

"one man's trash..."

Solid Waste District of La Porte County



Fall 2024

Your guide to reducing, reusing, and recycling

Keep Styrofoam Out of Landfills

Here in La Porte County, community recycling drop-off programs enable residents to responsibly dispose of additional recyclable materials that are not accepted through our curbside recycling program. One common material that is not accepted curbside is Styrofoam. While Styrofoam is lightweight and often used in packaging, it is not easily recyclable and can break down into harmful microplastics. Styrofoam can be brought to the Zigler Road Compost Site at 724 Zigler Road, La Porte, Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and placed in the shipping trailer designated for Styrofoam.

For a complete listing of our programs, download our brochure at www.solidwastedistrict.com/recycling-dropoff-programs. Thanks for helping us reduce waste!



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Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk

Ever wonder what your recycling fee covers? The \$72 annual fee for the La Porte County Recycling & Solid Waste District isn't just another bill—it's a small investment that provides essential services to keep our community clean and make recycling accessible for everyone. This fee supports everything from curbside recycling to safe disposal options for hazardous items, offering a wide range of convenient services.

Each home in La Porte County is provided with a 48- or 96-gallon recycling cart for bi-weekly curbside pickup. Recyclables are collected right from your curb, making it easy to participate in recycling without any extra hassle.

But the benefits go beyond just curbside service. The fee also supports six household hazardous waste collections throughout the year, so you can properly dispose of items like old paint, pesticides, gas, oil, and even medications—items that can't go in the trash and shouldn't end up in the landfill.

Your \$72 also grants you free access to the county's compost facility, where you can drop off yard waste and pick up small amounts of compost and mulch at no additional cost. In addition, residents can use three public recycling sites, two electronic waste drop-off locations, and a Styrofoam drop-off spot. The District even hosts two special 7-in-1 events each year, where you can get rid of tires, paper, electronics, large appliances, and other hard-to-recycle items.

Additional ongoing programs include gas can and plastic bag exchanges, free paper shredding at the District office, and a full-time educator who leads programs for schools and community groups. There's even a Master Recycler program that offers classes twice a year for residents who want to learn more about sustainable practices.

This fee goes a long way in supporting a healthier environment and a cleaner community for everyone. Thank you for doing your part!

Clay

WE ARE THE ROOT, WE ARE THE FOUNDATION, THIS GENERATION, IT IS UP TO US TO TAKE CARE OF THIS PLANET. ~ PRINCE EA



THE DIRTY DOZEN

12 Items To Leave Out Of Your Recycling

Due to the nature of the following items or their inability to be efficiently recycled, please leave the following items out of your recycling bin.

1. Plastic Bags

Including grocery bags, salt bags, shrink wrap, plastic wrap, and bags that cereal comes in

2. Non-Recyclable Glass

Window glass, mirrors, light bulbs, ceramic, china, and dishes

3. Items Contaminated With Food

Any recyclable item with food residue. Please rinse first.

4. Hazardous Materials

Batteries, tires, old paint cans, motor oil bottles, pesticide and cleaning product bottles

5. Coated Cardboard or Frozen Food Containers

Milk cartons, wax or plastic coated frozen food containers

6. Organic Waste or Garbage

Yard waste, food waste

7. Liquids

Please empty and rinse recyclable containers, jars, and bottles

8. Non-Recyclable Plastic

Including flower pots, hoses, garden edging & toys

9. Bagged Material

Please place loose recyclable material into your recycling container

10. Diapers or Bio-Hazardous Waste

Including medical waste and items contaminated with blood

11. Loose Shredded Paper

Please place waste from a personal shredder into a clear or opaque bag so material doesn't blow around and is clearly recycling.

12. Scrap Metal

Including metal fixtures, faucets, siding, and appliances

Borden

A Waste-Away Group, Ltd. Company

(800) 386-3313 ~ (574) 293-5001

www.wasteawaygroup.com



La Porte County residents may drop off yard waste at no charge at the Compost Facility, located north of the Fairgrounds, across from NIPSCO, at 724 Zigler Road in La Porte. (Businesses may also drop off yard waste but will be charged a tipping fee.) The Compost Facility will only be open on weekdays through the winter months.

Drop off your grass clippings, brush, and logs, and we will work our magic and transform them into nutrient-rich compost and useful mulch. If you collect your yard waste in the large paper yard waste bags available from home improvement stores, they do not need to be emptied because the PAPER bags are compostable. However, you must empty all plastic bags or bins that you use to haul your leaves or clippings and then take the bags and containers home to reuse or dispose. Leave only yard waste, please. Please follow all signs at the facility. NO trash is accepted at this facility. All loads will be inspected before you are allowed to drop off your yard waste.

When available, residents can purchase and self-haul compost and natural mulch for \$15 per cubic yard. Visit our website at www.solidwastedistrict.com for additional details.

Plastic Bag Exchange

During the week of November 18–23, bring your plastic bags to one of our recycling events. We will trade you a reusable bag for future use.

- November 18
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
2857 W. State Road 2
- November 19
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Al's East, La Porte
- November 20
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
LaCrosse Library
- November 21
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Al's Franklin, Michigan City
- November 22
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Al's Karwick, Michigan City
- November 23
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Wanatah Town Hall

All events are while supplies last.



Empty, clean plastic bags and films are also accepted year-round during regular business hours at our office, which is located at 2857 W. State Road 2 in La Porte.

For additional details, check our Facebook page or visit our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com.

Save Food, Save Money

According to the USDA, about 30–40% of our food supply ends up being wasted, and a substantial amount of that happens right in our homes. When we waste food, we not only throw away the money we spent, but also the resources used to produce it, like water, energy, and labor. This waste contributes to larger environmental issues, such as the release of greenhouse gases from decomposing food in landfills. By being mindful of how we handle our food, we can make a positive impact on both our wallets and the planet.

One way to reduce food waste at home is through careful planning and shopping. By creating a meal plan and a corresponding shopping list, you can avoid purchasing unnecessary items that are likely to go unused. It's important to stick to the list and resist the temptation of impulse buys, which often end up spoiling before they can be consumed. Additionally, being mindful of portion sizes can help reduce leftovers that may otherwise go to waste.

Proper food storage is another key strategy to reducing food waste. Learning how to store fruits, vegetables, and other perishables correctly can extend their shelf life. For instance, certain fruits and vegetables should be stored separately



to prevent premature ripening, and understanding the use-by and best-before dates can help prioritize what to use first. Freezing food is another excellent way to extend its life. By freezing surplus food, households can preserve it for future meals, reducing the likelihood of it spoiling in the fridge.

Embracing a mindset of sustainability and creativity can make a significant difference. For example, vegetable scraps can be used to make broth, and overripe fruits can be transformed into smoothies or baked goods. Composting is another effective method to manage unavoidable food waste, turning it into valuable nutrient-rich soil for gardens.

Celebrate America Recycles Day!



America Recycles Day, celebrated every November 15, serves as a reminder of the importance and impact of recycling. Despite its significance, the United States has a recycling rate of only 32% for materials such as glass, plastic, cardboard, and paper, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. This statistic includes collections from residential trash. The low rate highlights a significant opportunity for improvement, and America Recycles Day provides a perfect occasion to increase participation.

One of the misconceptions about recycling is that it is a complicated process, but, in reality, it is quite simple. Recycling correctly starts with understanding what can and cannot be recycled. Knowing what to recycle is the first step in making a significant impact. For example, clean and dry paper, cardboard, and glass bottles can be recycled. It's essential to rinse out containers to avoid

contamination, which can render whole batches of recyclables unusable.

Recycling is not only important for environmental preservation, but also for economic benefits. The 2020 Recycling Economic Information Report reveals that for every 1,000 tons of recyclables collected and recycled, there are 1.17 jobs, \$65,230 in wages, and \$9,420 in tax revenues generated on a national average. This means

that by recycling more, we can contribute to job creation, boost the economy, and increase tax revenues, all while reducing the strain on

our natural resources.

Visit www.epa.gov/amicarecycles and www.americarecyclesday.org to pledge your support and learn how to recycle more.

If you have any questions about local reuse and recycling programs, call 219-326-0014, email sgeeburns@solidwastedistrict.com, or visit www.solidwastedistrict.com.



SMART SHOPPING GUIDELINES



40% of food in the U.S. is never eaten. Careful shopping is the easiest way to save more food and dollars in your budget.

MAKE A LIST

Shoppers who use and stick to lists have lower grocery bills and make fewer shopping trips.

SKIP THE CART

Bigger carts call us to fill them. Hand baskets help improve your grocery store discipline.

SCRUTINIZE DEALS

Five bananas for \$1 is a good deal only if you eat all five. Many stores offer the sale price even if you buy less than the stated quantity.

SHOP THE BULK BINS

Many stores offer grains, nuts, and other dry goods in bulk bins that allow you to purchase only the quantity you need.

TAP THE SALAD BAR

For recipes that call for small amounts of different vegetables, shop at the salad bar. They will cost more per ounce, but less overall.

USE A PORTION PLANNER

When you're not sure how much you'll need for your dinner party, use an online portion planner.

KEEP IT COLD

Buy perishable and frozen foods last so they spend less time at room temperature. And be sure to shake the water from produce—water encourages rotting and adds weight. If you won't be home for a while, keep cold groceries in a cooler in your car.

SUPPORT IMPERFECTION

Scarred and oddly shaped fruits and vegetables are perfectly normal. If we don't buy them, the store will throw them away.

BUY THE LAST ONE

Buying the last item on the shelf discourages stores from overstocking to create the appearance of abundance.

For more tips, visit SaveTheFood.com.

From Waste Free Kitchen Handbook by Dana Gunders, 2015. Used with permission from Chronicle Books, San Francisco.

SAVETHEFOOD.COM





Don't Burn Fall Leaves

It may be tempting to burn a pile of fall leaves, but please don't. Burning leaves can start larger fires that get out of control, putting people and properties in danger. Plus, leaf burning releases harmful pollutants into the air, making it hard for people to breathe, especially children, older adults, and those with respiratory difficulties.

Instead of burning fall leaves, shred them into small bits with the mower and leave them on your lawn or pick them up and add them to your compost pile. If you don't want to handle leaves on your property, check with your city or town office about leaf collections or drop off leaves at the Compost Facility on Zigler Road.

Safe Battery Disposal

Batteries are indispensable in our daily lives, powering everything from our smartphones and laptops to remote controls and children's toys. These compact energy sources offer the convenience of portable power, enabling us to stay connected and productive on the go. However, despite their undeniable usefulness, batteries can pose significant risks if not handled properly. To ensure safe disposal and recycling of batteries, follow these important guidelines:



- Tape the terminal ends of your lithium-ion and other rechargeable batteries.
- Bag lithium-ion and other rechargeable batteries individually in sealable plastic bags.
- Do not place lithium-ion or other rechargeable batteries into your trash can or with recyclables! Take lithium-ion batteries or devices with these batteries to one of the electronics recycling trailers or a 7-in-1 collection.

In addition to lithium-ion batteries, we also accept rechargeable and disposable batteries for recycling. For added safety, please attach tape to both ends of alkaline batteries before disposal. Some retail stores also accept batteries for recycling. For retail locations, visit Call2Recycle.org.

Electronics Recycling Drop-Offs



Electronics are accepted at these locations Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.:

- 724 Zigler Road, at the Zigler Road Compost Facility, La Porte
- 1801 Kentucky Street, along the side of the Street Department, Michigan City

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

- Recycling Basics
- Your Solid Waste District
- Paper Recycling
- Composting Basics
- Make your Own Household Cleansers
- Master Recyclers

CALL 219-326-0014 TO SCHEDULE

LAPORTE COUNTY RECYCLING

Solid Waste District

Gifts That Keep Giving

As the holiday season approaches, the joy of giving can be enhanced by making choices that are kind to our planet. By focusing on eco-friendly gift-giving, we can create meaningful moments and memories without contributing to environmental waste. Here are some thoughtful tips to help you give gifts that are both heartfelt and sustainable:



- **Gift Experiences, Not Objects:** Step outside the traditional gift box and consider giving experiences rather than physical items. Whether it's a cooking class, a yoga retreat, or a weekend getaway, experiences create lasting memories and don't require storage space or maintenance. This not only reduces material consumption, but also offers unique and personal touches that are cherished long after the event.
 - **Choose Eco-Friendly Materials:** When selecting physical gifts, pay attention to the materials used. Opt for items made from recycled, upcycled, or organic materials. These choices help reduce the environmental footprint of your gift. Look for brands and products that prioritize sustainability and ethical production practices.
 - **Use Creative Wrapping Solutions:** Traditional wrapping paper often ends up in landfills after a single use. Instead, get creative with your gift wrapping. Use reusable materials, like fabric, scarves, or tote bags, that can serve a purpose beyond the initial gift. Alternatively, repurpose old maps, newspapers, or even children's artwork to wrap your presents.
- By incorporating these practices into your gift-giving, you can spread joy and contribute to a healthier planet. Each small step towards sustainability helps make a big difference, ensuring that the spirit of giving remains bright!

Recycle Your Christmas Tree

If your family enjoyed a real Christmas tree, you can recycle it with us this winter. Simply remove all ornaments, lights, garlands, and tinsel, as well as the stand, and deliver the bare tree to the Zigler Road Compost Facility. These trees will be chipped and turned into mulch, so make sure that your tree is totally bare. Trees must be unbagged, so if you put the tree into a bag to transport it, please remove it from the bag and take the bag home to discard or use again next year. We cannot accept flocked trees for recycling since the chemicals used to create the snow effect will contaminate mulch. Christmas trees will be accepted during our normal winter hours, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. (The facility is closed on Saturdays,



Sundays, and all government holidays.) The Washington Park Zoo in Michigan City and many local livestock farmers accept bare Christmas trees, as well. Visit the Zoo's website or check with a farmer you know for details. If you live in a city or town, your local street department or trash hauler may pick up your tree at the curb, so check with them for the schedule and set-out requirements. If you have a pre-lit artificial tree to discard, you can recycle it at one of our electronics recycling trailers. The trailers are in La Porte at 724 Zigler Road (at the compost site) and in Michigan City at 1801 Kentucky Street (on the side of the Street Department). Please do not bag trees. Only pre-lit artificial trees will be accepted. Unlit artificial trees should be placed into the trash for landfill disposal.



Eco Lessons for Children

Reading with your children can be a wonderful way to bond and learn together. The following books and magazine not only provide engaging stories, but they also offer valuable lessons on recycling, environmental stewardship, and the power of individual actions. These works can spark meaningful conversations and inspire both children and adults to take better care of our planet.

One Kid's Trash by Jamie Sumner

Jamie Sumner's *One Kid's Trash* explores the life of Hugo, a boy struggling to find his place in a new school. Through his unique ability to sort and recycle trash, Hugo gains acceptance and discovers that his peculiar talent is his strength. The narrative beautifully combines humor and heart, making it an engaging read that encourages children to embrace their differences and consider the importance of recycling.

Total Garbage by Rebecca Donnelly

Rebecca Donnelly's *Total Garbage* follows Georgie, a young girl with an unusual fascination for trash. The story creatively highlights the potential of recycling and repurposing waste materials. Georgie's adventures offer a captivating way for children to understand environmental responsibility and the value of innovation. The book's playful tone makes complex ideas about waste management accessible to young readers.

This Class Can Save the Planet by Stacy Tornio

This Class Can Save the Planet by Stacy Tornio tells the inspiring story of a class that takes environmental action seriously. Starting with simple recycling projects, the students' efforts grow, demonstrating the impact collective action can have on environmental preservation. This book is a motivational tool, showing children how teamwork and dedication to eco-friendly practices can lead to significant changes.

National Geographic Kids – Kids vs. Plastic

The *Kids vs. Plastic* edition of *National Geographic Kids* magazine is an educational and visually engaging resource. It delves into the pervasive issue of plastic pollution, offering facts, stories, and stunning photography that illustrate the problem and potential solutions. This edition provides children with practical tips and activities to reduce plastic use, fostering a sense of responsibility and empowerment in young readers.



Planning a Litter Cleanup?

This fall, we need your help cleaning up La Porte County, and we will provide the supplies! Participation is simple. Gather your friends or go out on your own to pick up trash in any area within La Porte County that holds special meaning to you. You can choose any date that fits your schedule, making it easy to contribute without disrupting your routine. We will provide all the necessary supplies, including trash bags to collect litter and bottled water to keep you hydrated while you work.

Over the summer, La Porte County residents made a visible impact through the Clean It Up! program. Since its launch, many local groups have pledged their

support, including political and religious organizations, school clubs, scout troops, civic organizations, businesses, and families — all eager to contribute to the well-being of our community. Their dedication highlights the strong sense of civic duty and community spirit that defines La Porte County.

Signing up for the Clean It Up! program is simple. Whether you want to volunteer or donate supplies, reach out to Sacha Gee-Burns at 219-326-0014 or sgeeburns@solidwastedistrict.com.

Your involvement will help us maintain the beauty of our county and ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone.

LAPORTE COUNTY RECYCLING

Solid Waste District

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 Councilman Don Przybylinski – Vice Chair
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We want your suggestions, questions, and comments!
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