FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Am I a Master Gardener forever?
Certification as a Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) is granted one year at a time, but is renewable by remaining active as a Master Gardener Volunteer.

How do I get volunteer hours?
The purpose of the University of Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program is to provide horticultural information specific to local climates, soils and plants, and training to the gardening public, based on research from the University of Wisconsin and other research institutions.

You may get your hours by working on projects, committees, and many other volunteer activities listed on pages 8-14. These will provide you with the hours needed to recertify and maintain active status or for interns to complete your certification.

How do I get continuing education hours?
Recertification each year includes completing 10 hours of continuing education. A list of approved continuing education opportunities is on the back of your MGV timesheet. Call your Horticulture Educator if you have a question about a specific event or class. You must remain current in annual educational updates to provide the latest information to the public.

How many hours do I receive for attending Racine/Kenosha Master Gardener Association (RKMGA) meetings?
The business meeting may be counted as ½ hour support services volunteer time. The educational program is worth 1 hour continuing education.

How many volunteer and continuing education hours do I need?
Master Gardener Interns must complete a minimum of 24 volunteer hours before October 1st of the year they complete training.

Master Gardener Volunteers need to complete a minimum of 24 volunteer hours and 10 continuing education hours every year from October 1st to September 30th.

Do have to pay dues to be a Master Gardener? How do I pay my dues?
Annual dues are not required to be a Master Gardener Volunteer but are required to be a member of the Racine/Kenosha Master Gardener Association (RKMGA) and the Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA). If you wish to join RKMGA and WIMGA annual dues should be paid in December to the RKMGA Treasurer (see page 37).

Can I take classes for continuing education at other places than UW-Extension?
Yes, you can. Make sure that the classes you select provide true gardening information and will add to your knowledge. If in doubt, contact your horticulture educator.
**Is my travel time counted with my hours?**

Yes, it is for volunteering but not for continuing education. For trips, tours and potlucks only the pure education or volunteer time is counted, not meals and socializing.

**Do I need to report my hours on a regular basis?**

Yes. You are required to report your hours annually using the Master Gardener Volunteer Time Sheet. The deadline for reporting all of your volunteer work and continuing education is October 1st.

**After I complete my hours requirements (volunteer and continuing education), should I still turn in hours?**

Yes. The total number of hours is important on reports to local and state financial supporters and administration.

**Can I carry over hours from one year to the next?**

No. The Master Gardening year runs from October 1st through September 30th of the following year. Hours may not be carried from year to year. Any hours after October 1st should be counted in the next calendar year.

**May interns attend continuing education classes/trips? Should those hours be reported?**

Absolutely! Interns are welcome and encouraged to take advantage of all continuing education classes and field trips. Time should be turned in as continuing education on your report of hours. Interns should report continuing education above and beyond General Training.

**What if my life has changed and I’m having a difficulty fulfilling my volunteer or education requirement?**

If for any reason you cannot fulfill requirements for the Master Gardener Volunteer program, contact your horticulture educator as soon as possible. Some flexibility is possible.

**I’ve done a certain Master Gardener project for a few years, is there any problem switching to something new?**

No problem! In fact, it will widen your knowledge and experience if you do change. You will meet new people, too! Contact your horticulture educator or project committee member for help in finding new volunteer opportunities.

**I have a great idea for a new project. What do I need to do to get it approved as a Master Gardener project?**

Fill out a project request form, which is available from your horticulture educator or RKMGA project committee chairperson. The completed project request form must be submitted by October 1st. New project requests must meet project guidelines listed on pages 8-9 and be approved by the Project Committee. The Project Committee makes their final decisions on projects in October.
OK, the summer is over and I still don’t have enough hours. What should I do?

There are several committees that meet and are most active during the fall and winter. Choose one or two of these and look for continuing education classes and opportunities, as well during this time. Pace yourself, and as with a paying position, seek to attain a certain number of hours per week/month.

Who should I call if I have questions or problems making my hours?

Call your Horticulture Educator, either Patti Nagai or Barb Larson, as soon as possible. They usually don’t bite and can be very helpful.

Should I wear my name badge?

Yes! Wearing the official University of Wisconsin-Extension name badge identifies you as a representative while conducting and serving in programs as a Master Gardener Volunteer. When you are with other MGVs, it provides easy identification and facilitates getting to know one another.