

Sustainability Spotlight

Earth Day

The origins of Earth Day date back to April 22, 1970, with founder Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin. At that time, air pollution was common due to industrial manufacturing and oil spills polluting large bodies of water by large freighter vessels. Senator Nelson was inspired by youth activism following the Vietnam War and decided to spark the environmental movement. The first Earth Day was a success and celebrated by 20 million Americans, 2,000 college campuses, 10,000 schools, and hundreds of communities.



Image Source: earthday.org

The primary focus for Earth Day 2024 is the commitment to end the manufacturing of plastics with the goal of a 60% reduction in plastics production by 2040. To achieve this reduction, we collectively need to strive for:

- promoting widespread public awareness of the damage done by plastics to human and animal health, as well as the health of all other living things, while also demanding more research be conducted on its health implications, including the release of any and all information regarding its effects to the public
- rapidly phasing out all single use plastics by 2030 and achieving this phase out commitment in the United Nations Treaty on Plastic Pollution in 2024
- demanding policies ending the scourge of fast fashion and the vast amount of plastic it produces and uses in the manufacturing and shipping of these products
- investing in innovative technologies and materials to build a plastic-free world

The City of Southfield will be hosting its annual Earth Day festivities on Monday, April 22nd with activities and educational programming for people of all ages. To learn more about the history of Earth Day and current global initiatives, please visit <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2024/>





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