

## 5 Minutes for Going Green



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September 17, 2008

## Walking the Talk

*Written by Guest Contributor*



When I realized I was ready to take the next step in my journey going green, I signed up for the [Chicago Conservation Corps \(C3\) Leadership Program](#). Their mission is to recruit, train and support a network of volunteers who improve their surrounding communities and schools through environmental service projects protecting our water, cleaning the air, restoring the land and saving energy. After the initial orientation in late August, I was hooked.

Not since my college days wearing Birkenstocks and dreaming of the [Peace Corps](#) have I felt such a rush of pure optimism. Learning so much. Hands on helping where it counts. I was thrilled. Actually making a difference.

Now that I have completed half of my training classes, I find myself more and more inspired. Sure, I was skeptical about being in classes again after such a long hiatus but the subject matter leaves me wanting more. And the depth of the knowledge C3 is providing is exceptional.

I am compelled to share the facts that produced some OMG moments for me during class:

- Chicago is 45% forest preserves.
- Our park districts provide over 500 acres of dedicated nature.
- We should be planting all of our food in raised beds due to soil contamination.
- [Vermicomposting](#) can be really easy.
- Adding a soccer field to a community reduces crime in that area by 50% **overnight**.
- 20% of the fresh water in the world is in the Great Lakes.
- 95% of the fresh water in the US is in the Great Lakes.
- Chicagoans use 1 billion gallons of water per day or roughly 20 gallons per person per day with a cost average of \$1.33 per gallon. (That's a lot of green right there!)
- Reversing the flow of the [Chicago River](#) is the largest engineering feat of modern man.
- Per the UN the world's populations will be chronically short of water by 2025 or the year my younger son graduates high school.
- When boats drop off their cargo they must restore balance by releasing the water they captured when they loaded the boat. Since the boats are loaded in different regions with a different eco systems, new [aquatic invasive species](#) are introduced through the balancing water constantly.
- [The Alliance for the Great Lakes](#) is diligently lobbying to manage the Great Lakes sustainably and protect them from depletion.

Each class I feel like my creativity increases and my outlook on the world brightens. Right before me I have so many opportunities to make a true difference. New chances to be the person I have always hoped to be- one who walks the talk.

*An Original 5 Minutes for Going Green post. Read more about Jen's green adventure at her blog [The EcoChic Organizer](#).*

Filed under [Activism](#), [Author--Jennifer \(The Eco Chic Organizer\)](#), [Conservation](#), [Green Thoughts](#) by [Guest Contributor](#)

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