



MOUNT PROSPECT SUSTAINABILITY news

SUMMER 2026

CYCLING PAST BIKE MONTH

We may have just finished National Bike Month, but that doesn't mean you should stop cycling! Cycling provides a great opportunity for people to do their part in helping the environment, improving their health and happiness, and reducing green house gas emissions. Living more sustainably and improving our environment can feel overwhelming, but small efforts do make a difference. Using your bike over your car for various local trips is one change that may be small, but can make a large collective difference!

This past May, the Village of Mount Prospect partnered with Go Green Mount Prospect, the Mount Prospect Bike Club, and the League of American Bicyclists to encourage everyone to, "Get out and bike Mount Prospect!" Special attention was given to Bike To Work Day, Bike To Work Week, and Ride a Bike Day.

Participating in these bike-themed days is an valuable way for anyone to determine whether or not cycling is a realistic way to get around in their day-to-day lives. Short commutes can be substituted with bike rides, and days like bike to work day provide great opportunities to see if biking to work is a realistic alternative for a commute.

We look forward to seeing more cyclists on the road as we move into summer. Safety is key to encouraging residents to cycle more. The following information was shared so motorists know how to safely engage with cyclists:

- Slow down and stay alert - Put the phone away!
- Give at least three feet when passing cyclists
- When turning, always check for cyclists, pedestrians, and oncoming traffic
- Use extra caution at intersections
- Obey all traffic laws and signals
- Be visible and predictable in your movements



MOUNT PROSPECT FAMILY BIKE RIDE

Spend some quality time with your family or just enjoy a leisurely 4-mile bike ride around Mount Prospect with your neighbors. Before or after the ride, hang out for some bike safety education and visit booths from local organizations.

Date and Time: Saturday, August 15 at 9:30 AM

Location: Sycamore Trails Park, 1500 E. Kensington Rd.

[CLICK HERE TO VISIT THE EVENT PAGE AND REGISTER](#)

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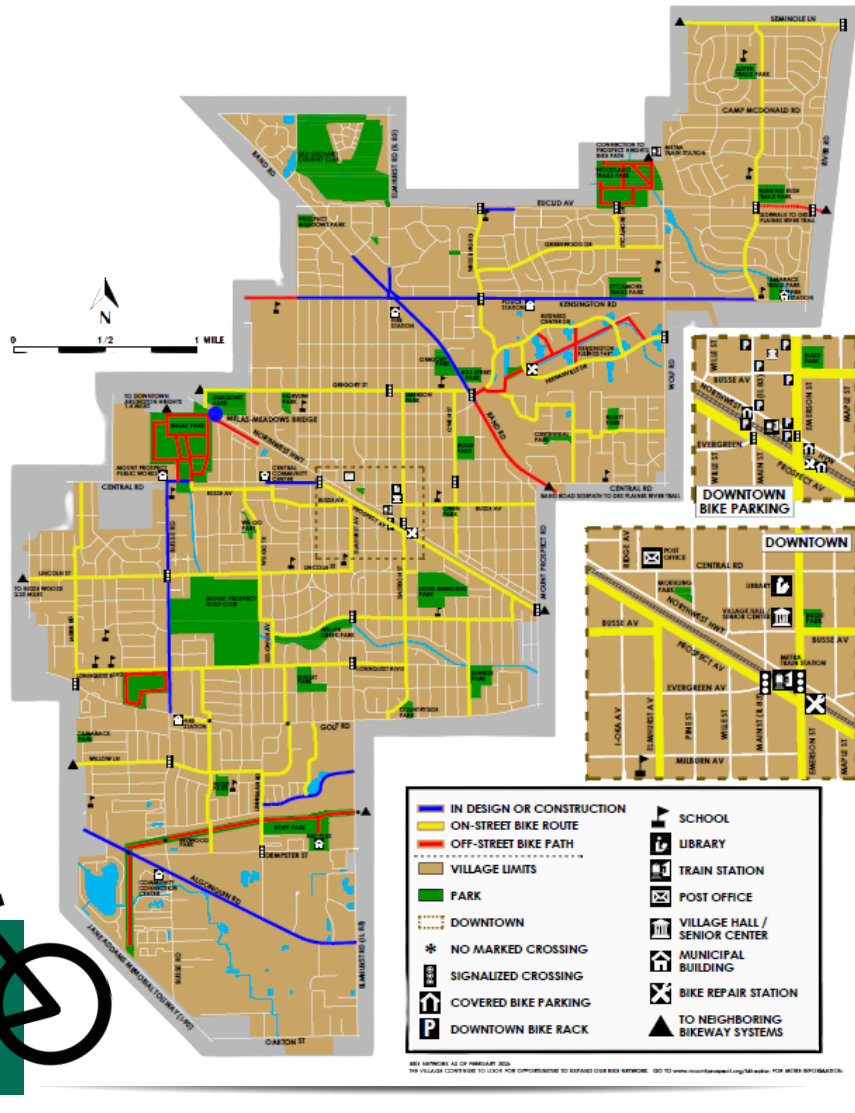
Sunscreen
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Bike Mount Prospect!

As you get out there and bike Mount Prospect, look to access our network of on street and off street Bike routes and paths! Additionally, routes can also connect to areas outside of the Village in case you want to go for a longer ride and see what's going on in neighboring communities.

Looking at the map on the right, you can see current and future bike routes. On street bike routes can be seen highlighted in yellow, off street bike routes can be seen highlighted in red, and future bike routes can be seen in blue.

The Village is also in the process of creating new bike routes, seen in blue, that will help connect the community. Be on the look out for future Village projects aimed at connecting Mount Prospect and improving community access!



**DON'T FORGET
A HELMET!**



Biking Health Benefits

Sustainability News is focused on sustainability and what's healthy for the environment. But, it's important to also focus on your health as well! Please review the following facts from Harvard's School of Public Health regarding cycling and cardiovascular health:

- A large observational study including more than 72,000 men and 82,000 women showed that active commuting was significantly associated with a lower body mass index and percentage body fat than those who drove or took public transportation.

- A large prospective study followed more than 53,700 Danish older men and women ages 50 to 65 years for 20 years and controlled for underlying health conditions to observe the effect of cycling on heart health. The results showed that participants who changed from no cycling to cycling had a 26% lower risk of heart disease compared with those who never cycled.

**[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE FULL
STORY AND LEARN MORE!](#)**

Warm Months Ahead

As we summer approaches, climate scientists are projecting a super El Niño this year. El Niño events are characterized by an increase in average sea surface temperatures by at least 0.9 degrees Fahrenheit in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. When this occurs, trade winds are weakened and warm water is driven towards America's West coast.

El Niños also have an “extended stay”; they tend to have lasting effects for up to 9 to 12 months with some lasting even longer. The longest recorded El Niño began in the spring of 1991 and continued through the summer of 1995, roughly 48 months.

El Niño events are by no means rare. In fact, they usually occur every 2 to 7 years! Yet they have quite an impact when they do arise.

What are the Effects of an El Niño?

The effects of El Niño's depend on their severity; regardless, El Niño's years see an increase in monsoons in South and Southeast Asia, droughts in the Caribbean and Southeast Africa, and changes in hurricane patterns. The most direct

impact for parts of Midwest America is a milder winter.

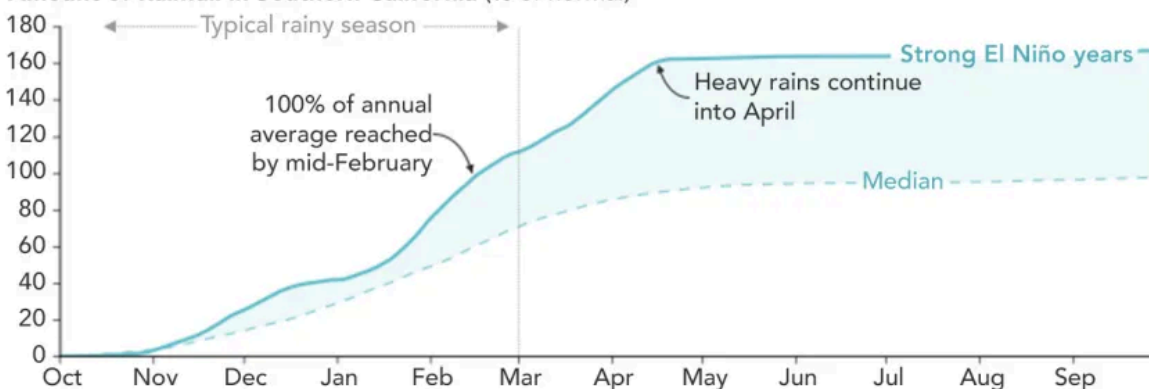
Flooding in El Niño years is most notably a concern for South and Southeast Asia; however, there is an increase rainfall across the southern US as well, leading to increased flood risk. The northern US states will experience the opposite, a notable decrease in rainfall.

At the same time, while Mount Prospect and Illinois will be going through a warmer summer, the southern states will have a cooler summer. This happens as a result of the increased overcast, but also due to shifts in the Pacific Ocean jet stream pattern.

Another change in the US is shifting hurricane patterns. Hurricanes will be less frequent in the Gulf of Mexico and along the Atlantic Ocean. Whereas on the West Coast, there will be an increase in hurricanes with the El Niño conditions.

Climate change is making El Niño events stronger in intensity. Interestingly, however, there is not evidence that climate change is increasing the frequency of El Niño events.

Amount of Rainfall in Southern California (% of normal)



[Click here to access NASA Earth Observatory chart using data from the California-Nevada Climate Applications Program.](#)

SUPER EL NIÑO APPROACHING

What is the opposite of an El Niño?

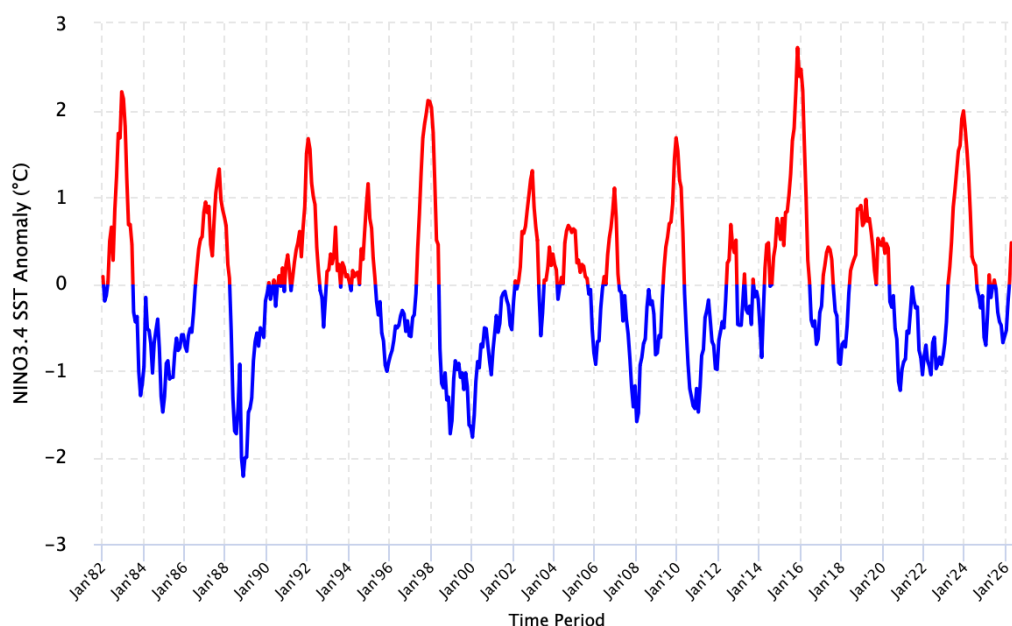
El Niño's are only one component of the Pacific Ocean's climate pattern. The other two are neutral and La Niña patterns. Neutral years are exactly what you would expect, as they occur when the Pacific Ocean's sea surface temperatures are around the long-term average.

Alternatively, La Niña's are when the Pacific Ocean's sea surface temperatures fall below 2

degrees Fahrenheit below the average. These years experience the opposite effects that we see during the El Niño patterns.

The graph below displays anomalies in sea surface temperature. Note the increase seen in the Summer of 2024, the hottest year on record, didn't meet the threshold required to be a super El Niño.

Historical Nino 3.4 Sea Surface Temperature Anomaly



[Click here to read more about El Niño projections referenced in the above news stories.](#)

[Want more details on El Niño's effects on the climate? Click here!](#)

Organics and Yard Waste

One of the most common questions asked to the Village on the topics of sustainability is always composting. Composting has numerous environmental benefits and residents are encouraged to participate if possible.

If you can't or don't want to use a traditional at home composter, be sure to check out the Village's organics and yard waste program. This program is designed to help make composting

more accessible to the community. The service is provided for single family homes between April and Mid-December at no additional charge.

Looking to learn more about the program? Visit the [Organics/Yard Waste section](#) of the Village's website for information on setting out a container for collection, what can be accepted for collection, and additional solid waste programs offered by the Village.

CORAL BLEACHING

Coral Reef Status Update

As ocean temperatures continue rising, the coral reefs experience bleaching more frequently. Some of the impacts of coral bleaching are intuitive, such as habitat loss, a reduction of biodiversity of ocean life, and the disruption of the food chain. Other effects are less obvious, but no less consequential, with increases in flooding, storm surges, and economic distress occurring in proximity to the coral reefs.

Mass coral bleaching events span hundreds of miles and result in wide swaths of coral being bleached. These mass bleaching events have grown in severity and frequency, with recent events coinciding with El Niño years. With the growing potential for a super El Niño, we should be mindful of the ways we can help – see more on that on the next page.

FACTS ABOUT THE MOST RECENT MASS GLOBAL CORAL BLEACHING EVENT IN 2023-2025

Impacted 84% of global coral reef area

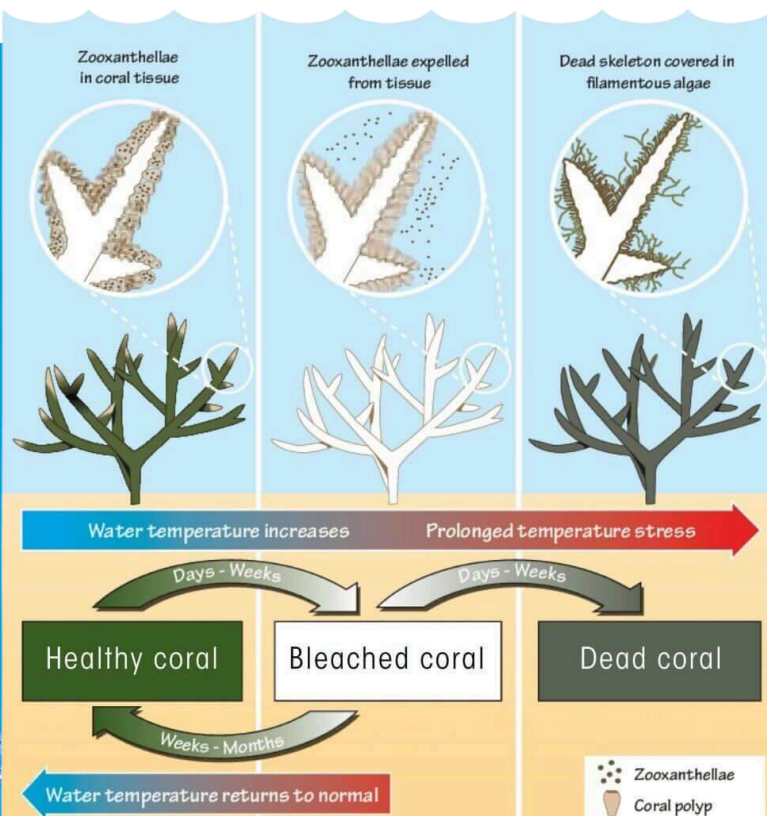
Spanned 83 countries and territories

Primarily driven by the 2023 and 2024 El Niño

One of four recent mass coral bleaching events

This was the most extensive mass bleaching event

Mass bleachings are getting progressively more severe



Source: Marshall P.A. and Schuttenberg, H.Z. (2006). A Reef Manager's Guide to Coral Bleaching. Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Australia

Coral Bleaching - What is it?

Coral bleaching is the result of increasing ocean temperatures, leading to the production of zooxanthellae. Zooxanthellae is microscopic algae that returns significant amounts of energy for the coral during photosynthesis. When this algae – the zooxanthellae – is released, it causes the coral's tissue to become transparent. In our eyes, this makes the coral look white. This transition is not only the result of ocean temperatures, it can also be caused by ocean water quality. After the coral is bleached, it is very difficult for it to return to its formal self; oftentimes, coral that has been bleached dies. That's why preventing the bleaching in the first place is key.

[If you want additional information on coral bleaching, click here!](#)

SUNSCREEN & PLASTIC BAGS

Sustainable Sunscreen

While we can't fix coral bleaching on our own, we can contribute in small but impactful ways. One of the easiest ways to help out is to use the right sunscreen. Every year 4,000 to 6,000 tons of sunscreen wash into the ocean, which, depending on the sunscreen, threatens coral reefs.

Common sunscreens that contain ingredients aside from zinc oxide and titanium oxide can threaten our coral reefs, and ocean life in general. That's why it's important to check the labels of your sunscreen. Use the link below to see a list of ingredients to avoid.



Read the fine print!

Look out for zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. Some companies will label sunscreen as beach friendly when it isn't!



Slather don't spray

Most spray sunscreens contain harmful nanoplastics that stick to sand and wash into the sea.



Cover up instead

Choose UV blocking clothing, hats, and sunglasses instead of sunscreen.

[Click here to visit the National Park Services website and learn more about sun screen use and ocean health.](#)

Plastics and Our Oceans

In addition to wearing the right sunscreen, don't forget to recycle your plastic bags! Plastic bags and other plastic items can work their way into our water ways and cause some real damage to the eco system.

Plastics small enough to be considered "micro-plastics" and items that are larger than plastic bags can have equally devastating impacts on the environment. Looking into the future, plastics can take hundreds of years to fully degrade.

Following consumption of plastics, fish and other aquatic life can suffer from digestive track blockage, internal bleeding, damage to the digestive track, and many other life threatening situations.

How can you make a difference? The three R's of recycling are a great way to start! Reduce your use of plastics and look for alternatives when shopping. Reuse plastic bags or other plastic items if you have them at home. Try to also find alternative items designed to be reused multiple times compared to single-use plastics. If you can't reduce your use or reuse, be sure to recycle any plastics using the appropriate method!

Looking to recycle those hard to recycle plastic bags? Bring bags to the Recycling Center located at the west end of the parking lot at Public Works Department and Village Hall.