

Dailycamera – Boulder, CO

Eco-Products signs retail lease for organic products store

Ellie's Organic Home Center to be next to Sunflower

By [Alicia Wallace \(Contact\)](#)
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Part of Boulder's Village Shopping Center now boasts a canary-yellow tinge with the soon-to-be-opened Sunflower Farmers Market.

Come September, the center could add a little more "green."

Eco-Products Inc., a local company known for items such as compostable cups and flatware, plans to base its first Ellie's Organic Home Center -- something Eco-Products' owner calls an "environmental Target" -- next door to Sunflower.

"It's a complement to a Whole Foods or a Sunflower Market," said Steve Savage, owner of Eco-Products. "It's everything for your home that is not food."

The tentatively named Ellie's Organic Home Center was spun off from the 18-year-old Eco-Products last fall. The decision, which keeps Ellie's as wholly owned by Eco-Products, was made to give Eco-Products more of a focus on its environmental food service wholesale business and also to create a visible retail outlet for other aspects of the business -- such as its sustainable design center; patio and garden; and general merchandise offerings, Savage said.

The 9,000-square-foot spot to the south of Sunflower will allow Ellie's to add other departments, he added, noting the store's new departments will include a conservation center; apparel and linens; organic wine and beer; and an education center.

The intention, Savage said, is to provide a one-stop shop of healthy, sustainable and environmentally products -- from Yolo low- and zero-VOC paints and Java-Log coffee firelogs to Tushies gel-free diapers and Pet Promise dog foods.

The store also will carry a variety of local companies' products such as Twist, Pangea Organics and, of course, some of Eco-Products' cups, plates, bowls and other items, he said.

With Ellie's just a stone's throw away from Boulder business mainstay McGuckin Hardware, there might be some overlap in paint and some general merchandise items, "but that's about it," Savage said.

Dave Hight, a co-owner of McGuckin, was unavailable for comment Thursday afternoon.

If the first Ellie's is a success, the plan is to open about 30 stores nationwide in the next three years, Savage said, adding they would be strategically placed near a natural foods grocer such as a Whole Foods or a Sunflower.

Mike Gilliland, founder and chief executive officer of the Boulder-based Sunflower, said he viewed a neighboring Ellie's as complementary to his new store that's set to open to the public Tuesday.

"It's nice to have a little natural lifestyle epicenter," he said. "I think we'll play off each other well."

Eco-Products expects to apply for building permits with the city of Boulder around May, begin construction on the interior a few weeks later and open the store by September, Savage said.

Contact Camera Business Writer Alicia Wallace at 303-473-1332 or wallacea@dailycamera.com.