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

Paint Recycling & Holidays

What to do with unwanted paint has been one of the most frequently asked questions since 2001, when the Illinois EPA ceased accepting latex paint. In 2015 Will County began accepting it, along with residential oil-based paint at our one-day Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events. As of December 1, 2025, residential and business paint is being accepted throughout Illinois. Read more below and pick up a few tips to reduce waste, give green gifts, recycle smart and be more energy efficient. We wish you a warm holiday and Happy New Year!

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Paint Recycling Available Year-Round

The Paint Stewardship Act was passed with bipartisan support and no opposition in the Illinois General Assembly. It created a manufacturer funded paint collection program. The non-profit, PaintCare, has spent over a year locating and training retailers willing to accept paint. As of December 1, the program has begun with nearly 300 locations statewide!

Will County has over 20 retail locations that accept at least five gallons of paint from residents and businesses. Some even accept more. For businesses with 100 or more gallons, there may be direct collection service available through PaintCare.

If your garage, basement or shed has unwanted paint, you may now take it to a participating store for recycling or repurposing. The program is expected to take in over one million gallons annually. Will County will continue to accept paint at our one-day events, but the PaintCare program offers easier access in a more cost effective manner than offered previously. For a list of locations, please visit www.PaintCare.org



Paint Disposal just got a lot easier!

Visit www.PaintCare.org to find over 20 locations around Will County to accept your unwanted latex and oil-based paint at no charge.

Shopping for an E-Bike?

If you are thinking of purchasing an E-bike for yourself or your children, please be aware that [Illinois law](#) requires a legal low-speed electric bicycle (e-bike) to meet all of the following requirements:



- The motor must not exceed 750 watts of power.
- The maximum assisted speed must not exceed 28 mph.
- The bicycle must have fully functional pedals.

Devices that have a motor greater than 750 watts or are capable of going faster than 20 mph without pedaling are e-motos, not e-bikes. E-motos should not be purchased for minors nor operated by anyone under 18 years old.

Reputable bike shops understand state and local regulations. You're encouraged to shop at a trusted, local bike shop when shopping for a legal e-bike, pedal bike, and accessories. They can help you determine the right e-bike for your needs and will provide the service and support you need to ride safely.

Check out [Ride Illinois' Bike-Friendly Illinois Map](#) to locate local bike shops and to learn more about bike safety.

Give the Gift of Energy Efficiency

Take a moment to consider giving gifts that will reduce energy use, potentially saving resources and cutting utility bills - truly, a gift that keeps on giving!

Pressure Cookers: A highly efficient appliance that saves power by reducing cooking times (up to 70%) using less energy compared to ovens and stovetops.



Heated Blanket: Highly effective for personal warmth, allowing the user to set the thermostat lower when using on a chair, sofa or bed. Some brands offer timers and overheat protection.

Dryer Balls: A set of dryer balls will separate clothes allowing hot air to circulate through them reducing drying time by 10-40% depending on the appliance.

Smart Plug/Smart Surge Protector/Smart Outlet: Devices in standby mode such as TVs, game consoles, and more use energy when not in use. A smart plug, surge protector or outlet will cut energy when devices are off.

Draft Stopper: Block leaks from under doors to keep your heated or cooled areas comfortable. These can make home heating and cooling systems run more efficiently by preventing drafts and enhancing comfort.

Smart Thermostat: More of a personal gift or one for someone close to you (parent or offspring). This device is programmable, allows for personalized scheduling and may have an app for remote scheduling. Heating and cooling can be adjusted for times when no one is home or when covered in blankets in bed. Energy Star models add to the efficiency.

Green Holiday Practices

This time of year can create waste, but there are a variety of ways to avoid it and create habits that serve to reduce unwanted material year-round.

- Send email greetings instead of cards to reduce paper use.
- Shop for recycled content cards, avoid foil lined envelopes and glitter.
- Reuse old cards as gift tags.
- Use LED lights and timers for energy efficient decorations.



Avoid bows, ribbons, metallic gift wrap and glitter. Wrap gifts in reusable bags, boxes you've decorated or a reusable basket

- Serve food and beverages on real plates and glasses that can be washed and reused many times. Use real utensils instead of disposable (find some extras at the local thrift store).
- Make use of natural materials for wreaths to avoid sending plastic broken or faded items from becoming waste later.
- Put together a package of items that introduce friends to more environmental practices such as dish towels, cloth napkins, refillable products, laundry sheets, plastic free dish washing detergent tablets, in a reusable gift bag.
- Add food scraps to your backyard compost such as tea leaves, coffee grounds, banana peels, apple cores, veggie and fruit peels.

Green Gift Tips

We all receive gifts that we simply do not want. While it is the thought that counts, and we appreciate the effort, it is kinder to the planet to give items that don't become unwanted waste. Here are a few suggestions:

- Items made from natural materials such as bamboo, pine cones, greenery that could be composted if unwanted.
- Gift cards to reduce packaging and avoid purchasing an unwanted item.



Gift Tip: TICKETS!

- Give a membership to an environmental organization.
- A compost bin or rain barrel
- Wildflower seed packet
- Gift certificate to a restaurant, greenhouse, the farm bureau, or department store with plenty of items to choose from.
- Consider giving your skills as a gift, babysit one night, make a meal, clean a room, take them shopping or fill some other need with your talent over the coming year.

Movies, Theatre, Dance, Concerts, Sport Events, Museum, Auto Show, Arcade, Golf, etc. may allow you to share time and make lasting memories.

Salt for Safety and Environment

Salt is well known as part of road treatment that many people rely on it for driveways and sidewalks. However, salt doesn't really go away as much as it accumulates as runoff in soil and waterways, harming vegetation and aquatic life. There are steps we can take to stay safe, prevent slips, slides and falls:

1. Clear all the snow from the driveway and walkways before it turns to ice.
2. Less is often more. A 12-ounce mug of salt can be enough for 500 sq ft of driveway or 10 sidewalk squares.
3. Distribute the salt evenly (no clumps)
4. Have alternatives - remember that rock salt stops working when



Some of our local communities use beet juice on roadways, reducing damage to roadways and vehicles using them.

temperatures fall below 15 degrees.
There are deicer products made for
colder temps.

Make Holiday Recycling Easier

Packaging is always the target of recycling programs but not all packaging is easily recycled. Here is some guidance:

DO Recycle Curbside

Gift Wrap (except metallic)

Greeting Cards and Envelopes (except foil lined and heavily glittered)

Paper Gift Tags

Boxes

Gift Bags (except metallic)

Reuse

Gift Bags, Boxes, Bows

Holiday Cards may be cut into gift tags

Recycle at Participating Retailer

Plastic bubble wrap, plastic film bags

Landfill

Plastic Gift Tags

Ribbon and Bows

Metallic papers and foil-lined envelopes

Damaged decorative plastic gift bags

Plastic candy liners



Reuse is better for the environment than recycling but recycling beats landfilling every day. Just be sure what you place in your curbside recycling cart is accepted.

Solar Works in the Winter

For years staff has been asked if solar really works this far north and in the cold. Solar powers the space station in the cold of outer space and cold can actually make solar panels more efficient!

People also ask about the impact of snow on solar panels and while it may partially block the panel temporarily, it tends to slide off, with light dustings having little impact to the UV rays.

As an example, between January and November of this year, the rooftop solar array atop the Will County Courthouse has generated 97,310 kWh of electricity,. This is enough energy to:

- save 702,000 pounds of CO₂ emissions
- power an EV to drive 796,000 miles (32 times around the circumference of the Earth at the equator)
- draw down the same CO₂ emissions as 5,300 trees



View of part of the solar array on the roof of the Will County Courthouse

Snow around the panels can actually improve the power generation due to the "albedo effect" referring to the reflective quality of the snow boosting reflective light to the panels.

Electronic Recycling Options

The holidays are a common way to receive electronic items, including replacing items that are broken. We often hear that people are looking for places to take unwanted devices. Please let friends and family know that while we have a couple of holidays impacting electronic recycling service, we do have numerous opportunities for you to bring your unwanted electronic items.

Coming up this month and in January, the following drop-off locations are available:

Lockport Township every Tuesday and Friday morning, 6am to 11am

Bolingbrook Park District the 1st and 3rd Tuesday from 5pm to 7pm

Frankfort Township the 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 5pm to 7pm

Peotone Police Dept on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 5pm to 7pm

New Lenox Township usually 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 5pm to 7pm*

Channahon Township the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month 5pm to 7pm

Wilmington is open once a month, the 2nd Thursday 5pm to 7pm

Manhattan Township is open once a month, the 4th Thursday 5pm to 7pm**

Saturday, January 17th a special collection will be offered in Shorewood from 8am to Noon.



No collection due to Holidays at:

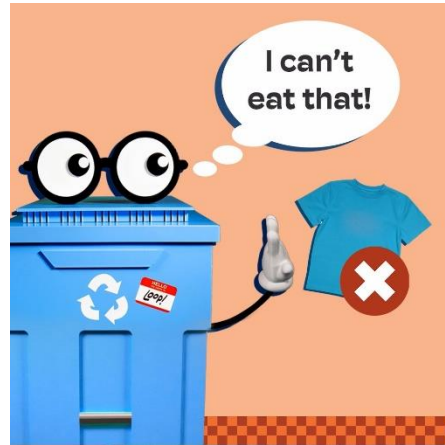
*New Lenox Township on Christmas Eve

**Manhattan Township on Christmas Day

Cleaning out the Clothes?

Clothing is a popular gift to ourselves and our loved ones at this time of year. In some cases, we are replacing items that have become stained or worn while other times, the old clothes were simply outgrown. Never place these items in the recycling cart but bring them to a thrift store for reuse and recycling.

Some thrift stores only accept items in good condition, but others, that have partnered with the County for our Textile collection can recycle the items not suitable for reuse. These include: Goodwill, St. Vincent DePaul, Savers, and donation boxes offered by USAgain and Helping Hands.



Never Place Clothing in the Cart

Please take unwanted clothes and shoes to reuse centers or the County Textile Collection in the Spring and Fall

Upcoming Events

Dec 1: Paint Recycling Statewide Launch

Dec 1- Jan 31: String Light Recycling (at some County Buildings, Homer Glen, Three River Library in Channahon and Minooka)

Jan 1: Battery Recycling Statewide Launch

Jan 17: Electronics and Scrap Metal Collection in Shorewood



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



Plastic Bag & Film



Electronics Drop-Off

Donate Items



Reporting Data



Household Hazardous
Waste Drop-Offs

Composting



Sustainable Infrastructure



Medication Take-Back

WillCountyGreen.com

A website of Will County

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Resource Recovery
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