

"one man's trash..."

Solid Waste District of La Porte County

Your guide to reducing, reusing, and recycling



How to green up your holiday clean up



There's no time like the present to kick-start your recycling and reuse efforts! Finish the winter holidays off right by making sure all your waste and leftovers are properly reused, recycled, or disposed. Not only will you have a cleaner home, but you'll also give everyone the gift of a cleaner environment!

Live holiday trees

With our holiday tree recycling program, "undecking" the halls has never been easier. Once you remove and put away your ornaments, lights, garlands, and tinsel, as well as the stand, residents who are bringing trees from their homes can recycle cut Christmas trees at no charge. These trees will be chipped and turned into mulch, so make sure that your tree is totally bare. Residents can drop off holiday trees at the District's Zigler Road Compost Site. Winter hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed Saturdays, Sundays, and all government holidays). Please do not use plastic tree bags. If you do put your tree in a bag, remove it from the bag at the Compost Site and take the bag home to throw in the trash or save for reuse next year. 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 for composting, so check with them about the schedule.

Wrapping paper and boxes

Now that your tree is on its way to a second life, let's give wrapping supplies the same chance. Any usable wrapping paper, boxes,

bags, bows, or tissue paper can be folded and stored for next year. If you were careful when opening presents, this should provide most of next year's supply. Any boxes beyond reuse can be broken down and recycled. Be sure to remove tissue, plastic bags, and other packing material. Wrapping paper is also recyclable, as long as it is not metallic or metal-flecked. Holiday cards can be recycled too. However, there are some exceptions: no photo paper, no musical greeting cards, no metallic or foil paper, and no cards with ribbons, buttons, or other doodads attached. Non-recyclable cards should be put into the trash or saved for arts and crafts projects. Ribbons and bows are not recyclable but are easily stored for reuse later. If you won't be saving them, be sure to offer them for free to a local teacher or nonprofit or give them away through an online marketplace like Nextdoor or Facebook Marketplace. When all attempts at reuse fail, place non-recyclable wrapping supplies into the curbside waste container.

Replaced toys and unwanted gifts

Some of the gifts wrapped in those bags and bows might have replaced old toys or become unwanted toys themselves. Some stores will accept new toys without a receipt in exchange for store credit. You can always donate new or gently used toys, as well as clothes and other goods that have been replaced, to a local charity or to Goodwill and The Salvation Army.

Batteries

Some of your gifts may need batteries. Consider purchasing rechargeable batteries instead of single-use batteries. Recharge-

(Continued on Page 2)



Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk

District residents love to recycle! But sometimes it can be a bit confusing to know how and where to recycle each item. Help us recycle better by learning what goes into the recycling totes, what is collected at our offices for recycling, and what is collected at special disposal events.

Curbside Recycling Toters

– Cardboard; paper; plastics marked #1–5 and #7; metal and aluminum cans; and glass jars and bottles ONLY should be placed into the totes. All recyclables should be empty, clean, and dry and all cardboard flattened. Recyclables should be placed loose into the totes, NOT in plastic bags.

TerraCycle and Other

Collections at the Office

– We collect a variety of hard-to-recycle items, including plastic bags and empty prescription drug containers, in special drop-off containers at our District office, located at 2857 West State Road 2 in La Porte. When you drop off items, please bring them into the lobby and place them into the correctly labeled boxes to ensure that they are recycled properly. Visit www.solidwastedistrict.com/recycling-dropoff-programs for an up-to-date list of materials accepted and more details. Note: These hard-to-recycle items are NOT accepted in curbside totes.

Yard and Green Waste Drop-Off

– Residents can drop off yard waste at no charge at the Compost Facility, which is located north of the Fairgrounds, across from NIPSCO, at 724 Zigler Road in La Porte. Drop off residential grass clippings, leaves, brush, and logs only. NO landscape timbers or building materials are accepted. Yard waste must be unbagged or in PAPER bags (NO plastic bags). Please empty any plastic bags used to haul the yard waste and take them home with you. No trash is accepted.

7-in-1 Collections

– In the spring and fall, we offer drop-off events at the Fairgrounds where you can recycle tires, appliances, electronics, Styrofoam, and cardboard; safely dispose of household hazardous waste (HHW); and have confidential documents securely shredded. We also provide additional mobile HHW collections throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Watch for event dates and more details in our spring newsletter or check our website, www.solidwastedistrict.com. Electronics are also accepted year-round at our drop-off sites in La Porte and Michigan City.

We are so very thankful for La Porte County residents and their efforts to recycle. We need everyone to do their part by being realistic about what goes into curbside recycling totes and what can be recycled through our other programs. For more information, visit www.solidwastedistrict.com or call 219-326-0014.

Recycle right and recycle realistically!

Clay

"INDIANA'S STRONG MANUFACTURING BASE PROVIDES INDIANA WITH THE STRONG INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY JOBS FOR HOOSIERS AND PLAYS A UNIQUE ROLE IN BOOSTING THE STATE'S ECONOMY WHILE IMPROVING THE STATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY." ~ BRUCE BURROW, CHAIR OF THE INDIANA RECYCLING MARKET DEVELOPMENT BOARD



Wasted Money: The Economic Impact of Recycling in Indiana

Reduce, reuse, and recycle. We are all familiar with this phrase reminding us to be mindful about what we do with our waste. Many of us don't think much about waste until we are holding onto something we no longer want and must figure out what to do with it.

However, our state is making a concerted effort to get Hoosiers to recycle more. Indiana has set a goal of a recycling rate of 50%. So, how are we doing? Not too well, as it turns out. Indiana's recycling rate is estimated at just 19%. There are a few reasons for this shortcoming. One is that only 57% of our neighbors in other counties have access to recycling programs. (Everyone in our District has recycling access!) Another is that Indianapolis, our state's capital and largest city, does not have universal curbside recycling and has a limited number of drop-off sites. Those who wish to recycle must pay for their own subscription service or drive their recyclables a fair distance.

Why is it so important to recycle in the first place? There are the obvious answers of resource conservation, sustainability and keeping our environment clean, but there is also a significant economic factor at play. For this, we look at the supply side of recycling and the demand side. The supply side involves companies that process recyclable materials. The demand side involves products being made from recyclable materials and sold to consumers. On the supply side, Indiana exports more than half of its recyclable materials out of state. Despite this, the recycling industry in Indiana has a \$1.7 billion impact on the state economy in wages alone for roughly 8,500 employees. The impact on the demand side is even larger with total output measuring over \$115 billion across metals, glass, fibers, and plastics. With thousands of jobs and billions of dollars at stake, it's important that Indiana maintains and improves our recycling programs.



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Recyclables are commodities

How much do you know about the business of recycling? Most of us understand that when we recycle correctly, the stuff we put into the recycling carts gets sorted, baled, processed and made into new stuff. But how do those steps really work? How do we make sure that what goes into our recycling carts becomes new products?

Understanding that recyclables are commodities in a manufacturing process helps people appreciate why the list of acceptable items sometimes changes and why all recyclables must be as clean and contaminant-free as possible. Your recyclables become resources in manufacturing.

To make new goods, you can start with raw materials, such as harvested trees, mined metals or petroleum products, with recyclables (those materials that were once in your recycling cart), or with a combination of both. In many cases, there are huge advantages in manufacturing new goods from recycled materials. For instance, using

recyclables in manufacturing may require less electricity or other energy or create less pollution and fewer emissions. However, sorting, transporting, cleaning and, in some cases, preprocessing recyclables cost money. As you can imagine, if the recyclables are contaminated because they are mixed with non-recyclable items or are dirty, those costs increase, which means raw materials may be cheaper and easier to use for manufacturers.

Simply put, your recyclables are a commodity. They are something that we collect because it is good for our economy and our environment. Please help us keep the costs of our recycling program down and the value of our recyclables high by only placing accepted items into your recycling cart. Bottles, jugs and jars should be emptied, lightly rinsed if needed, and allowed to drip-dry. Paper and cardboard should be dry, and boxes should be flattened. Visit www.solidwastedistrict.com to learn more.

A page a day to keep waste away

Are you looking for some daily inspiration for 2022? Do you like ideas that improve your family life and our community and environment? If you answered "yes," check out *Waste Not Everyday: 365 Ways to Reduce, Reuse and Reconnect* by Erin Rhoads. You'll find daily inspiration for your low-waste journey. Her tips are short, usually just a sentence or two, and easy to implement. Plus, Rhoads focuses on kindness and community-building, both of which will make for a better new year. For longer articles and more ideas, follow Rhoads blog, www.therogueinger.com.



Photo courtesy of Erin Rhoads

Green up ... (Continued from Page 1)

able batteries can be reused multiple times with the help of a charging device. However, even rechargeables eventually die. When this happens, be sure to recycle them. Harmful chemicals and metals in rechargeable batteries don't belong in landfills and can be recycled to make new batteries. You can recycle both rechargeable and disposable batteries at various locations in the District, including many AI's Supermarkets, Ace Hardware stores, and public buildings. For a full list of battery drop-off sites, visit www.solidwastedistrict.com/batteries.

Bulky waste

Finally, your larger gifts, like a washer or a rug, need special consideration when you dispose of their predecessors. Check with local charities to see what types of working and usable large-scale items they accept. If you have curbside trash service, contact your hauler to ask about bulky waste collections and fees for landfill disposal. You can drop off bulky items for a fee at the Waste Management Transfer Station in Kingsbury Industrial Park; call 219-393-7066 for details. We accept appliances at our 7-in-1 Collections at the La Porte County Fairgrounds. The next event will be held in May 2022. Visit www.solidwastedistrict.com or call 219-326-0014 for more information.

Electronics

More than likely, someone in your household got some new electronics. Perhaps it was a new TV, computer, tablet, e-reader, game system, or smartphone. If those new electronic presents replaced something you already owned and now no longer need, don't throw your old electronics into the trash! All electronics, no matter how small, contain chemicals and metals that can be harmful to the environment when mixed with household trash. Plus, these metals and other components can be used to create new electronics. Sell or donate usable and unwanted electronics. No takers? Recycle them, along with any electronics that no longer work. TVs and all other unwanted electronics can be dropped off at either of our Electronics Recycling locations for FREE recycling year-round. These are the locations and hours:

- 724 Zigler Road La Porte
Open Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
- 1027 Hitchcock Road, Michigan City
Open Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–3 p.m.

We also accept electronics at our 7-in-1 Collections at the La Porte County Fairgrounds. The next event will be held in May 2022. Visit www.solidwastedistrict.com/electronic-recycling or call 219-326-0014 for more information.

Want to recycle at your business?



We can help!

We are available to visit and help establish recycling programs at businesses within our District. Contact Environmental Educator and Public Outreach Coordinator Sacha Gee-Burns at sgee-burns@solidwastedistrict.com or 219-326-0014 for details.

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The dangers of lithium-ion battery fires



A lithium-ion battery sparked this garbage truck fire that closed a city street and put surrounding properties at risk in Bellevue, Washington. (Photo courtesy of Bellevue Police Department and U.S. EPA)

Did you know batteries can start fires inside your totes, collection trucks, and our waste facilities? Lithium-ion batteries, found in many rechargeable devices like cell phones, laptops, and headphones, pose a fire risk when you toss them in your trash or recycling bins at home. This past summer, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a report, “An Analysis of Lithium-Ion Battery Fires in Waste Management and Recycling,” analyzing the impact of these batteries when not properly recycled.

The EPA found more than 240 fires caused by lithium-ion batteries at 64 facilities between 2013 and 2020. This number is likely low since data is limited on lithium-ion battery fires not made public or covered in the news.

Lithium-ion batteries can easily ignite when damaged, and in the process of collecting and processing curbside trash, they are likely to be damaged. Mechanized trucks typically crush waste when picking it up. At materials recovery facilities (MRFs), items travel across conveyors and tumble through a series of sorting machines. At landfills, waste is compacted by heavy equipment. The fires sparked by lithium-ion batteries not only caused damage at the facilities or to the vehicles where they occurred, but they also resulted in injured firefighters, monetary loss, and service disruptions in the community. In addition to posing fire hazards, when we trash our portable devices and their batteries, we cannot reuse the valuable materials they contain in new products.

As portable electronics continue to be a critical part of our everyday lives, our waste and recycling systems will only see more of these batteries. Take all batteries and electronics to a designated drop-off location or a household hazardous waste collection event. Better yet, use your portable electronics as long as you can, only upgrading to a replacement once your device is no longer working.

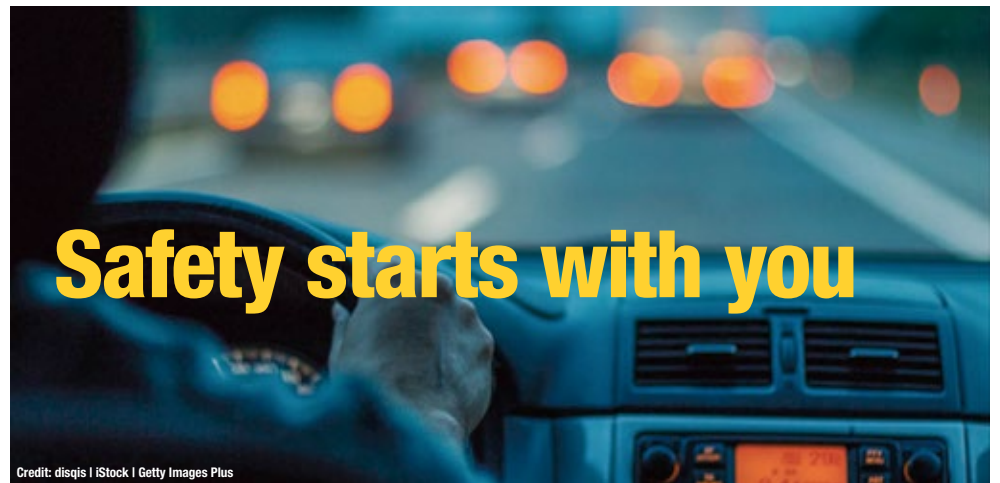
We can all do our part to ensure we properly dispose of these batteries to keep our community safe.

Recycle your batteries right!

- Tape the terminal ends of your lithium-ion batteries.
- Bag lithium-ion batteries individually in sealable plastic bags.
- Do not place lithium-ion batteries inside your trash or recycling tote!
- Drop off batteries for recycling in one of the District’s battery boxes or at a household hazardous waste drop-off event next year. For details, visit www.solidwastedistrict.com/batteries.

ATTENTION, RESIDENTS!

Plastic bags of any type are no longer being accepted in the blue recycling bins. Please place your extra recycling in an additional container marked, “RECYCLING,” or place in a brown paper bag or cardboard box.



Safety starts with you

Of the 118 fatalities in the solid waste industry during 2020, 76 involved a customer or member of the public. When you visit a drop-off center, compost facility, transfer station, materials recovery facility, or a landfill, be aware of the risks related to heavy equipment, other vehicles, and traffic flow. To avoid collisions, do not speed around other vehicles or move into their blind spot. When in your vehicle, be cautious of pedestrians on the site. When outside of your vehicle, be aware of other vehicles moving around the facility.

Never scavenge in the waste for reusable items. In addition to sharp and heavy objects, solid waste can include rotting organic material that can spread bacterial infections. While medical waste and household hazardous waste should not be included with trash or recyclables, mistakes are sometimes made. There may be medical sharps or toxic, caustic, or flammable liquids mixed in with any pile at the site.

A variety of people use these facilities: collection haulers, community members like you in a personal vehicle, or contractors

with construction and demolition debris. If you are entering the facility for the first time, a little preparation can make the process go smoothly and safely for you and everyone else on site.

Before you go, check the facility website or Facebook business page for hours of operation and accepted materials. While you are on the website, look for a facility map and any safety guidance that might be provided. Most facilities prohibit scavenging, smoking, and speeding.

As you enter the site, look for signs that communicate directional and safety guidance. Ask gatehouse staff or other workers on site about customer safety policies as you enter the property. While you are at the facility, avoid distractions like texting, talking on the phone, adjusting your entertainment system, or programming your navigation app.

The safety protocols we have in place were put there for a reason. To protect yourself, your vehicle, other residents, and workers, please follow all safety rules and share responsibility for everyone’s safety.

Save money – reduce food waste

How much food do Americans throw away? The short answer is “too much.” According to Rosa Rolle, an expert on food waste and loss at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, we buy too much food, we don’t finish our plates, and we spend a far smaller share of our income on food. Simply put, many Americans can afford to toss out food and still make ends meet. However, an average family of four could save up to \$1,500 a year just by not wasting food. Wouldn’t that be nice?

Most Americans throw out food when it starts to look or smell bad. Dairy, produce, and meats are the most commonly tossed items, because they spoil most quickly. Throwing away food wastes not only hard-earned money but also valuable resources, such as water, fuel, and supplies used to grow, transport, and market the food before it reaches your home.

Worldwide, about one-third of the food we grow is wasted. As a result, food waste is the single largest category of waste in landfills. Instead of feeding people, nutritious food is sitting in landfills and generating methane, a greenhouse gas. In wealthy countries like the United States and Canada, around 40% of food is thrown out by consumers like us.

We can do better. The Environmen-



tal Protection Agency and United States Department of Agriculture have tools to help you start. Learn more at www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-too-good-waste-implementation-guide-and-toolkit and www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste and follow these simple tips:

- Buy only the food you need.
- Think before you order at restaurants. What will you eat at the table and what will you take home as leftovers?
- Learn how to store food correctly. Food lasts longer than you think.
- Know the difference between the “sell by,” “use by,” and “best by” dates posted on products.
- Be creative in meal planning and utilizing leftovers.
- Don’t be afraid to offer excess food items to neighbors, friends, or food pantries.

Curbside Recycling Schedule

- A** City of La Porte – South of Hwy. 2 and West of Monroe (Hwy. 4); North of Hwy. 2 and West of Hwy. 35
- B** City of La Porte – East of Hwy. 4 and South of Hwy. 2, including Kankakee Township; East of Hwy. 35 and North of Hwy. 2 to Brighton Street
- C** City of La Porte – East of Hwy. 35 and North of Brighton Street; Town of Westville; New Durham Estates Mobile Home Community; Cass Township; Dewey Township; Hanna Township; Prairie Township
- D** Clinton Township; Noble Township; Scipio Township; Town of Wanatah
- E** Johnson Township; Lincoln Township; Pleasant Township; Union Township; Washington Township
- F** Michigan City – South of 12, South of MLK Drive, West of Karwick Road; Pottawattamie Park; Village Green
- G** Michigan City – North of 12, North of MLK Drive, East of Karwick Road; Springfield Township; Long Beach; Michiana Shores; Shoreland Hills; Beach Walk; Green Acres; Sheridan Beach
- H** Coolspring Township; New Durham Township (excluding the Town of Westville and New Durham Estates); Weatherstone Village; Terrace Acres
- I** Center Township (outside city limits)
- J** Galena Township; Hudson Township; Wills Township; Trail Creek (Michigan City); Rolling Prairie Mobile Home Park

Recycle Toter Reminders:

- Place at curb by 6 a.m. on pickup day.
- Locate toter at least 4 feet from items such as mailboxes, trees, or parked vehicles.
- If recycling pickup is missed, please call 219-326-0014 within 24 hours. We will get a truck back out to you!

NOTE: Township is outside of City limits. Never remove toter from assigned address.

January						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1 Holiday No Service
2	3 A	4 B	5 C	6 D	7 E	8
9	10 F	11 G	12 H	13 I	14 J	15
16	17 A	18 B	19 C	20 D	21 E	22
23	24 F	25 G	26 H	27 I	28 J	29
30	31 A					

February						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		1 B	2 C	3 D	4 E	5
6	7 F	8 G	9 H	10 I	11 J	12
13	14 A	15 B	16 C	17 D	18 E	19
20	21 F	22 G	23 H	24 I	25 J	26
27	28 A					

March						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		1 B	2 C	3 D	4 E	5
6	7 F	8 G	9 H	10 I	11 J	12
13	14 A	15 B	16 C	17 D	18 E	19
20	21 F	22 G	23 H	24 I	25 J	26
27	28 A	29 B	30 C	31 D		



LAPORTE COUNTY RECYCLING

Solid Waste District

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- Commissioner Sheila Matias – Vice Chair
- Mayor Tom Dermody
- Councilman Mike Mollenhauer
- Commissioner Rich Mrozinski
- Mayor Duane Parry
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- Amy Feikes – Secretary
- Katie Bell
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- Jim Micheals
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- Robin Havens, Office Manager
- Lisa Woodson, Recycling Coordinator
- Sacha Gee-Burns, Environmental Educator and Public Outreach Coordinator
- Lyn DeGroote, Controller
- Scott Lynn, Project Coordinator/HHW Coordinator
- Vincent Sherman, Compost Site Program Coordinator
- Abraham Moyoa, Compost Utility



- www.facebook.com/LPCoRecycling
- www.twitter.com/LPCoRecycling
- www.youtube.com/LPCoRecycling
- www.lpcorecycling.tumblr.com
- Green E-Club: <http://eepurl.com/eiyHs>

We want your suggestions, questions, and comments!

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PLEASE RECYCLE AFTER READING.

Keep contaminants out of your curbside recycling toter

Republic Services, the District's recycling collection provider, is doing random contamination checks on curbside toters and will tag any bins that contain non-recyclable items. Please be sure that you are only placing clean household recyclables into your toter — paper, boxes (flattened), cartons, glass bottles and jars, metal cans, and plastic bottles, jugs, containers, and tubs. For a list of accepted recyclables, visit www.solidwastedistrict.com/curbside-recycling and check out our handy recycling guide.



Remember – no plastic bags of any kind are accepted in your recycling toter. If you have extra recycling, please place your extra recycling in an additional container marked, "RECYCLING," or place in a brown paper bag or cardboard box.

Questions about trash collection?

The District provides curbside recycling service to all residents, but we do not provide trash collection services. If you have questions about trash collection, call your city or town office or your hauler. If you do not have trash collection service, these private haulers provide service in La Porte County:

- Lakeshore Disposal – 877-525-3877
- Michiana Disposal – 800-722-9710
- Republic Services – 800-828-2253
- Waste Management – 800-223-9029
- Waste Management Transfer Station (drop-off only), Kingsbury Industrial Park – 219-393-7066



Credit: Sophie-Caron | iStock | Getty Images Plus