

# USGBC TEXAS CHAPTER



# TEXAS



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### Our Mission:

To accelerate the adoption of green building and sustainable development practices in Texas.

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# TEXAS

# CHAIR LETTER

Welcome to 2020. We knew that this would be a special year for every advocate of green building as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. However, it is safe to say that none of us had any idea about how truly revolutionary this year would become. The response to the COVID 19 pandemic that has everyone changing their daily lives and routines is reshaping our paradigm of the world around us. Already we are seeing that changes to our human behavior can dramatically impact the natural environment, most visibly in India where reduced vehicle traffic from stay-at-home protocols has allowed the pollution to recede and the air to clear resulting in spectacular views of the Himalaya Mountains.

2020 is an important milestone for everyone. Whether we are watching our progress towards the Architecture 2030 goals or the National [USGBC goal](#) of ***Green Buildings for All Within This Generation***, we are entering this new decade with a renewed commitment towards making our built environment sustainable, resilient, healthy and equitable for all. As a member or partner in [USGBC Texas](#), you should know that these are exciting times and that your support is vital to our future.

We anticipate that when we go back to our offices after this pandemic, we will be met by building design and operation participants who are eager to support the pillars of the USGBC mission; Sustainability, Resilience, Health & Wellness and Social Equity. Our task now is to prepare for an increase in interest in LEED, WELL and the other green building rating systems. More than ever, we will need you to join us as a member, a partner, a volunteer, in any capacity you can to be ready for our new normal. Because that new normal will be one that values Sustainability, Resilience, Health & Wellness and Social Equity more than ever before.

Our Regional Councils are continuing to provide events, education and networking opportunities, while many will be in a virtual format. Be sure to visit the website for details [www.usgbctexas.org](http://www.usgbctexas.org). There are also some great tools being developed. The Sustainable Best Practices Committee is working on game-changing analytics tools that will allow us to close the gap between the model and the actual. Additionally, the Arc tool is now going to be for free to all to use. This will allow anyone to measure and monitor the results of sustainable design efforts. Look for more details in the future on both of these tools. Additionally, we are creating the [Best Practices Champions](#) program to help you, our members, reach your goals.

2020 kicks off with the continued commitment USGBC has made to the state of Texas: "We are here to support each other". While events for the year have gone primarily virtual, USGBC will continue the [Town Hall Meeting](#) series with a virtual Texas meeting on August 11th. Over the past couple of years these Town Hall Meetings have proven to be a great opportunity to dialogue personally with the leaders of USGBC. Additionally, this year's slate of regional conferences will include a virtual "Better Building, Better Lives" on June 18th. This event will be similar to the Greenerbuilder event last year held at the Austin Library. **More details coming soon!**

Please join all of us at USGBC Texas in preparing for the new normal. Because that new normal will be one that values Sustainability, Resilience, Health & Wellness and Social Equity more than ever before and we would like for it to include you too.

Thom Powell, AIA LEED AP BD+C  
USGBC Texas 2020 Chair



# EARTH DAY – 50th ANNIVERSARY!

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day is upon us. We will celebrate a little differently this year, but there are still so many ways to get involved – virtually, at work and at home! We've compiled some ideas and resources to get you motivated. You can join a virtual Earth Day Celebration, write to an elected official, start a compost pile, give up meat for a day or virtually hang out with some wild animals! Why not green your office, pass on some sustainability information to your clients or learn a skill to increase your environmental knowledge? Tell us about your Earth Day plans!

## **Be part of a movement**

Check out virtual Earth Day Events around the world and all kinds of resources.

<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/>

Earthrise is a global mobilization in history on behalf of our environment and our planet. <https://earthrise2020.org/>

The World's Largest Environmental Experience partners with National Geographic and will hold a virtual event. <https://earthx.org/> (see more on next page)

Use this toolkit to plan an effective teach-in that will bring your community together and build capacity to make change! <https://www.earthday.org/2020-teach-in-toolkit/>

## **Take action!**

Earth Day Initiative has lots of actions and ideas.

<http://www.earthdayinitiative.org/earth-day-50-events>

Run for the Earth – The Virtual Run Challenge.

<https://www.thevirtualrunchallenge.com/virtual-race-event/earth-day-24901-mile-challenge/>

11 actions for the planet during a pandemic.

<https://www.earthday.org/11-actions-for-the-planet-during-a-pandemic/>

Earth Day tips and ideas. <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-tips/>

## **Watch and learn**

San Diego Zoo's online Earth Day Celebration –

<https://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/go-wild-this-earth-day-with-san-diego-zoos-virtual-celebration/2305530/>

Earth Day Home Schooling ideas from our friends at Environment Texas.

<https://environmenttexas.org/blogs/greener-together/ame/virtual-earth-day-curriculum-ideas>

Films for Earth Day <https://www.readersdigest.ca/culture/environmental-movies-earth-day/>

A data-driven portrait of America's energy, climate, and environment.

<https://usafacts.org/earth-day-facts/energy-emissions/>

NASA Earth Day at Home - <https://www.nasa.gov/content/earth-day-2020>



Celebrating The **50<sup>th</sup>** Year of Earth Day

Join the Virtual Celebration April 22-27

## **APRIL 22-26**

[Session Schedule available online](#)

### **About EarthX Summits:**

Due to COVID19, we are sad to cancel the 2020 EarthX Expo as well as other in person events celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, April 22-26, and knew that we needed to stay connected with the EarthX community.

Over the past few weeks, the EarthX team and volunteers have worked to shift all EarthX efforts over to the virtual world for our speakers, conferences, film screenings and community. For one-stop, easy sign up to [EarthxVirtual](#) [click here](#).

### **Summit Details:**

For more details/times of our virtual events go to [EarthX.org](#) or specific events below:

- Wednesday April 22 [Celebration of Earth Day's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary](#)
- Thursday Friday, April 22-24 [EarthxE-Capital Virtual Summit 2020](#)
- Thursday Friday, April 23-24 [EarthxCities Resilient Cities Virtual Conference](#)
- Thursday Friday, April 24-26 [EarthxEnergy|Renewables](#)
- Thursday Sunday, April 23-26 [Additional Conferences, Summits and Youth Activities](#)

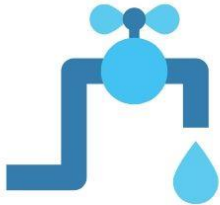
**[FREE REGISTRATION](#)**

# SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME

## TIPS TO REDUCE ENERGY AND WATER WASTE AT HOME

With Covid-19 keeping the population indoors, expect to see higher utility bills. Here are some ways to reduce resource waste, stress on natural ecosystems and keep your money in your wallet!

### Water



- Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth, shaving and washing hands.
- Upgrade to low flow shower heads and faucet aerators and take shorter showers.
- Use water from warming up shower to water plants.
- Upgrade to dual flush or low flow toilets.
- Regularly check your home for leaks.
- Water your lawn during cool parts of the day.

### Electricity

- Appliances consume energy when they are off but still plugged in, known as phantom loads.
  - Unplug phone chargers, TV, and appliances when not in use.
  - Upgrade old appliances.
- Turn off the light when you leave a room.
- Open window shades for natural light.
- Promote airflow through the home and use shades to block afternoon sun.
- Taking shorter showers also saves electricity used to heat water.
- Set your thermostat to a schedule to use less energy while you're away or asleep.



### Did you Know?

- A dry towel added to your dryer load can reduce drying times, saving money and reducing energy use
- A full refrigerator uses less energy to keep your food cold

# SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME

## LIVING IN AN APARTMENT?

If you live in an apartment, you probably can't upgrade your appliances. However there are still a few physical and behavioral changes that can have a noticeable impact.

### Work with your property manager

- Some managers will upgrade your bulbs to LEDs free of charge.
  - LEDs provide better light, use less energy, put out less unwanted heat, and last longer. If they do not offer this, it is an inexpensive change to make on your own.
- Be sure to have your air filter replaced every 1 to 3 months.
  - Dirty air filters can hinder air flow, causing the system to work harder.

### Personal changes

- Only run your dishwasher and clothes washer when there is a full load ready.
- Take shorter showers.
- Unplug all appliances not in use.
- Turn off unnecessary lights and use natural light during the day.
- Use window shades to let in the sun's heat during the winter and keep it out during the summer.



*'Sustainability at Home' tips provided by Amy Otley with US-EcoLogic*

# COMING SOON



Want to be featured in the newsletter? Send submissions and inquiries to [marketingintern@usgbctexas.org](mailto:marketingintern@usgbctexas.org).

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