

Earth Day 2012

“Capture the Earth” photo contest

The Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet invites student photographers in middle school (grades 6-8) to submit an original photograph for the “Capture the Earth” environmental photo contest. The winner will receive two nights lodging at any Kentucky State Resort Park with his or her family. Judges will look for originality and creativity, photo composition and how well your photo represents the Earth Day theme: *Celebrating Kentucky’s Forests*.



Bigtooth aspen. Photo by Kentucky Division of Forestry

How to Enter

Send your photo by email as an attachment to kidsphotocontest@ky.gov. Your photograph must be saved as a jpeg file. File sizes may not exceed 5MB. The subject line of your email should read STUDENT EARTH DAY PHOTO CONTEST. Please include in the body of the email:

- Your name, age and grade;
- Your parent or guardian’s email address and phone number;
- The name of your school and the county where it is located;
- Where and when the photo was taken; and
- A paragraph explaining the photo and why you believe it represents Kentucky’s Earth Day theme of “*Celebrating Kentucky’s Forests*.” Be creative. Keep in mind that “forestry” is more than just trees. We use products every day that are made from timber resources. A variety of professions have been created because of forests—foresters, fire management and forest health specialists are just a few. Remember that cities have “urban forests” that provide a canopy for our city streets and downtown businesses. Forests provide clean air and water. So put on your thinking caps, get out your cameras and start taking pictures. Good luck and have fun!
- **DEADLINE:** Send in your photo by 4:30 p.m., Monday, April 9, 2012.

Rules

Contest begins at 12:01 a.m. EDT on Feb. 14, 2012. Photos may be submitted until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, April 9, 2012. Only electronic submissions are eligible. Limit one entry per student. The Energy and Environment Cabinet (EEC) is not responsible for lost, late, illegible, incomplete, or entries not received for any reason. Entries become sole property of EEC, and none will be acknowledged or returned. By entering, entrant warrants that the entry (1) is original and does not infringe the intellectual property rights of any third party, (2) has not been published in any medium and (3) has not won an award.

Eligibility

Open to all Kentucky middle school students. Email Ricki.Gardenhire@ky.gov or telephone 502-564-5525 for more information.

Judging

All entries will be judged by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet communications staff based on the following criteria:

- Creativity and originality (50 percent)
- Photo composition (25 percent)
- Appropriateness to contest theme (25 percent)

Photography 101

Helpful Photo Tips

1 Select your Subject

Photograph a subject from different levels. For instance, if you are taking a picture of a puppy, try getting on the floor and taking the photo with the camera level to the puppy. Then try taking a photo from a standing position while the puppy is looking up.

2 Heed the Background

Make sure the background is not too distracting. An example of that would be you are taking a picture of a person outside with trees in the background. If you are not careful, it will look like the tree branches are coming out of the person's head. Try moving the camera or moving the person to avoid this.

3 Use a Flash

Try using a flash outside if your camera will allow it. Often the sun will create harsh shadows especially if you are photographing people. A flash will fill in those shadows.

4 Get up Close

Don't be afraid to get close to the subject. "Fill the frame" is an expression that means to fill the viewfinder with the subject...just so long as it isn't an alligator or something like



that! But don't get so close that you cut off part of a subject that you didn't mean to.

5 Landscape vs. Portrait

Take both horizontal...often called landscape mode, and vertical...often call portrait mode, photos. Check both ways to make sure which works best for your subject.

6 Rule of Thirds

Use the rule of thirds. What that means is to try not to always place your subject in the middle of the frame. Imagine your camera viewfinder is divided into a grid of thirds both ways. Make sure your subject is placed where those imaginary lines intersect.

7 Sun over your Shoulder

Take a photo with the sun shining over your shoulder and toward your subject. This works best for subjects, but not people, who will squint their eyes at the sun.

8 See each Person's Face

When taking photos of groups, make sure you can see everyone's face. Either move the camera to a higher angle or make sure your subjects are standing in such a way that you can see each face.

9 Try Something Different

For instance, if you are taking a photo of a group of people, have them look at you and smile, then do a fun photo where they are all making faces. Also, take candid photos, don't pose all of them. Capture a moment as it happens; as if you are not there.

10 Focus your Camera

Make sure your camera is in focus. Just because it is an auto-focus camera doesn't mean you can't take blurry photos. Many cameras make a beeping noise or show a solid green light when the focus is "locked."