

City of Madison: Low-carbon concrete success, City Engineering hosts event, allows future process

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The City of Madison Engineering Division will allow use of low-carbon concrete in the construction of public sidewalks and curb and gutter thanks to the work and initial passion of a couple local Girl Scout troops.

The City is taking this action to mitigate the climate challenge created by concrete production. Due to the sheer volume of concrete used globally, and the emissions intensity of cement — concrete's key ingredient — the manufacturing of concrete generates an estimated 7 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions.

“By using a more sustainable material, the City will reduce the carbon footprint of new infrastructure projects and encourage more local concrete producers to adopt such innovation,” City Engineer Rob Phillips said.

On April 13, 2022, the City of Madison Engineering Division hosted the Girl Scout Troops #1477 and #1952 of [the Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Badgerland Council](#), [CarbonCure Technologies](#), [Wingra Stone and Redi-Mix](#), City staff and crews for an educational event at the Engineering Division's Larry D. Nelson Operations Facility at 1600 Emil Street, Madison, Wis. The morning included a low-carbon concrete pour demonstration, low-carbon concrete craft for the Girl Scouts, [Big Green Vector](#) demonstration, [Closed Circuit Television Program](#) demonstration, [Women in Construction](#)-focused panel, mini-press conference and a concrete handprint photo opportunity with City of Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway.

“It was so great to meet with these Girl Scouts. Their research, understanding,

presentations and dedication to climate change and sustainably is incredibly impressive,” Rhodes-Conway said. “They are already making a difference – their actions spurred our investigation into low-carbon concrete options. I have no doubt we will be hearing more from these young women in the future.”

The idea for the pour demonstration came after the Girl Scout troops presented about the benefits of low-carbon concrete at a City of Madison Board of Public Works meeting earlier this year. The scouts were so passionate about sharing the positive impact low-carbon concrete can have on the environment; they continued to bring awareness to the topic in the greater-Madison area through their [YouTube project launch video](#) and their latest educational [YouTube music video](#). The scouts’ work has also been featured on the [Carbon Leadership Forum](#), a national organization focused on addressing embodied carbon in structures.

The concrete slabs poured for the demonstration will be used for the Pallet homes at 3202 Dairy Drive, to raise the homes off the ground out of any potential pooling around the foundations. Wingra Redi-Mix donated the low-carbon concrete, made with CarbonCure technology.