



[Visit Our Website](#)

Make Every Day Earth Day - "Green" Your Choices - Save Resources - Be Happy

Introducing "Loop" and More!

Basic recycling information has become confusing for residents over the past few decades. More materials have become accepted in curbside programs, along with others that are accepted at special collection locations. Learn about our new, multi-jurisdictional education campaign and meet "Loop!" Take a moment to address some of the myths connected to solar energy, and, with the cold weather arriving, learn ways to keep your utility costs manageable.

[Visit Our Website](#)

ReBuiding Trust in Recycling

In a first-of-its-kind effort, Will County joined DuPage, Kane, and McHenry Counties; the Solid Waste Agencies of Lake County and Northern Cook County; along with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus to launch the “Feed the Cart” recycling education and outreach campaign.

Through a highly competitive grant process, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded the group the largest Recycling Education and Outreach grant in Illinois in over 30 years. The funded campaign aims to increase recyclables’ tonnage by 15% before 2030.

This marks the first time in the State's history that such a coordinated recycling education campaign has been launched. The goals of the campaign are to:

- Engage Chicagoland residents by promoting the environmental and economic benefits of recycling.
- Educate residents to increase recycling and reduce contamination at the community level.
- Improve the quality of materials placed into the recycling stream throughout the region, resulting in a less contaminated, more marketable stream of recyclables.
- Encourage residents and businesses to “buy recycled,” to seek out products made from recycled material or packaged in post-consumer recycled content.



Let LOOP steal your heart and "eat" your recyclables!

Visit FeedtheCart.org to see more of Loop's adventures and visit WillCountyGreen.com for all your recycling questions.

Loop likes Glass Bottles, Plastic Bottles, Tubs, and Jugs, Aluminum Cans and Foil rolled into balls, Steel Cans and nearly all types of Paper!

Triple-Play: Pumpkins, Electronics and Shredding

Mark the calendar for Saturday, November 1 for some family fun at Lewis University. Will County's Resource Recovery and Energy Division will be hosting its annual "Triple Play" event on the first Saturday of November, in partnership with Lewis University. If weather permits, you may meet our office worms that eat our workplace food scraps! We will be accepting:

Electronics - TVs (all sizes), Computers, Laptops, all types of telephones, radios, microwaves, power tools, cords, game devices, string lights, and a variety of small scrap metal items.

Confidential Documents - Bring us documents containing social security numbers, bank numbers, and other sensitive information and Lewis Sustainability Club shall assist you with unloading them.

Pumpkins - Bring a blanket or chair to watch the Physics students operate their Catapults, shooting pumpkins and gourds through the air with varying degrees of ease.

All pumpkins must be free of candle wax, glue or decoration. The pumpkins will be taken to Christiansen Farms for composting. Lewis University collects campus food scraps year-round for composting, making them an excellent host site for this popular annual event.



Saturday, November 1, 2025
Lewis University
1 University Way
Romeoville

9am-Noon

Limit Documents - 3 banker boxes

Limit Electronics - 2 TVs per
vehicle

Solar: An Excellent Energy Source

October is **National Clean Energy Action Month**, making it a great time to explore some common misconceptions about Solar Energy. When solar is installed on the ground, some people have asked us:

Will the solar pollute soil or groundwater?

Simply put, no, solar arrays do not pollute local soil or groundwater. Solar can even improve the fertility and stability of depleted farmland when paired with deep rooted, native plants and prairie grasses underneath solar panels (known as ecovoltaics). This is a common practice adopted by developers in Will County and across the globe.

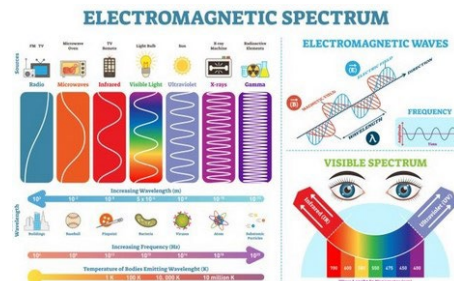
The misconception that solar pollutes the ground is invalid. Most solar cells contain a small percentage of hazardous material, such as lead soldering. This is not unique to solar; lead solder is a very common material used in LED lights and for securing the flow of electricity throughout the grid. The presence of these materials does not threaten the health of our soil or water resources for a few reasons.

1. Solar panels are constructed with an enclosed layer, which keeps internal components from leaking out and outside contaminants (dirt and water) from seeping inside.
2. Solar panels must undergo testing to determine their toxicity before reaching the market. These tests determine the disposal procedures, set by the Environmental



Do solar panels emit dangerous electromagnetic waves?

While solar Photovoltaic (PV) systems do produce an electromagnetic field (EMF), it does not present any threat to human health. The waves created by solar panels and inverters are considered “low frequency” at about 60 Hz. Higher wave frequency is generally more interactive with the human body. Wi-Fi routers, Bluetooth devices, cell phones, and microwaves all have significantly higher EMFs than solar systems.



Lastly, solar panels located in unincorporated areas are regulated by the US EPA, the Illinois Dept of

Protection Agency (EPA), for solar panels at their end-of-life or when damaged

What happens to the solar panels if the solar company goes bankrupt?

The County requires a decommissioning plan which often includes insurance coverage. The panels would be considered an asset and likely sold to a new investor.

Agriculture, and Will County ordinances to assure materials are properly maintained throughout their useful life, which can be 25 years. These regulations are intended to protect the environment and the property owner.

Can solar panels be recycled? Simply stated, yes. Like electronic devices, solar panels may be disassembled and parts reused or completely recycled.

Relax and Save the Fireflies

Don't waste your time fighting mother nature, by raking leaves to "clean" your lawn. A light covering of leaves provides shelter for pollinators over the winter. If you have mature trees and are concerned about a heavy covering, mow them and this will speed decomposition while still protecting firefly and other larvae.

Leaves also act as a natural fertilizer, providing nutrients to your lawn, trees, bushes and flowers.

Piles of leaves around trees and bushes can also serve as an insulation blanket during the winter, holding in precious moisture during the dry windy season.



Relax and enjoy this colorful season. Embrace leaves scattered across the lawn.

If you still feel the need to tidy your lawn, consider adopting these options:

- Chop the leaves with a mulching mower but leave them on the lawn and they will decompose naturally
- Rake leaves off the lawn to use as mulch in garden beds
- Make compost: Combine fallen leaves (“brown material”) with grass clippings and other “green material” and keep moist and well mixed. You’ll have nutrient-rich compost to add to your garden next spring
- Make a "leaf-free path" while leaving the rest of the lawn more natural.

Cut Your Energy Bills: Furnace

Fall is an ideal time to check your heating systems to be sure they are ready for warming during the incoming winter.

- Hire a qualified contractor to inspect and/or repair electric/gas connections and other heating system components
- Clear indoor and outdoor vents of obstructions or debris
- Clean or replace air filters each month
- Adjust your thermostat settings to 65–68°F for energy savings,



How Low Can You Go?

Keep the thermostat in the 60s by:

Wearing a sweater or layers.

Wearing socks and slippers.

especially when you are away from home

Keep a blanket on the sofa to snuggle.

- Lower your water heater to 120°F

Find guidance on hiring a heating and cooling contractor on [Energy Star's site here](#), plus more seasonal efficiency tips on [Nicor's site here](#).

Saving Water also Saves Energy

While most of us take water for granted, we should be aware that it takes energy to clean, deliver, and heat the water coming from our faucets. All of us are experiencing increasing costs for the infrastructure that delivers the water so it is more important now, than ever, to conserve water.

Switching to a WaterSense labeled sink faucet or showerhead, for example, can save the average family more than 330 kilowatts hours of electricity every year while also cutting water use substantially. Learn more about the relationship between water use and energy use on the [WaterSense website](#).



Modern or Traditional Options are offered at your local home improvement store.

Paint Recycling: Statewide on Dec. 1

The Paint Stewardship Act that passed unanimously in 2023 kicks into action this December 1, 2025. It will allow interested retailers to take back latex and oil-based paint from residents and contractors. More information will be coming out soon but for anyone purchasing paint, please keep these tips in mind to reduce unwanted paint:

- Purchase only the amount needed, There are website calculators and staff in many stores to assist you in determining your needs.
- Seal leftover paint properly. Replace the lid securely and turn the container upside down for the best seal.
- Use leftover paint on other projects.
- Give paint away to friends or check with your local school or community theatre to learn if they may want it.
- After Dec. 1, 2025 check our website for retailers in the area that will accept paint at no charge under the new Illinois state law.



Paint Recycling is the most requested item from callers to the Resource Recovery and Energy Division. This new service is the result of staff and elected officials working with industry to provide a year-round solution.

Batteries: Hazards and Solutions

Batteries have become commonplace in our lives from the phones we carry to the tools we use and the many devices we depend upon daily. Some need to be handled with care. Lithium-ion batteries can heat up after becoming non-usable, causing fires because they use liquid electrolytes made of flammable organic solvents. A new water-based electrolyte with the texture of kids' play slime promises to make batteries safer.

Because it dissolves in water, the quasi-solid electrolyte may allow for easier recycling of valuable metals from batteries.

The Illinois Battery Stewardship Act passed unanimously in 2024 promises to make all battery recycling easier. A collection program is being developed now that is expected to start in January of 2026. For now, be sure to recycle your rechargeable and lithium-ion batteries at the County Land Use Office in Joliet and at many partner sites around the County.

Responsible Management = Protect All Terminals



Take to a Battery Collection Site



Be sure to place tape on the ends of the batteries you are storing to take to a recycling drop-off.

ReUse and Repair are Important

Anytime an item is repaired, rather than replaced, saves resources. Will County's website offers a page on this topic listing businesses with services to assist residents in preserving and maintaining items so they can be reused.



Consider cutlery, having knives and scissors sharpened can make them last longer and save money over the cost of replacement. Having a purse or shoes repaired, especially an expensive item, saves money, prevents waste and conserves resources.

Visit our [Reuse and Repair Website](#) page and let us know of any additional resources that we should list.

Often, people do not consider the resources that are used to make an item. Leather must be treated and shipped hundreds of miles to be offered in shoes, jackets and other clothing items. Water, chemicals, energy are all resources used to make products. Imagine how much pollution is prevented when we repair an item instead of replacing it.

No Plastic Bags in Recycling Carts

Will County has been working overtime to reduce plastic film contamination of recycling. A recycling symbol on plastic does NOT mean an item is recyclable. In the case of plastic grocery bags, bread bags, newspaper covers, plastic film wrap around beverage cases, and other plastic film, recycling may occur but only by dropping the material off at select retail locations.

If you must line your recycling collection container, either empty items loose into the cart or use a paper bag to transfer items. If your cart is blown over or becomes a playground for raccoons, paper bags may



Please drop-off clean plastic film at
Berkots - Jewel - Kohl's - Mariano's
- Target - Walmart

reduce litter concern and make clean up easier.

Consider ways to reduce plastic film by bringing a reusable bag to shop. Ask for paper bags. NEVER place plastic film in recycling carts or recycling dumpsters.

Upcoming Events

Nov 1: Triple Play: Pumpkin for Compost, Electronics, Shredding in Romeoville
Nov 8: IEPA HHW in Romeoville

Nov 15: America Recycles Day

Dec 1: Paint Recycling Statewide Launch

Dec 1- Jan 31: String Light Recycling at some County Buildings

Dec 2: Giving Tuesday (consider giving to environmental charities)

Jan 1: Battery Recycling Statewide Launch



Water Conservation



Search for recycling and disposal options on willcountygreen.com



Geothermal Energy



Green Business Star



School Earth Flag



Take a Virtual Tour



Solar Energy



Info on Electric Vehicles



Wind Energy



Cleaning Alternatives



Donate Items



Composting



Plastic Bag & Film

Reporting Data

Sustainable Infrastructure



Electronics Drop-Off



Household Hazardous
Waste Drop-Offs



Medication Take-Back

WillCountyGreen.com

A website of Will County

58 E. Clinton Street

Joliet, IL 60432

815-727-8834



Will County

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant

County Executive



Resource Recovery
& Energy

*A Division of the
Will County Land Use
Department*

Written by

Marta Keane

Contributions from

Briana Moore

Johanna Strohschein

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Will County | Will County - Land Use Dept Resource Recovery & Energy 58 E.
Clinton Street | Joliet, IL 60432 US



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