



**Solid Waste District of
LaPorte County**
(219) 326-0014
(800) 483-7700
www.alco.org/solidwaste
Spring 2003



Household hazardous waste collection dates set for 2003

Once again, the Solid Waste District of LaPorte County will be sponsoring mobile collections of household hazardous waste (HHW).

HHW includes a variety of household products, such as cleaners, automotive fluids, oil-based paints and stains, pesticides, waste fuels, and mercury-containing items. Because of the chemicals they contain, these products cannot be disposed with household trash. To help residents dispose of them properly, we offer monthly drop-offs for HHW during the spring, summer, and fall. Residents

can drop off materials at no charge. All mobile collections begin at 9 a.m. and conclude promptly at 2 p.m. Materials are only accepted during these hours. Mark your calendar now for this year's collections:

- March 22, Michigan City, Kabelin ACE Hardware, Marquette Mall
- April 12, LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2
- May 3, Michigan City, Kabelin ACE Hardware, Marquette Mall
- June 7, LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2
- July 19, Michigan City, Kabelin

- ACE Hardware, Marquette Mall
 - August 2, LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2
 - September 20, Michigan City, Kabelin ACE Hardware, Marquette Mall
 - October 4, LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2
- Some businesses that generate small quantities of hazardous waste may also participate in this mobile collection program. However, there are DISPOSAL FEES for businesses. For details or to pre-register your business for an upcoming date, call Tom Buford at 1-800-946-4449 or 219-326-1425.

It's time to recycle

Check your clock! Is it almost 6 a.m. on your recycling day? Then, it's time to recycle. Hustle that bin to the curb.

6 a.m.!

Recyclables must be at the curb in your blue or red bin by 6 a.m. on your scheduled collection day. If your recyclables are at the curb by 6 a.m., your bin should not and will not be missed. However, if you try to guess when the truck will come, you might miss it entirely. Remember—there are no return trips to pick up recycling that didn't make it to the curb on time!

Be sure that your red or blue recycling bin is clearly visible from the street. Your bin is the driver's signal to stop and pick up recyclables. The driver will pick up recyclables set out next to the bin only if they are in a container that is clearly marked "Recycling." Remember—no bin, no pickup.

In LaPorte County, recyclables are collected every other week. If you aren't sure which week is now your scheduled week, call our office or visit our website, www.alco.org/solidwaste. The monthly collection calendar is available when you click on "Curbside Recycling." The weekly recycling calendar is also printed in the LaPorte Herald-Argus by township. Look on Page 2 of the newspaper under the heading "Did You Hear."

For more information about recycling, call our office, 219-326-0014 or 1-800-483-7700, or visit our website, www.alco.org/solidwaste.

E-cycling kept 75 tons of material out of landfills

In 2002, we hosted a recycling event for obsolete electronics. All LaPorte County residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations were invited to drop off electronic items for recycling.

Prior to the collection, we had hoped to receive 20 tons of material. But once again, LaPorte Countians outdid themselves! We collected a whopping 75 tons during this three-day event. Here's a summary of the results:

Item	Number Received	Weight (Pounds)
Monitors	839	41,843
Televisions	512	38,143
CPUs	586	17,444
Peripherals*	2,826	26,066
Copiers/Faxes	191	5,069
VCRs	659	4,805
Stereos	976	15,077
Microwaves	20	1,715
Totals	6,609	150,162

*Computer peripherals, such as printers, scanners, keyboards, mice, disk drives, etc.

We will host another recycling collection for electronics this fall, Thursday, October 2, through Saturday, October 4, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day! Watch for more details in upcoming newsletters, the local newspaper, or at our website, www.alco.org/solidwaste.

For more information on e-scrap and e-cycling, see Page 2.

Tire and White Goods Recycling Day set for May 17

Again this spring, residents will be able to drop off tires and white goods (large appliances) for recycling. The day-long event will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 17 at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds.

There is no charge to drop off up to 10 tires of any size and large appliances, such as washers, dryers, stoves, refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, humidifiers, and water heaters. Freon

will be extracted from refrigerant appliances at no charge.

If you have more than 10 tires, you must make arrangements in advance with the District Recycling Coordinator. If you do not make arrangements in advance, we will only accept 10 tires. In addition, driver's license and vehicle registration must be presented to the officer at the collection prior to dropping off tires. The District reserves the

District values your comments

The Solid Waste District of LaPorte County relies on suggestions from citizens to design and operate successful programs. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact members of the board, citizen's advisory committee, or staff.

Board Members

Mayor Sheila Brillson
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Mayor Kathy Chrobak (Vice Chairwoman)
Commissioner William Hager
Commissioner Marlow Harmon (Chairman)
Councilwoman Ann Spevak
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Ted Daube
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James Kintzele
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Leon Meyers
Dennis Nichols (Vice Chairman)
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Carol A. Trost, Controller
Nancy K. Gibson, Administrative Assistant/School Recycling Programs
Michelle M. Buford, Financial Clerk
Paulette S. Schuster, Secretary
Tom Buford, HHW Coordinator
Joseph D. Jokantas, Project Coordinator, Westville Compost Site

right to refuse any loads.

This drop-off event is for residents ONLY. No businesses or industries may drop off items.

Last year, we held Tire and White Goods Recycling Days in the spring and the fall, collecting a total of 209.2 tons of appliances and tires for recycling. That's 209.2 tons of material that didn't go to any landfill! Thanks, LaPorte County. We'll see you again this spring.

Are hazards lurking in your computer?

During the years that you own and use your computer, it poses no great hazard to you and your family. Unless, of course, you drop your laptop on your foot or pinch your finger under the CPU tower during a spring housecleaning.

No, the hazards lurking in your computer have little to do with its use and everything to do with its disposal. If computers are disposed in the wrong ways or the wrong places, they can introduce pollutants and toxins into the environment.

At the end of their useful lives, computers become e-scrap. E-scrap includes about 1,000 distinct substances. Some of these, such as gold, silver, copper, platinum, palladium, steel, and aluminum,

A standard monitor, referred to as a CRT for its major component, the cathode ray tube, contains lead. During use, this lead, along with barium, shields users from harmful radiation. Monitors also contain phosphor, a substance that the U.S. Navy warns is "extremely toxic." At least two states, California and Massachusetts, have banned CRTs from landfill disposal.

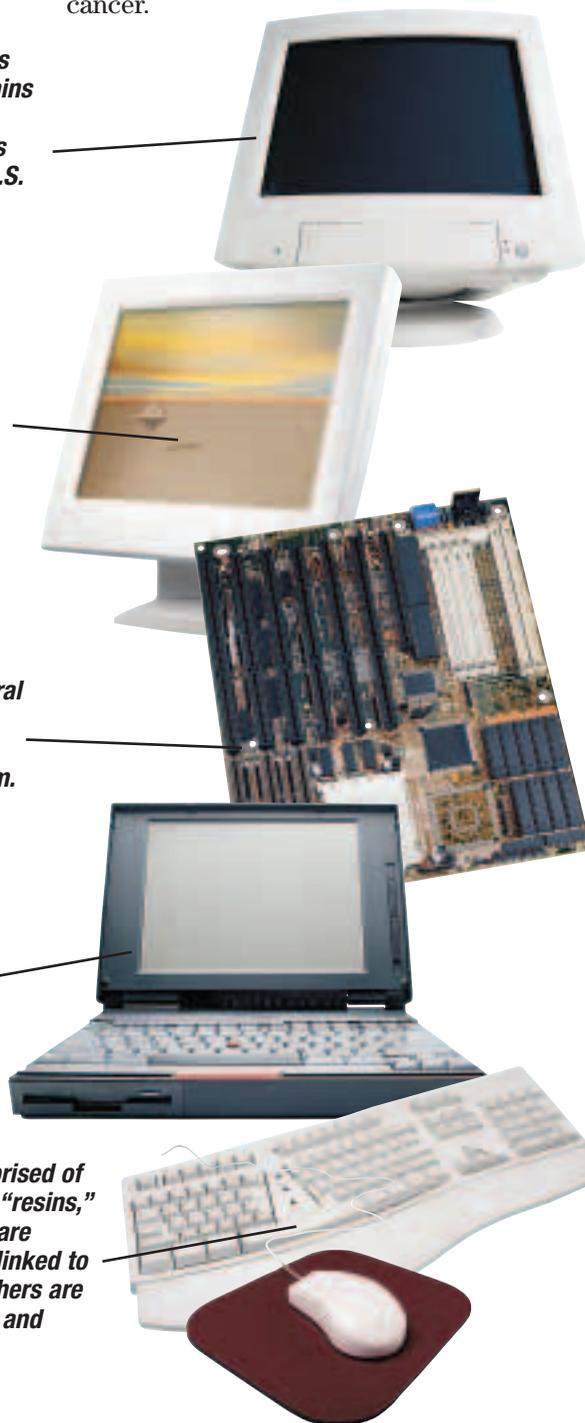
Flat-screen monitors don't include CRTs or lead. However, they do have hazards of their own, most notably mercury switches, mercury-containing fluorescent bulbs, and caustic chemicals.

Inside the central processing unit (CPU), several potentially hazardous materials are present, including tin-lead solder, mercury switches, cadmium, beryllium, and hexavalent chromium.

Batteries may contain nickel, cadmium, and mercury. Like central processing units, the circuit boards and drives may also contain tin-lead solder and cadmium. The screens have a small mercury-containing fluorescent lamp.

By weight, about one-third of e-scrap is comprised of plastic. This plastic includes several different "resins," or types of plastic. Some plastic components are treated with flame retardants that have been linked to reproductive and developmental disorders. Others are contaminated with paint, connectors, or foam and cannot be recycled as a result.

pose no particular risk and give non-reusable equipment some value. But e-scrap also contains potential pollutants, such as lead, mercury, cadmium, arsenic, selenium, beryllium, barium, and brominated flame retardants. These heavy metals and toxins have been linked to a variety of maladies, including asthma, organ dysfunction, reproductive disorders, brain damage, and cancer.



What's next for e-scrap?

Once computers are collected, the recycling process is far from complete. Like old appliances and cars, some can be reused as is. Others provide usable parts. And some are dismantled or shredded so that the materials can be separated and recycled. Certain materials, such as CRTs, are handled at separate plants.

Here's a glimpse of how e-scrap moves through the process:

Reuse

Incoming computer systems are tested and evaluated. If they are in working order, they are donated or resold.

Disassembly

At the next stage, the non-working systems are opened up and usable parts and components are "harvested." For instance, working CD and disk drives can be resold to the repair market. Integrated circuits, motherboards, chips, and memory can be taken out and sold as spare parts or used to upgrade older systems.

Recycling

After all usable components are removed, precious metals, such as gold, silver, palladium, and platinum, are extracted. In addition, aluminum, steel, and lead are separated for resale. Plastic parts are identified and sorted. All materials with potential value are shipped to manufacturers where they become raw materials in making new products.

The systems used to separate the recyclable materials vary. At some plants, most recyclable materials are removed and sorted by hand. At others, mechanical shredders break the computers into tiny pieces and machines use air, magnets, and other means to segregate different materials.

Disposal

Parts that cannot be recycled are disposed appropriately. For some portions of the residual waste, this means disposal at special hazardous waste facilities.

Fast facts

- In 2001, only 11 percent of personal computers retired in the U.S. were recycled. Most of these came from businesses. (*U.S. EPA*)
- About 75 to 80 percent of retired home computers are stored in basements, garages, attics, and closets. (*Institute for Local Self-Reliance and Northwest Product Stewardship Council*)
- In 2001, about 520 million people at 147 million different computers used the Internet, almost double the numbers in 1999. (*Worldwatch Institute, Vital Signs 2002*)
- In 1998, more than 112 million pounds of materials were recovered from electronics, including steel, glass, plastic, and precious metals. (*U.S. EPA*)

The NEPSI generation

No, it isn't a new soft drink. NEPSI, which stands for "National Electronics Product Stewardship Initiative," is a group of electronics manufacturers, recyclers, and government officials that mobilized to address the growing volume of e-scrap.

At the core of their discussions has been the question of what parties are responsible for the recycling and proper disposal of this potentially hazardous material. Another major concern? How to handle the vast amount of material that will enter the waste stream when it finally comes out of storage—particularly older items that were not designed with disassembly or recycling in mind. In the two years since NEPSI representatives first met, the group has explored how best to collect materials and fund electronics recycling.

A final report that will include a series of recommendations on how local, state, and federal governments, as well as consumers, retailers, and manufacturers, might best tackle these issues is due out later this year.



Just a mouse click away

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Resource Conservation Challenge—Plug Into Recycling**
www.plugintorecycling.org
- **Earth's 911**
www.earth911.org
Click on "Electronics Recycling"
- **Electronic Industries Alliance's Consumer Education Initiative**
www.eiae.org

- **Electronics Recycling**
www.electronicrecycling.org
- **National Cristina Foundation**
www.cristina.org
- **National Electronics Product Stewardship Initiative**
www.nepsi.org
- **Northwest Product Stewardship Council's "A Guide to Environmentally Preferable Computer Purchasing"**
www.productstewardship.net/productsElectronicsEPPGuide.html

Odd shoe out

Maybe you've come home from a shoe store, opened a box of fabulous pumps, and discovered one size 6 and one size 8. Was it then that the "all sales final" sign came to mind? Perhaps, because your feet are more than one size apart, you routinely buy two pairs of shoes to end up with a pair that fits.

Whatever the reason, if you have an "odd shoe" or an "odd pair," don't throw them out. Instead, donate them to someone who can use them.

The National Odd Shoe Exchange, which was founded in 1943 by a polio survivor, helps provide shoes to children and adults in need of a single shoe or a pair composed of different sizes. This includes amputees, stroke victims, people with congenital conditions such as cerebral palsy, and



cancer patients, among others.

The National Odd Shoe Exchange is a non-profit organization that serves people nationwide. The Exchange accepts donations from individuals, retailers, and manufacturers. The only requirement is that the shoes must be new, unworn, and undamaged.

The Exchange will accept any style or size, as well as other footwear items, such as socks, laces, and inserts.

The shoes are made available to people who need them at no charge. However, recipients are asked to make a donation, if possible, to cover the cost of shipping.

For more information about the National Odd Shoe Exchange, visit the website, www.oddshoe.org, or call 480-892-3484.

Water for life

This year and next, the Earth Day Network will be asking people around the world to get involved in the "Water for Life" campaign. This project is designed to raise awareness about water access, quality, and use. However, as with all Earth Day efforts, the objective is action—in this case, providing better access to adequate supplies of clean water for all the world's people.

The campaign will encourage students to learn what's in their own water by discovering how to measure the health of local water resources. Corporations, which use about 20 percent of the world's water and by some estimates waste about half of that through inefficient processes, will be challenged to adopt conservation practices. People across the country and around the globe will be inspired to make clean water a priority.

If you're thinking that water doesn't have much to do with waste and recycling, think again. Here are a few ways that you can practice the three R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and promote clean water:

- Follow label instructions carefully whenever using potentially hazardous products.
- Use a drip pan when pouring gasoline or oil to avoid spills onto the ground.
- Grasscycle by letting your clippings drop back onto the lawn when you mow. This will provide moisture to your lawn—and reduce your need to water.
- Use native plant materials in your landscape. After native plants are established, they often require less water and generate less waste than either non-native plants or a grass lawn.
- Recycle. For most materials, processing recyclables and remanufacturing them to make new products uses less fresh water and creates less wastewater than making the same products from virgin materials.

If goods are good, are more goods better?

That is the question raised by *Confronting Consumption*. This book joins others, such as *Affluenza*, *How Much Is Enough?*, and *Culture Jam*, in asking Americans to give some thought to how, why, and what we consume.

Written from different perspectives, each of these books shines a light on some aspect of consumerism and its results. For instance, *Culture Jam* looks primarily at the role of the media in shaping our consumer choices. *Confronting Consumption* makes the point that we see most economic problems in terms of "production"—without questioning the consumption patterns that are in the driver's seat. *Affluenza* explores the effects that consumerism is having on our lives and families, and *How Much Is Enough?* probes the outcomes in our environment.

Other than their theme, these works do have one thing in common. After investigating consumption, each asks readers to become more conscious and more cautious consumers.

You probably won't agree with everything written in these four books—and in fact, they don't always agree with one another. However, each of these books will encourage you to think about your own attitudes toward consumption and your own consumer behaviors, as well as the outlooks and habits of those around you.

Two great videos devoted to consumerism and the alternative—simpler living—are also available. Look for *Affluenza* and *Escape from Affluenza* (Bullfrog Films, 1997 and 1998).

Read more about it

Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic, by John De Graaf, David Wann, and Thomas H. Naylor, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2001

Confronting Consumption, edited by Thomas Princen, Michael Maniates, and Ken Conca, MIT Press, 2002

Culture Jam: How to Reverse America's Suicidal Consumer Binge—and Why We Must, by Kalle Lasn, Quill, 2000

How Much Is Enough?: The Consumer Society and the Future of the Earth, by Alan Durning, W.W. Norton & Company, 1992



Consuming Choices

According to a recent "Green Gauge Report" by RoperASW, Americans do think about the environment as they shop. Whether you're a consumer, a retailer, a product manufacturer, a policy maker, or a student, consider:

- More than three-quarters of Americans believe that at least some people in this country are at increased risk of disease because of pollution.
- Half of Americans believe they could be doing more to help the environment.
- More than half of Americans conserve electricity and recycle at home.
- More than half of all Americans have purchased a product because advertising indicated that it was environmentally friendly.
- One-quarter of Americans go to the store and seek out recycled-content products to purchase.

WHAT'S UP?

Citizens are invited to attend the meetings of the District's Board of Directors and Citizen's Advisory Committee.

District Board

All meetings are held on Mondays at 1:00 p.m. at the LaPorte County Complex. Check the marquee inside the Complex for the room number.

- April 7
- May 5
- June 2
- July 7
- August 4
- September 8
- October 6
- November 3
- December 1

Citizen's Advisory Committee

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month at 3:30 p.m. at the Solid Waste District Office.

- April 17
- May 15
- June 19
- July 17
- August 21
- September 18
- October 16
- November 20
- December 18



We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

We are also available to speak to your club or organization about solid waste, waste reduction, recycling and composting.

**Solid Waste District of
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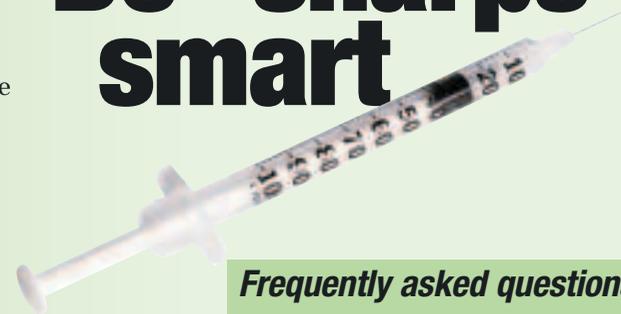
The "Sharps" Program, a FREE service to residents of LaPorte County, collects and properly disposes of "sharps," such as needles and lancets used by diabetics for in-home treatment. When placed into household trash improperly, sharps put trash collectors at risk.

To help residents dispose of these items more safely, the Lake Michigan Districts Household Hazardous Waste Program accepts sharps at our regular household hazardous waste drop-offs. (See Page 1.) For information about when the Sharps Program will be in your area, call Tom Buford at 1-800-946-4449 or 219-326-1425.

This program is for households only and is NOT open to businesses.

This program is funded entirely by your Solid Waste District.

Be "sharps" smart



Frequently asked questions

Why not throw my used sharps in the trash?

Needles and lancets are considered infectious waste material that could contaminate sanitary employees, landfill workers, or children who may take them from the trash. Let's do our part and dispose of them correctly!

Is this program confidential?

Yes! You will be asked to sign in. However, signing in is voluntary. (Just so you know—we ask all residents to sign in when they drop off household hazardous waste.)

How do I dispose of my sharps?

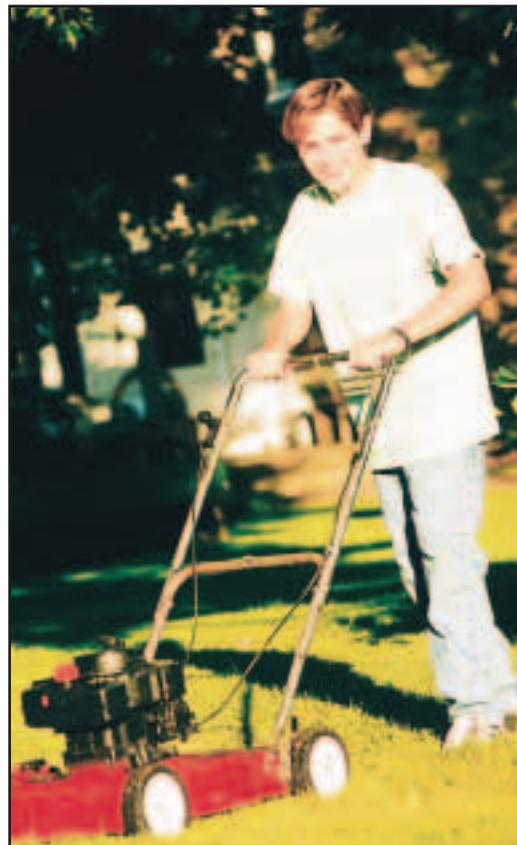
Bring your sharps in a sealed container to the collection site. Our trained technician will accept and dispose of all sharps. We will then give you a FREE sharps container to take home with you. All residents of LaPorte County can use our FREE program. Sharps are accepted during our scheduled Household Hazardous Waste collections.

Yard waste and you

Every year, a lot of reusable organic debris gets wasted. Grass clippings end up in the trash. Leaves are raked and packaged for disposal. Fruit and vegetable peelings are thrown in the trash instead of being composted. Now would be a great time to make a change.

As the seasons change outside, resolve to reuse and recycle your organic debris. Start a backyard compost pile. Set up a vermicompost bin for food scraps. "Grass-cycle" your clippings by letting them drop back onto your lawn. You can save yourself time and money—and have healthier lawns and gardens to show for it.

You don't have to go it alone, either. We're here to help. We can make presentations to civic groups, clubs, and classes about ways that you and your yard "waste" can work together for a better planet, community, and backyard. Call or e-mail us for information or to schedule a presentation.



More yard waste than you can handle? Deliver it to the Yard Waste Drop-off

The Solid Waste District of LaPorte County's Yard Waste Drop-off Site is located at the north end of Zigler Road, just past the grandstands on the west side. (Zigler Road runs along the east side of the LaPorte County Fairgrounds.) The site is open during daylight hours, seven days a week.

You can drop off any of the following material:

- Leaves (whole or shredded)
- Chipped wood
- Clean lumber (no nails)
- Grass clippings
- Yard trimmings
- Brush
- Branches up to 6 feet long and 12 inches in diameter
- Pine needles and pine cones
- Corn stalks
- Bark
- Sod with no more than 4 inches of soil attached

You may drop off materials in special

kraft paper leaf bags, which may be purchased at local grocery and hardware stores. You must unload your own material at the site.

All yard waste is transported to the District Compost Facility located at the Westville Correctional Facility to be turned into compost.

If material is transported to the site in plastic bags, the plastic bags MUST BE emptied. You MUST take your plastic bags away from the site. The plastic bags will not decompose in the compost and will contaminate the organic materials. Please, help us create clean, usable compost—take your plastic bags home!

We cannot accept any of these items: construction debris, rubble, wooden skids, wire, nails, rope or twine, glass, metal objects, plastics (any type, including plastic trash bags, flower pots, and Styrofoam), treated or painted wood, plywood, particle board, or other non-organic materials.

Compost available to residents

As long as supplies last, compost is available on a first-come, first-served basis to LaPorte County residents. Remember—compost is a soil amendment not top soil. Mix compost in equal parts with soil before use.

Pick up compost at the following self-serve locations during daylight hours:

- Fish Lake — Fish Lake Community Building (Old Lions Club property), on 800 East
- Hanna — County Highway Barns
- Hudson Lake — Hudson Township Park
- Kankakee/Rolling Prairie — County Highway Barns, corner of 700 E. and 400 N.
- Kingsford Heights — Grayton Road on left (cement slab by sewage plant)
- LaPorte — City Street Department, 1206 Second Street
- Michigan City — Hitchcock Street (between two sets of railroad tracks)
- Union Mills — Mill Pond, off Water Street
- Wanatah — 12562 S. 1050 W. (at sewer plant)
- Westville — Prairie Meadow Park

Remember to recycle!

Don't forget—we offer many convenient locations for recycling household batteries and ink jet printer cartridges. Need details? Visit our website, www.alco.org/solidwaste.