

Saving the planet in your spare time

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By [Kris Scheuer](#)

Not sure how to save our planet from environmental disaster? Do what I do, consult an expert.



There are dozens of local eco-organizations looking for volunteers to help them plant trees, educate the public, maintain gardens, attend events and design newsletters.

Those with experience can put it to use and those with none are trained. You can often have an impact on local projects that have lasting results that you can take pride in for years to come.

Here are five organizations looking for volunteers:

Toronto Green Community has opportunities for those with a green thumb. Starting April 1, the North Toronto-based organization needs people to tend to gardens on a weekly basis at Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden and Naturalization Site.

Minaz Asani-Kangi, executive director of TGC, says they also need a treasurer, fundraisers for their annual fall green gala, accountants, legal experts and program managers.

They also need someone to improve the language of the ESL in the Garden teaching manual. Call 416-781-7663 for more info on opportunities.

Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests downtown does backyard tree planting, tree tours and has education booths at environmental events.

Liza Badaloo, the office and events coordinator says some volunteers are trained to engage in public education about LEAF and the urban forest at environmental events.

Something fun is to research trees and the community, and to look for local Tree Tours in neighbourhoods around Toronto. Volunteers also take photos while experts lead the tours. Help with brochure design and content is also welcome. Call 416-413-9244 for orientation sessions.

If teaching the younger generation about our ecosystems excites you, the Leaside-based **Environmental Earth Angels** can put you to good use. It needs post secondary students in environmental studies, graduates and community members to volunteer on fieldtrips.

Wendy Lee, executive director, suggests people e-mail info@earthangels.ca to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers are also needed to work with you on community tree plantings and stream revitalization.

Toronto Environmental Alliance, started in 1988, has five main campaigns going on now focused on smog and climate change, public transit, toxics and urban pesticides, waste reduction and clean water.

Volunteers can sit on Rocket Riders or Residents for Safer Communities groups or as a toxics campaigner for TEA research into what's being released into our air, water and soil. TEA is working with the city on a community right to know bylaw so local companies have to disclose the amount and type of pollutants they are putting into the environment.

For more info go to <http://www.torontoenvironment.org/volunteer> or call 416-596-0660.

City of Toronto has a Toronto Environmental Volunteer program. It provides 20 hours of training, so volunteers can participate in any of the over 150 community events held throughout the year.

The education and community outreach focuses on waste reduction, recycling, composting, organic waste collection, household hazardous waste, energy and water efficiency, wastewater education, pesticide reduction and air quality.

Anyone who volunteers 40 hours in this program receives a diploma. Call 416-397-4838 or e-mail tev@toronto.ca for details.

This article also found in:

[Bayview Mills](#), [Beach - Riverdale - East York](#), [Forest Hill](#), [Leaside Rosedale](#), [North Toronto](#), [North York](#)

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