([City Code Section 910](#)). For information and financial assistance to remove infested trees, visit [Richfield's Forestry website](#).

■ Wood Lake Nature Center

Wood Lake Nature Center is a 150-acre natural area dedicated to environmental education, wildlife observation, and outdoor recreation. The center's staff offices are located in a 4,000 square-foot main building, which features many educational exhibits. The park also features several wildlife viewing areas, a 100-seat amphitheater, a picnic ground, a nature play area, and three miles of trails and boardwalks. The trails are either blacktop or crushed limestone and most are wheelchair accessible during summer months. Groomed ski trails are offered in the winter. To preserve the natural habitat, no pets, bikes, or rollerblades are allowed.



Did you know?

Wood Lake members receive free ski/snowshoe use and free or discounted admission to many events. [Join today!](#)

Resources:

The nature center offers a variety of social and educational events year-round:

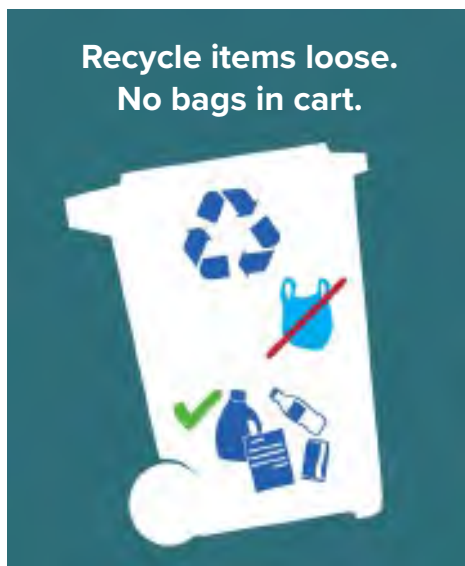
[Current events page](#)

[WLNC Facebook page](#)

Waste Reduction and Management

■ Curbside recycling

In Richfield, garbage haulers handle recycling pick-up for their customers. For apartment, condo and townhouse residents, property owners are required to provide residents with the opportunity to recycle. Contact your building manager or association to find out where recycling bins are located. Recycling systems are robust in the metro area and it's important to recycle right. Hennepin County's [***recycling guide***](#) shows what can be recycled throughout the County. When in doubt, throw it out!



Did you know?

Have you ever seen how things actually get sorted at a recycling facility? Eureka Recycling, a local processor, made [this engaging and informative video](#)!

Resources:

Want to learn more? ***Community Recycling Ambassadors*** are trained on waste prevention, recycling and composting, and communication skills over six weeks. The class also includes field trips to local waste processing and recycling facilities.

Hennepin County provides free recycling resources to all residents! Order [here](#).

■ Organic waste recycling

Organic recycling significantly reduces the amount of organic material sent to landfills, where it would otherwise decompose and produce methane, a potent greenhouse gas. By diverting organic waste, the county helps mitigate climate change and supports sustainable waste management practices. Hennepin County encourages residents, businesses, and other institutions to separate food waste from regular waste. This food waste is collected separately and sent to specialized composting facilities. This not only reduces landfill waste but also produces nutrient-rich compost that can be used to enrich soil.

Richfield offers curbside collection of organic waste and two drop-off sites, making it convenient for households to participate in composting efforts. As a part of the curbside program, residents are provided with separate carts for organics.

Resources:

Never heard of organics? Learn more [here](#).
Learn more about Richfield's **Organics Recycling Program**.

Did you know?

Richfield's two drop-off sites are in the parking lots at Wood Lake Nature Center and House of Prayer Church. Any community members are welcome to use them.



■ Composting at home

Home composting is a great way to reduce waste, enrich your garden soil, and contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle. There are different methods including backyard composting and vermicomposting (worm composting). Here are some tips to help you get started and succeed in your home composting efforts:

1. Select the Right Location:

- Place your compost pile or bin in a well-drained area with good air circulation and some shade. Avoid placing it too close to your home to prevent odors.

2. Use the Right Materials:

- Balance green (nitrogen-rich) and brown (carbon-rich) materials.
- Green materials: Fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, tea leaves, grass clippings.
- Brown materials: Leaves, straw, cardboard, newspaper (shredded), small branches.

3. Layering and Mixing:

- Layer green and brown materials to encourage decomposition. Turn or mix the compost pile regularly to aerate it and speed up the composting process.

4. Moisture Control:

- Keep the compost pile moist like a wrung-out sponge. Too dry or too wet can slow down decomposition.

5. Avoid Certain Items:

- Do not compost meat, dairy, oily foods, pet waste, and diseased plants, as they can attract pests or spread diseases.

6. Patience:

- Composting takes time. Depending on the method and conditions, it can take a few months to a year for compost to fully mature.

7. Harvesting Compost:

- Finished compost should look and smell like dark, crumbly soil. You shouldn't be able to recognize the original materials.
- Use a sifter or screen to separate any larger, uncomposted materials for future use.

8. Use Compost Wisely:

- Mix your mature compost into garden soil to improve its structure, water-holding capacity, and nutrient content.
- Use it as mulch around plants to retain moisture and suppress weeds.

Remember, successful composting is a balance of carbon and nitrogen, moisture, aeration, and time. Experiment and learn from your experiences to find what works best for your specific situation!

Did you know?

There are [city code requirements](#) around backyard composting placement and accepted items.

[Helpful home composting tips](#) from University of Minnesota

■ Recycling drop-off locations

Hennepin County has drive-thru style drop-off locations for many items that are not collected via curbside recycling, such as chemicals, electronics, appliances and batteries. Many of these items are accepted for free (including extra curbside recyclables) but some do have a small charge – which is regularly still cheaper than other disposal methods!

Important!

The Brooklyn Park Transfer Station is the only location that accepts mattresses.

All the info you need to know about the county dropoffs is [here!](#)



Did you know?

The drop-off facilities have free product centers where you can take and use items like adhesives/glues, aerosols, automotive products, cleaners, and paints and stains.

■ Thrift stores

Shopping at, and donating to, any of the many thrift stores in and around Richfield is a great way to save money, potentially net yourself a tax break, and make a positive environmental impact. By choosing secondhand items you are aiding in the reduction of resource consumption that includes less energy spent on the manufacturing and transportation of goods. You're also doing a big part in limiting the growth of landfills.

Did you know?

Nearly 20% of global wastewater, 10% of global carbon emissions, and 5% of all space in landfills is tied to textiles, more specifically, clothing production and waste.

Some local thrift stores you can support:

[Goodwill](#)

[Turnstyle Consignment](#)

[Assistance League Thrift Shop](#)

[Arc's Value Village](#)



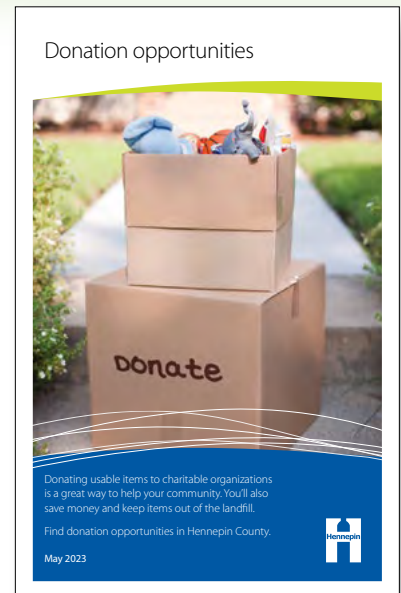
■ Donations/Waste Reduction

Many of us come across things at home that we don't need or want anymore but are still in good shape. Don't throw them away! There are so many non-profits and other organizations that will take your gently used items and help them find a new home. This is also a huge environmental win as we waste less resources when extending the life of items and therefore don't need to create as many new ones.

Resources:

Hennepin County has a [multi-page donation brochure](#) that highlights different categories of donatable items and which organizations accept them.

The [Green Disposal Guide](#) is an easy to use search platform that provides local options for reuse, donation, and recycling options for numerous items.



Did you know?

Community groups like [Buy Nothing Richfield](#) help residents keep the spirit of donating hyper-local by connecting with each other and sharing things for free!



Did you know?

Richfield puts on a 3-day **citywide garage sale** in mid-May every year. In 2024, 94 households signed up to participate officially, selling items including clothes, appliances, household items, tools, camping gear, records, and much more! There are always unique finds (like a wedding dress or a trailer) and it's a great way to reduce items that might be landfilled, avoid buying new items, and meet others in the community!

Local and Healthy Food

■ Growing your own fruits and vegetables



Home gardening offers a plethora of benefits that extend beyond the mere cultivation of plants. Firstly, it provides individuals with a direct connection to nature, fostering a sense of tranquility and mindfulness as they nurture and observe the growth of various plants. Engaging in gardening activities has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, promoting mental well-being and improving overall mood. Furthermore, gardening can serve as a valuable educational tool, teaching individuals, especially children, about plant life cycles, ecosystems, and sustainable practices.

By cultivating plants at home, individuals can reduce their carbon footprint by decreasing the need for transportation and packaging associated with store-bought produce. Gardens also act as mini ecosystems, attracting beneficial insects and pollinators that support biodiversity and promote natural pest control. Home gardens can become hubs for sharing excess produce with neighbors and friends, fostering a sense of community and reducing food waste. Through these collective efforts, home gardening not only enhances personal well-being but also plays a role in building resilient and sustainable neighborhoods.



Resources:

University of Minnesota Extension –
[**Planting a Vegetable Garden**](#)

Almanac –
[**Row Gardening vs. Raised Beds**](#)

Did you know?

In 2023, Richfield started a Community Garden Pilot Project at Veterans Park. Garden plots and raised beds were available for rent during the growing season for Richfield residents. Learn more about the current season and availability [here](#)!

■ Backyard Fowl

You can own up to three fowl (chickens, ducks, etc.) in Richfield. Both chickens and ducks lay eggs quite often. Chickens lay about 250 eggs per year, and ducks lay 300-350. Eggs can be gathered and stored for multiple months before preparing for consumption. Both chicken and duck eggs are comparable in size and taste; however, duck eggs have a larger, darker yolk and thicker shells. Because of this, duck eggs hold more antioxidants, omega-3 fatty acids and 50% more Vitamin A making them an excellent source of nutrition. Richfield does not require a permit to have pet fowl, but a clean space and shelter are necessary.

Other than laying eggs, a big benefit to backyard fowl is that they help with keeping yards clear of destructive insects such as Japanese beetles which have plagued many Richfield lawns over the years. Their trained eyes can spot bugs, grubs, and worms below the surface that us humans don't detect. Unfortunately, their eating and digestive habits do entice flies, bunnies, birds, and other animals into the yard. They may not be the cleanest, but you'd be hard-pressed to find a pet that provides you with a better breakfast.

I have noticed that there are less ticks and other bugs in my yard because of my chickens. They also provide entertainment and eggs!

– **Bill Anstedt, Richfield Chicken Owner**

“We decided on backyard ducks, purely because we thought they would be fun. They've helped reduce the mosquito population in our backyard, they lay delicious eggs, and folks walking by the house never fail to stop and ask about them.”

– **Sophie Parris, Richfield Duck Owner**



Did you know?

Backyard chicken and duck eggs will last longer if you don't wash them until you're ready to eat. When the egg is laid, it is covered with a thin layer of film that protects the contents of the egg. When placed in your refrigerator, the cooler temperature and protective film combine to give your eggs a shelf life of up to 6 months! Of course, you will want to be sure to scrub your eggs well when it comes time to use them.

Resources:

[BackyardChickens.com](https://www.backyardchickens.com)

(community of pet chicken and duck owners)

[Richfield Chicken Keepers Facebook Group](#)

[Twin Cities Chickens Facebook Group](#)

[Richfield City Code on Fowl](#)

■ Richfield Farmers Market

Since 1990, Richfield Recreation has operated the Richfield Farmers Market to provide access to local, healthy, and affordable foods, and to offer a community gathering space to help connect residents, as well as local producers. The Richfield Farmers Market also emphasizes educational and recreational activities through our involvement with the Richfield Arts Commission, the U of M Master Gardener Program, and other programs and events.



All vendors are local – vendors' place of production must be within 200 miles of Richfield. In 2018, all vendors were within 80 miles. Promoting local vendors creates fewer travel miles for products, cutting down on associated environmental and transportation costs.



Did you know?

The farmers market often has special days throughout the summer, such as National Farmer Market Day or Bike to the Market day. Check the website or Facebook page for planned events!

Resources:

[Richfield Farmer Market Website](#)

[Richfield Farmers Market Facebook Page](#)



Thank you for your interest and participation in local sustainability initiatives. Your commitment and collective efforts are driving significant positive change in our community and beyond.

By embracing sustainable practices in your daily lives through reducing waste, conserving energy and water, consuming more home-grown foods, and supporting local and eco-friendly businesses, you are playing a crucial role in protecting our environment.

Your actions are making a difference in Richfield and also contributing to a global movement towards a more sustainable and resilient world.

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

