

ECO-LIVING BLOCK PARTY



The Eco-Living Block Party is an opportunity to collectively learn about environmentally friendly actions to take individually and as a community. Your party can cover topics such as sustainable living practices, circular economy in your neighborhood, energy conservation, and demand side management techniques in engaging and fun ways to better inform community members about the tangible actions they can take to support Canada's net-zero goals.

▶ IMPACT

An Eco-living Block Party can provide your community with a fun way to learn about sustainable lifestyle habits and realistic opportunities to take action on net-zero in your everyday lives. Canada's building sector (and its associated energy demands) accounts for **up to 18%** of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions. Opportunities to reduce these emissions include implementing more sustainable building or household upgrades such as installing electric heat pumps or energy-efficient appliances and ensuring proper sealing of windows and doors. The Canadian government has invested millions of dollars in **loan programs and incentives** to support communities in upgrading their homes and buildings and for providing more affordable housing across the country. Aside from the building and home sector, Canada's **Emissions Reduction Plan** also outlines pathways to reduce emissions through waste reduction, nature-based solutions, supporting the development of active and public transportation infrastructure, and many others. Your Block Party can explore practical implementations of these incentives and pathways, in addition to the environmental and cost-saving benefits of other energy efficiency or demand response strategies in an engaging way with games, music, and activities to promote healthy and sustainable lifestyle practices that also contribute to Canada's net-zero goals.

You can be creative in hosting this action, it does not need to follow the traditional **"block party"** format. For example, you could leverage an existing event in your community or on your university's campus and ask the event organizers if you can set up a table or booth there to share all the information you otherwise would have at the Block Party. You can also host an open invite party for your friends, classmates, and the wider community to attend

and learn more about sustainable living practices. One option to diversify the content of your party is to include different stations each with their own themes, education points, and activities. For example, one station can inform participants about the importance of a **circular economy** by incorporating a Repair Cafe-style segment where you bring in a few local experts to help people repair their broken household items or devices, or share tips for repairing these items at home. At another station, you can create space for a clothing swap while sharing information about the **environmental impacts of fast fashion**. A third station can address **demand-side management solutions**, such as increasing advocating for and public transportation, advocating for improved **demand response**, grid and infrastructure upgrades, and incentives for energy efficient behavioral changes that can all provide your community with tangible social and economic co-benefits. Use this as an opportunity to be responsive to the needs of your community while supporting and showcasing examples of sustainable and energy efficient lifestyle changes that can be immediately implemented after people attend your event!



▶ HOW TO HOST A SUSTAINABLE LIVING BLOCK PARTY

▶ STEP 1: PRELIMINARY EVENT PLANNING

- Reflect on your goals and intentions for your block party. What are some tangible learning outcomes you want people to take away from this event? How do you plan to display learning materials? Are there specific community members, business owners, or professionals in your area that you would like to invite? Are there any upcoming community events that you can attach your block party to?
- Select a date well in advance so that you can prepare and provide your guests and neighbors with enough notice
- Scope out open-access locations to host this block party, such as a public park, an unused parking lot, a common room or area in your building, or even a group of driveways on your street
- Research the permitting guidelines for your city or community and whether you would need a permit to host a block party

STEP 2: PREPARE FOR PARTY

- Once you have selected the location for the event, relay this information to your friends and community members who indicated interest in attending the block party, you can also create flyers and post them in public spaces, such as a local library or coffee shop bulletin board
- Prepare an itinerary of activities, games, and learning materials to encourage individual and local level participation at the party
- Reach out to local organizations or businesses who can lead specific workshops on their sustainable living niche, for example inviting a local refillery store to set up a booth on the advantages of buying in bulk.

- Do some research on accessible home retrofit rebates and incentives that the community members can take advantage of as well as any other energy efficiency actions that can be immediately implemented
- Look into local organizations or grassroots groups in your area that you can invite to the party to discuss their work

STEP 3: TRACK YOUR IMPACT

- Keep track of people as they enter and make note of how many people attend in general, these are great for measuring your impact in hosting this event
- Before wrapping up, ask people to share their feedback on the event either as a parting activity or as its own booth at the event
- For example, you could ask people to write down one thing they learned from the event or will incorporate into their daily routine and add this to a poster or in a notebook
- You can also set a reminder to check in with event attendees in the weeks following the Block Party and share a poll asking if anyone has changed their lifestyle habits to be more environmentally friendly as a result of attending
- Take photos throughout the event and share them along with your impact results on social media and feel free to share your results and photos with us at research@studentenergy.org so we can see your awesome work!

Have fun!

▶ REFERENCES

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