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April 2020 News

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**We Are All in it Together  
What Pandemic Teaches Us**

As we all adjust to the "new normal" -- at least for a while -- we also have

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all of us and there is no better example than the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. We depend on our brave healthcare providers to cure us. We depend on our government to solve the economic crisis and show leadership. We depend on our friends and neighbors to stay home and not spread the virus. We depend on the clerks, delivery services, truck drivers, to keep food, medicine, and essential goods available. We are all in this together.

The pandemic, for all its lessons about infection, containment, and mitigation, is also giving us a brief moment of grace to see something else -- **what a cleaner world looks like**. The stalled world economy is creating a greener earth as carbon, nitrogen, and methane pollution subsides. A gift like this is rare -- to actually see with our own eyes what the future could hold for us -- recovery of our natural world. To make this future real, our city, state, and nation must respond to the pandemic with environmentally conscious policy changes. As we reboot the economy, we can also make the big changes that will transition us away from fossil fuels. Trust in medical research will restore an appreciation of science. Science can once again be valued and trusted to guide us. This could have huge payoffs for positive climate action.

As you walk outside for your daily exercise, notice how much easier it is to breathe. Rivers and lakes are cleaner. New life is bursting out everywhere in a kind of enhanced spring. COVID-19, for all its pain and misery, has given us a brief window to pause, observe, rethink, and soon, act together to hopefully move decisively in the right direction this time.

### Green Reboot After Pandemic

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## Looking Ahead

Sustainable Stillwater has had to cancel the majority of our events for this spring. This has been very disheartening, as we had an exciting line-up of public events and group activities meant to make our world green, sustainable, and resilient. We've postponed the Electric Vehicle and Bike Show, Migratory Bird Day, Bike to School Day, and our Arbor Day Tree Planting. We will be rescheduling these events and look forward to meeting our fellow residents face-to-face to tackle climate change.

In the meantime, we are left with "what can I do" as an individual or a household? First, let Sustainable Stillwater MN be a resource for educating yourself about the lifestyle changes that are making a difference. Follow us on Twitter **@MNSustainable** and on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/SustainableStillwaterMn/> and our website

<https://www.sustainablestillwatermn.org/> and

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sustainablestillwatermn/>

Engage in activities that can be accomplished individually. Our Adopt-a-Rain Garden program will be kicking off this month and our city system of rain gardens are in need of spring cleaning. We are also starting an Adopt-a-Drain program to continue to address the runoff and silt issues in city storm water systems.

And third, what may seem like a simplistic activity -- pick up trash on our daily walks. It may seem trivial and below us, but it's the least we can do.

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together and come into a good time to pick up trash, to clean up our public places, much like we do our spring cleaning in our homes. It makes us feel better about our environment and builds the bond of community that we will need going forward to tackle the issues on the horizon.

- Roger Tomten, Sustainable Stillwater MN Chairman



## Rain Gardening Time

A Message from Louise Watson, Natural Resources Workgroup chair, Board Member:

Sustainable Stillwater MN (SSMN) is organizing projects involving rain gardens, storm drains, and walking paths needing vegetative management and overall natural resource kindness.

### Current Activities:

- **Adopt-a-Rain Garden:** SSMN has adopted 6 rain gardens in Stillwater and is looking for volunteers to maintain them monthly April - October. Please let Louise know if you are interested. Due to COVID-



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be on-site once a month. Coordinate with Louise directly to locate a rain garden in need of maintenance; the online map at <http://www.mnwcd.org/adoptaraingarden> may not be up-to-date.

- **Adopt-a-Drain:** Go to <https://adopt-a-drain.org/> to sign up. This is a metro-wide website, just recently expanded in 2019 to include Washington County. Find a drain near your home, adopt it, and keep it clear of debris so that stormwater can flow through. Additionally, SSMN is asking adopters to sweep their curb lines regularly to reduce the amount of debris washed down the drain. If you want to learn where the water down the drain ends up, reply to Louise at [ssmn.nrwg@gmail.com](mailto:ssmn.nrwg@gmail.com) to find out.

Louise looks forward to hearing from you! As more projects get developed, she will let you know of additional volunteering opportunities; we are looking at volunteer needs along our local trails. Louise would be glad to hear any suggestions that you have.



Infrastructure development on the Greater Stillwater Area Green Business Directory and Awards project is underway, thanks to a grant from the Stillwater Sunrise Rotary! The Rotary's \$500 grant is allowing us to purchase our online platform. We are grateful to these amazing Rotarians! Our next phase is to put together educational resources and applications for various industry sectors: restaurants, retail stores, healthcare, salons, offices, and

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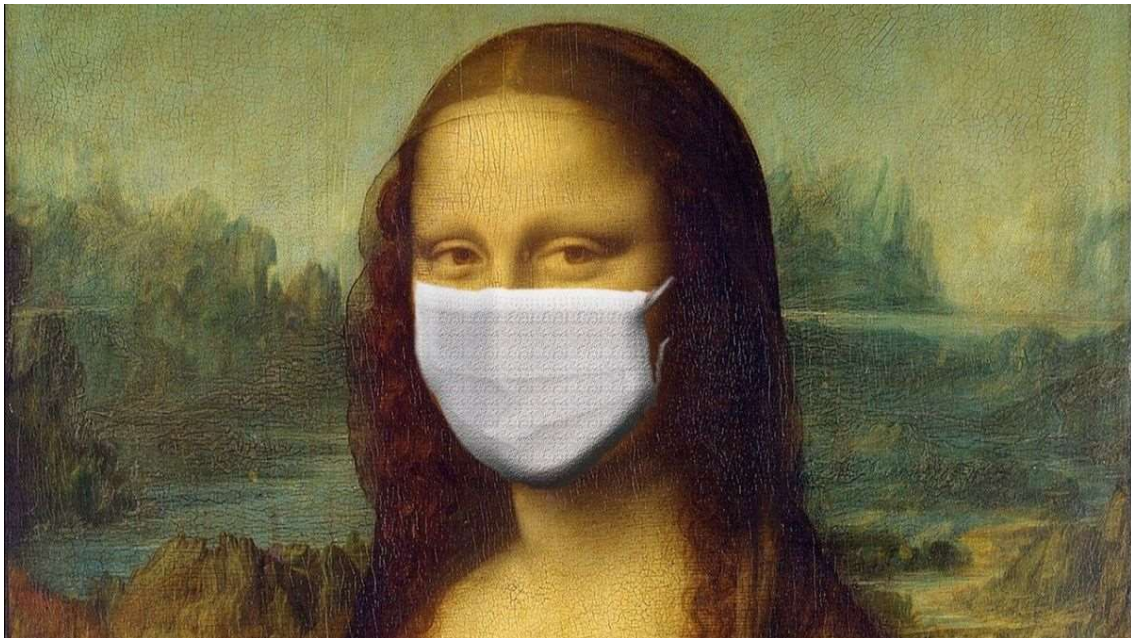
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## Looking For things To Do?

Try These Ideas



## Everyone is Now Urged to Wear Masks



## Listen To This

And finally, here's a share from Linda Countryman, Sustainable Stillwater MN Board member. Dr. Elvis Francois is a surgeon in training at Mayo Clinic whose voice is stunning the world.

Imagine by Dr. Elvis Francois



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## Have You Seen Our New T-Shirts?

All the most popular new designs on eco-friendly fabric, printed by a local company. [Enjoy our new line of apparel.](#) They're green, sustainable, and resilient. What's not to like?

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## Meeting Calendar

Due to state orders, all in-person workgroup meetings are cancelled.

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