



## Introduction

The Neighborhood Environmental Partners (NEP) Program is an environmental recognition program created by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to encourage and reward communities, businesses, and their neighbors who work together locally on projects. These projects improve environmental awareness and the quality of life in their communities. The NEP Program also provides an avenue for business and community groups to share social and environmental responsibility goals in their community.

## How it Works

Communities, businesses, and neighborhood groups can participate by completing “Neighborhood Partner” activities. Activity categories include but are not limited to: environmental improvements, environmental education, and environmental mentoring. Participants can then apply for NEP recognition.

Applications for NEP recognition should be focused on the “project,” not an individual facility. All projects meeting the basic criteria of a community project will be recognized, including all partner organizations (i.e., community groups, businesses, local units of government, non-profits, schools, and institutions).

## Application Schedule

Activities completed within 2016 are eligible for NEP recognition.

Applications will be accepted until February 29, 2017.

A recognition for all projects will be made in Spring 2017.

The NEP Program is made up of five easy-to-follow steps:

1. Plan
2. Implement
3. Apply
4. Evaluate
5. Recognize

### 1. PLAN

Organize a community or neighborhood stakeholders group. Share your environmental vision and discuss the environmental needs in your area. Then, select a project that is sensitive to the community’s needs. The DEQ’s NEP Web site at [www.michigan.gov/deqnep](http://www.michigan.gov/deqnep) has resources available to help you plan and implement an environmental project.

**2. IMPLEMENT**

Communities, businesses, and neighborhood groups can participate by implementing “Neighborhood Partner” activities. Examples of NEP activities can also be found on the DEQ’s NEP Web site at [www.michigan.gov/deqnep](http://www.michigan.gov/deqnep).

**3. APPLY**

Fill out the NEP Application Form and attach a description of your environmental project, including pictures, flyers/publications, photos, any other promotional materials, and a list of all participating partner organizations.

**Send your application electronically to Devan Dodge, NEP Coordinator, at [dodged1@michigan.gov](mailto:dodged1@michigan.gov).**

For additional information and questions, please contact Devan Dodge at **517-284-6904** or [dodged1@michigan.gov](mailto:dodged1@michigan.gov).

**4. EVALUATE**

Each NEP application will be evaluated by the DEQ. Only applications received prior to the deadline (February 29, 2017) will be reviewed. The DEQ Director reserves the right to make a final decision on all applications.

**5. RECOGNIZE**

A listing of all NEP-eligible projects will be announced in Spring 2017. A listing highlighting all NEP projects will be available for review on the program website. An NEP certificate will be mailed to the official contact for each project partner. The 2017 Most Outstanding Project Award will be selected based on the following set criteria: innovativeness, level of detail in application, project replicability, involvement level of all partners, and active learning components (not just volunteering).

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