



Van Buren Conservation District July 2024 Program Update

Submitted by Emily Hickmott, Executive Director

Staff at the Conservation District can hardly believe how quickly summer is going, and I'm sure we're not alone! We have four recycling collection events left on the calendar for 2024, so please help us spread the word about those. Additionally, three permanent site tire recycling sites have opened up that are available to all Van Buren County residents and landowners during regular hours May - October. You can find those details here: <https://vanburencd.org/permanent-site-tire-recycling/>

Recycling Collections: Details and tire sign-up available at:

<https://vanburencd.org/van-buren-county-recycling-collections/>. Please encourage folks to sign up their tires ahead of time! July and August Collections are:

-Recycle Roundup Collection | August 3, 2024 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | South Haven Public Works | 1199 8th Ave., South Haven, MI 49079

-Passenger & Semi Tire and Electronics Collection | August 15, 2024 | 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Pine Grove Township Transfer Station | 32nd Street (north of CR 388), Gobles, MI 49055

-Passenger & Semi Tire and Electronics Collection | September 9, 2024 | 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Columbia Township Transfer Station | 18868 52 1/2 Street | Grand Junction, MI 49056

-Recycle Roundup Collection | October 19, 2024 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Van Buren ISD Tech Center | 250 South Street | Lawrence, MI 49064 | Enter from South Street

In partnership with the Van Buren County Road Commission, the SWxSW Corner CISMA Strike Team of the Van Buren Conservation District will be treating county road rights-of-way for invasive species. The Strike Team will be targeting invasive Phragmites and Japanese knotweed in county road rights-of-way. Invasive knotweed and Phragmites grow aggressively causing harm to road infrastructure, homes and buildings, and our environment. Treatment will begin the week of August 15, 2024 and will continue until the first hard frost of the season. For more information on invasive species or this treatment, please contact Strike Team Coordinator Abbie Bristol by emailing InvasivesMGMT@VanBurenCD.org or by calling 269-633-9058.

Program Updates:

- **Ag Conservation/Water Quality Projects** (*Erin Fuller, Colleen Forestieri, Carlie Southland*) - The Ag & Water Quality Team has been hard at work preparing for summer educational activities. The team also prepared a farm newsletter (Farming for the Future: Bringing Conservation to the Farm) that is mailed to 1,163 farmers in the area.
- **SWxSW Corner CISMA (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) Team** (*Abbie Bristol, Alex Florian, Jena Johnson*) - June saw the SWxSW Corner CISMA team continuing some of our most important work. A Survey of the South Haven kudzu site turned up no indication of kudzu, a big success after several years of management. Continued surveys for Hydrilla have not led to any new detections. We then finished out the month by holding 3 landing blitz events to educate boaters about the importance of not spreading invasive species.
- **Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)** (*Kyle Mead*) - A light month for deliverables but there were several meetings that the specialist attended. He also took a week's vacation at the end of the month. For the time being, he is helping to get farmers that have lapsed

1035 E. Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

269.657.4030 x5 ♦ www.VanBurenCD.org ♦ info@vanburencd.org



Van Buren Conservation District July 2024 Program Update

Submitted by Emily Hickmott, Executive Director

with MAEAP Verifications, or that are about to lapse, get re-assessments so that they can be Re-Verified with the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD).

- **National Association of Conservation Districts (NRCs) Technical Assistance** (*Lucas Hartman, Gabriel Francisco*) - The team was happy to host two Royalty ID student interns, This year, Jay and Cameron visited all the way from Texas! These young men were hard at work training to become professional calf ropers in the rodeo circuit, and were here learning the ins and outs of conservation work as part of their program. They were showed a lot of what Van Buren County has to offer: blueberry picking, forestry work and tree planting, invasive species surveying, and dune climbing and Lake Michigan swimming.
- **Outreach** (*Jacob Diljak*) - June saw successful recycling collections and outreach efforts. The VBCD connected with our state legislators and we are diligently working on events happening in the near future - keep an eye out! Don't forget to attend our Annual Meeting, Director Election, & Picnic July 31, 2024!
- **Resource Recovery & Recycling** (*Kalli Marshall, Jacob Diljak*) - In June, the Van Buren Conservation District held the first Recycle Roundup of 2024! We helped 300 households in Van Buren County to responsibly recycle and dispose of tons of materials. We also held a passenger & semi tire and electronic collection in Keeler Township for the first time ever, and it was highly successful.