



# The Recycling & Waste Disposal Evolution

Lawrence M. Walsh  
County Executive



**Will County  
Land Use Department  
Waste Services Division**

**2007  
ANNUAL REPORT**

*Photo: I-355 Grand Opening Nov. 11, 2007  
Festival Recycling*

# **Lawrence M. Walsh – County Executive**

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Will County Electronic Recycling Permanent Drop-Off Partnership Program – July, 2007 Bolingbrook Site Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Featuring County Executive Larry Walsh and Mayor Roger Claar

## **Introduction**

The Waste Services Division of Will County Land Use Department provides this annual report to offer a brief summary of the past year's accomplishments and goals for the upcoming year. It is the mission of Waste Services to help Will County residents and businesses reduce the amount of waste they generate, recycle as much unwanted material as possible and assure proper disposal of the remaining waste. Waste Services meets this mission through relationships with other units of government, promotion and educational campaigns on waste reduction, the implementation of recycling programs and the inspection of illegal dumps and properly licensed solid waste facilities. Citizens, elected officials and representatives of community organizations are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these important environmental issues.

All questions, comments or suggestions may be directed to the Waste Services staff through the web site at [www.willcountylanduse.com](http://www.willcountylanduse.com) or by telephone at 815-727-8834.

## **History**

The Waste Services Division was created in 1988 to plan for the future disposal of Will County waste. In that same year, Will County entered into a delegation agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to investigate citizen complaints about illegal dumping and/or garbage burning. Additionally, the agreement requires inspections to be conducted at permitted pollution control facilities.

In 1991, the Will County Board adopted the first Will County Twenty-year Solid Waste Management Plan as required by the State of Illinois. The Plan called for the County to develop a landfill. After much study and local input, the Federal Government conveyed a portion of the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant to the County in 2002, to be developed into a landfill site. In January of 2004, Will County's Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility began accepting waste.

All the time the County was involved in planning for the safe disposal of municipal solid waste, it was busy encouraging the development of waste reduction education and recycling programs. Newsletters, flyers, guide booklets and other written materials were produced to provide the general public with information about alternatives to disposal. Annual and semi-annual special collection events were held throughout the County for tires, household hazardous materials, books and electronics.

An education program was undertaken to reach schools, teachers and students. Schools were assisted with grant applications, recognized for meeting recycling goals and supported with presentations, suggested classroom activities and learning opportunities.

The County Board passed ordinances and resolutions supporting recycling and requiring all disposal and recycling to be reported to the County in order to comply with State reporting requirements and to measure waste diversion progress.

2007 was a dynamic year for the Waste Services Division. Partnerships with businesses and local units of government were formed, events held in unlikely locations, and new levels of

public promotion of recycling programs were attained. The recycling and disposal goals agreed to by citizens, businesses and many levels of local government in 1988; continued to be refined, enhanced and realized.

### Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity

The Will County population grew to an estimated 673,586 in 2007. All non-hazardous municipal solid waste generated by residents and businesses combined, totaled nearly 660,000 tons. This is 133,000 tons less than was reported the previous year, a marked reduction in overall generation, almost certainly due to the economic slow down. Of the total generated, 39% was recycled (up 4% from the previous year). *(Note: Late reporting and Industrial Waste figures are not included in the waste & recycling numbers reported to the IEPA to be used in the IEPA Annual Capacity Report per standard accepted reporting practices.)*

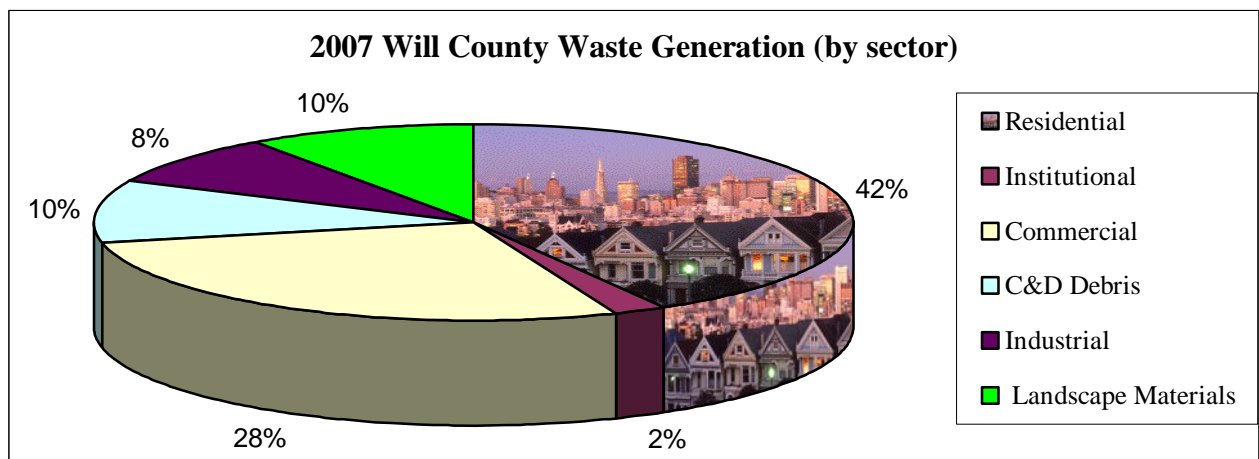
Due to State reporting requirements, Will County passed a resolution years ago requiring any company that hauls waste, recyclables or landscape material from a Will County residence, educational institution, commercial business, or construction/demolition site to report the amount they transport to Waste Services. The data gathered from the hundreds of reports received is presented in summary form below.

#### Will County’s Municipal Waste Generation - 2007

	Residential	Institutional	Commercial	C&D Debris	Industrial	Landscape Materials	TOTAL
<b>Total Generated</b>	273,842	13,728	181,533	68,098	54,505	63,682	655,387
<b>Recycled</b>	71,412	10,749	37,971	54,375	18,945	63,682	257,134
<b>Disposed</b>	202,430	2,979	143,562	13,723	35,560	0	398,253
<b>Diversion Rate</b>	26%	78%	21%	80%	35%	100%	<b>39%</b>
<b>% of Total</b>	42%	2%	28%	10%	8%	10%	100%

*Note: Due to service similarities, some reporting entities combined institutional and commercial in their commercial data.*

Excluding landscape materials, which were banned from Illinois landfills in 1990, the residential waste stream accounts for the majority of material generated in Will County, at 42%. Residents continued to recycle, diverting 26% of materials for recycling. The commercial, institutional and non-hazardous industrial waste stream combined made up 38% of all material generated. These groups diverted 27% of their waste stream. Construction and Demolition Debris was 10% of the total waste stream, but had a notable 80% diversion rate.

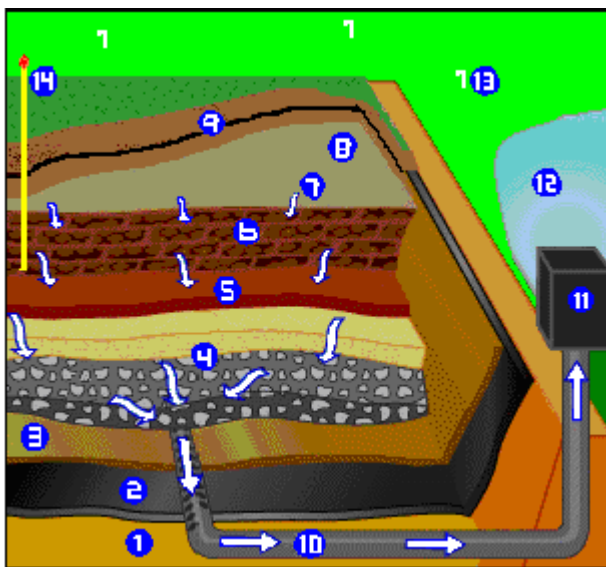


### Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility

In 2002 Will County was deeded a parcel of land free of charge by the Federal Government to be developed as a landfill. The 455 acres had been part of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant near Wilmington and required some reclamation as 223 acres were returned to tax generating service. The landfill site was named the Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility and was permitted by the IEPA for 20 million tons of municipal waste and non-hazardous waste. This figure includes tonnage from the Army, Forest Service and Veteran's Cemetery that will be accepted free of charge as part of an overall redevelopment project of the entire Joliet Arsenal site.



The landfill is developed in sections, known as "cells." Before each "cell" is allowed to receive waste, it must have three feet of re-compacted clay, a synthetic 60-mil high-density polyethylene geomembrane, a geotextile cushion, a foot-thick leachate drainage layer, and a fabric filter in place.



#### **Typical Landfill Components**

*(not representative of any specific landfill)*

1. Compacted Clay or Re-compacted Clay
2. 60-mil high-density polyethylene geomembrane (plastic liner)
3. Geotextile Cushion
4. 12" thick Gravel or Sand Leachate Drainage Layer
5. Fabric Filter
6. Completed Garbage Cells
7. Arrows depict liquid flow through the structure
8. Daily Cover
9. Final Cover includes Soil & Plastic Liner
10. Leachate Collection Pipe/Pump System
11. Holding Tank
12. Sedimentation Pond for Stormwater Runoff
13. Ground Water Monitoring Well
14. Methane Gas Collection Pipe

The Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility accepted its first load of waste on January 19, 2004. Prairie View RDF received 868,304 tons during 2007. That is an average of 3,301.54 tons of waste per day. This average includes the 173,041 tons of "free waste" from the Army and Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie. So far, the site has saved the federal government approximately \$15 million in disposal costs. The remaining waste came from residents and businesses within Will County (or from communities with boundaries that extend into Will County).

As per the terms of the landfill operating agreement, the facility generated almost \$2,063,107 for the County and other units of local governments in 2007 through host fees. An additional \$359,105.26 was paid to various taxing bodies during 2007 and over \$791,550 was generated in surcharge fees. An additional \$171,477.76 in revenues was also generated from the landfill property.



As the site matures, a methane gas energy recovery system will most likely be added, allowing the site to generate power that can be sold to the electric power grid and used by the entire community. Methane gas, underground water and leachate will be monitored throughout the life of the site and for 30 years after closure.

The Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility also includes a traditional recycling drop-off site where residents and businesses may drop-off glass jars, plastic bottles, aluminum and tin cans and all types of paper. This location is one of many recycling sites open to the public. Please see the Recycling Drop-Off section of this report for a full listing.

### **Current Accomplishments – Enforcement Activities**

Since 1988 Will County has had a Delegation Agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to investigate citizen complaints about illegal dumping and/or garbage burning. This agreement improves response time to such complaints and has been successful in addressing issues in Will County's incorporated as well as unincorporated areas. The Delegation Agreement also requires inspections to be conducted at permitted pollution control facilities. In 2007 this agreement included a grant to cover approximately half the cost of a 2007 Ford Escape Hybrid to be used exclusively for inspections and related activities.



2007 Ford Escape Hybrid  
Inspection Vehicle  
Partially funded by IEPA Grant

### **Permitted Facilities Inspections**

The Waste Services Division conducted 68 inspections at permitted sites throughout Will County in 2007. This included landfills, transfer stations, a landscape waste transfer station, compost sites and several land application sites. Four of the landfills were considered “open” from a regulatory standpoint.

Will County does not inspect the Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility because the County owns the landfill. This site is regularly inspected directly by the Illinois EPA. Waste Services staff visits the Prairie View RDF regularly to review the site's activities.

Of the remaining open landfills in the County, two of them, Renwick Landfill and Lincoln Stone Quarry, are monofills meaning they accept only one type of waste. This monofill is coal combustion-derived wastes from local coal-fired electricity-generating power plants.

The Laraway Recycling and Disposal Facility accepted general construction and demolition debris and permitted special wastes. The Laraway Recycling and Disposal Facility began accepting contaminated soil in 2005, after being permitted at the end of 2004, by the Illinois EPA, to operate a contaminated soil bioremediation facility at the landfill. In 2006, the Laraway Recycling and Disposal Facility applied to Will County for an expansion, to allow for the treatment of soil and the performance of an environmental remediation project, which facilitates the closure of two phosphogypsum stacks already on the site. In 2007, the County Board granted a vertical and horizontal expansion of the Laraway RDF, as well as the remediation of two phosphogypsum stacks. A small vertical expansion was then approved by the IEPA and a permit for the horizontal expansion awaits an IEPA approval. Due to capacity

restrictions during this permit application process, Laraway accepted only a small amount of waste during the year.

The CDT Disposal Facility continued to be considered an “open” landfill, although no waste has been accepted at the landfill since 1999. Final cover must be placed over certain areas of the landfill before it will be considered “closed.”

“Closed” landfills in Will County were also inspected, due to long-term monitoring requirements. These facilities include Beecher Development I, II, and III, two CDT Landfills, CDT-Barrett Landfill, the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, Land & Lakes/Willow Ranch Landfill, Wheatland Prairie Recycling and Disposal Facility, and the Wilmington Municipal Landfill. Closed landfills are inspected to ensure the integrity of the final cover, leachate and gas collection/removal systems, groundwater-monitoring systems, and compliance with other permit conditions and applicable rules and regulations.

### Complaint/Illegal Activity Responses

Waste Services performed inspections in response to complaints that involved open dumping, burning, suspicious leaks and spills, in addition to other waste related pollution concerns. The staff inspected a variety of locations throughout the County based on complaints or observations from citizens and the IEPA.

When it was determined that violations were occurring, staff identified property owners and responsible parties, notified them of the violations and encouraged them to clean-up or cease illegal pollution causing activities. In 2007, 39 illegal dumpsites were brought into compliance.



Example of illegal burning complaint photographed in 2007



Example of illegal dumping complaint

In cases where the property owners or the responsible party did not comply, staff referred cases to the State’s Attorney’s office to pursue legal action. In 2007, 3,670 cubic yards of illegally dumped or burned material was legally disposed due to the Waste Service’s involvement.



Clean up of former burning area



## **Current Accomplishments – Collection Events**

The theme of 2007 was “evolution” as items that were collected at one-day collection events began to be collected year-round on a permanent collection basis. This year marked the first time the County worked with a contractor to provide recycling at a festival type event. Throughout the year Will County collected batteries, books, cell phones, electronics, eye-glasses, gym-shoes, household hazardous items, motor oil, pharmaceuticals and tires. Some items were collected at multiple sites and/or at multiple times to educate the community on the variety of materials that may be recycled and make recycling easier.

**Battery Collection:** Since 2003 Will County has had a pilot battery collection program established at the Crete library. Will County has also collected batteries as part of the Household Hazardous Waste Collection program. In 2007, Will County also offered battery collection at the I-355 Grand Opening Ceremony on November 11. This was done at three on-ramp locations along the expressway and at the Will County Land Use Tent on the expressway during the pedestrian part of the opening day festivities.



**Book Event:** Will County’s 10<sup>th</sup> annual Book ReUse and Recycling Event was held at Pilcher Park Nature Center in Joliet at the end of October. The Park District generously donates their facilities for three days of continual use by Waste Services. Libraries, school teachers and residents join together each year to drop-off used, unwanted books. Most participants stay to browse the resulting eclectic collection of soft and hard-cover books. An estimated 85% of the books dropped off were taken for reuse. The remaining books were recycled. Additionally, cell phones and eye-glasses were accepted for recycling at this event.

**Electronic Recycling:** May 20, 2007 marked the 9<sup>th</sup> Consumer Electronics Collection Event held in Will County since its first one-day collection in 2000. The event was held in the far northwest corner of the County in an industrial park, in the parking lot of the selected electronic recycling contractor. This type of event had not been held in this densely populated part of the County since 2001, when it set records for participation, volume and cost. This year’s event marked the second highest participation level (503 households served), the third highest volume (nearly 84,000 pounds) but, surprisingly, had the second lowest cost (less than \$6,000).



All the usual items were accepted: computers, monitors, keyboards, peripherals, telephones, cell phones, answering machines, televisions, stereos, cameras, VCRs, camcorders, microwaves and more. These electronic items have been a disposal issue for years due to their short life-spans and specialty components. As part of the County’s landfill operation contract, Waste Management reimburses the full cost of this event.

However, due to the inconvenience of saving these increasingly necessary, but quickly obsolete items, the County bid its first permanent electronic collection contract. The 37 municipalities and 24 townships throughout the County were contacted and asked if they would host a permanent electronic collection site. Five jurisdictions worked with the County to open four permanent collection sites in July. The Village of Bolingbrook, Channahon Township, Troy Township Highway Department and Washington Township in cooperation with the Village of Beecher. Each of these sites offers residents throughout Will County various weekly hours of operation; making electronic recycling far more convenient. This marked the first permanent year-round collection program in the State of Illinois with multiple locations. In the first six months of the program, 154,460 pounds were collected from the permanent sites; more volume than any previous year. This combined with the Spring one-day, brought the grand total to 238,438 pounds or 119.2 tons of recycled electronics through Will County collection efforts.



**Eye-Glasses Collection:** Eye-Glasses are taken by the Lions Club to be reused, given to people throughout the world without access to corrective lenses. Will County began offering eye-glass collection as part of a few one-day collection events in 2006 and expanded it to be offered at all of the 2007 one-day collection events. In addition, it was offered at the I-355 event, for a total of 7 collection events. This service is available at many eye-glass retail locations year-round. By incorporating it into other recycling events, the public becomes more aware of this useful alternative to disposal.

**Household Hazardous Waste Collection:** Since 1996 Will County has held one-day collection events to keep hazardous items such as oil-based paint, pesticides, fertilizers, drain cleaners, automotive fluids like motor oil, gasoline, antifreeze and brake fluid. Household hazardous materials also include batteries, cleaning fluids, pool chemicals, expired medications and mercury containing objects (thermostats, fluorescent lights, thermometers, etc.). Every home contains some of these items and they are usually safely stored in cabinets, closets, under sinks and on garage shelves. They are the items that are kept out-of-the-reach of small hands and used as directed most of the time. The empty container may even be recycled. But, when someone cleans out a home due to a death, a relocation or simply because the product has passed its expiration date, then it becomes a Household Hazardous Waste.



These products are dangerous if inhaled, swallowed or just left on a person's skin too long. They can become more harmful if combined with one another, such as in a garbage can or when compacted in a collection truck. Since most of them are liquid or have liquid elements, they pose a risk in landfills where they will mix with leachate (the rain water and waste liquids in the garbage). To reduce the potential toxicity of leachate and the risk of garbage truck and dumpster fires or explosions (known to happen when different HHW products are mixed in the waste as it is collected), the County offers several disposal alternatives.

Since 1999 Waste Services has contributed funds to a permanent Regional HHW facility located in Naperville. Although it is located a few miles north of the County line, off State Route 59, it is one of only four permanent collection sites in Illinois and has been serving some Will County residents since 1992. This facility is open every Saturday and Sunday, except on holidays. It is estimated that over 1,000 Will County residents utilized this service in 2007. During the year, a second permanent HHW site opened in Chicago and it has also taken a few dozen Will County resident's HHW items on Tuesday mornings or Thursday afternoons, convenient for some of the residents that commute to Chicago.

Given the size of the County, many residents prefer a HHW collection option closer to their residence than these sites. In 2007 Waste Services offered three (3) one-day HHW collections held throughout Will County (the locations are noted in the summary chart below). Two of the events were funded by Waste Management, Inc. through the county's landfill contract. The cost per event averaged \$18,664 and cost per participant averaged \$44.40, while the amount per participant averaged 64 pounds. WJOL, as part of their "Go Green in May" campaign, did a live broadcast from the Joliet event and greatly enhanced publicity for all the County's recycling events.

Summary of HHW Collection Events for 2007				
Location	Participants	Pounds Collected	Cost of Event	Funding Provided by
Old Joliet Prison, Joliet	533	46,751	\$22,233	WM / County
Lincolnway East H.S., Frankfort	398	35,547	\$18,081	WM / County
Reed-Custer H.S., Braidwood	330	40,238	\$15,677	County
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,261</b>	<b>122,536</b>	<b>\$55,992</b>	

**Motor Oil Recycling:** Although "Motor Oil" is part of the Household Hazardous Waste one-day and permanent collection programs. It is also accepted by a number of private companies throughout the year. In April 2007, one company, located in Mokena, volunteered to accept motor oil and antifreeze from residents without fees of any kind. A total of 49 participants dropped off 390 gallons of motor oil, 25 gallons of antifreeze and 15 oil filters at Future Environmental in honor of Earth Day. The County listed the company, its location and drop-off hours on advertising for all the Spring events, but the only staff time devoted to this one-day event, was checking to make certain it was running smoothly.



Future Environment Offers Free One-Day Motor Oil



**Pharmaceutical Collection:** In late 2006, the IEPA and Federal EPA gave a presentation at an Illinois County Solid Waste Management Association conference where they announced that medications and personal care products were affecting fish in fresh water creeks, streams and rivers throughout the United States. One of the ways these items were getting into the water was through toilets and drains where they were being disposed. The IEPA offered to fund the disposal of medications collected from residents and asked Counties throughout Illinois to offer collection programs for these items and educate residents on this emerging issue.

Throughout the first half of 2007, Waste Services staff researched this issue, learning that police discourage direct garbage disposal of some medications due to the threat of possible theft for the purposes of misuse. Further, medications not in use but kept in homes can be a target of misuse by teens or a potential poison to curious children. They represent a safety, health and environmental concern.



Medications, expired sun screen and other personal care liquids have always been accepted in the Household Hazardous Waste collection programs, but given the nature of these items, Waste Services wanted to offer more opportunities for residents to conveniently dispose of them. In June of 2007, a letter/application was sent to local pharmacies asking them to “pilot” a permanent collection program for these items, as well as mercury containing thermometers and blood-pressure gauges. Basinger’s pharmacy of Joliet offered their four locations

throughout Joliet as the first pharmacy locations in Illinois to accept over-the-counter and prescription medications year-round.

In September of 2007, the Will County Medication Take-Back program, in partnership with the IEPA and Basinger’s Pharmacy began. In that same month, the Waste Services staff, in cooperation with the New Lenox Police Department, offered a one-day Medication Take-Back as part of the first **New Lenox Sharefest**. This event, included a Book Reuse, an Electronics Recycling Collection and a Health Fair among its many other community offerings. All totaled, this new program collected 60 gallons of medications in 2007.

**Shoe ReUse & Recycling:** For the second year in a row, the County collected athletic shoes in any condition. For the first time, dress shoes were also accepted if they were in reusable condition.



Schools were invited to collect shoes and bring them to the County Office Building on Chicago Street in Joliet during

normal operating hours Monday through Friday the first week of May. WJOL, a local news/sports/talk radio station on the dial at 1340 AM did a live broadcast from the County building on the last day of the collection. This, coupled with the station’s first month long “Go Green in May” campaign, generated increased interest in the program.





A total of 1,150 pairs of shoes were collected for reuse and recycling depending upon their condition. A non-profit in Alsip, Illinois known as Share Your Soles, accepted the majority of the shoes. This organization cleans shoes, sorts them by size and ships them to areas in need inside and outside the United States. The remaining athletic shoes, in poor condition, were sent to NIKE's Reuse a Shoe program that reuses and recycles gym shoes. The rubber from the shoes will be recycled and may be made into athletic fields, running tracks or playground surfaces.

**Tire Recycling:** Waste Services held its 17th tire collection event in 2007. The event was held in Crest Hill at the northern County Highway Department site. Tire recycling collections are held to eliminate breeding grounds for mosquitoes, clean up illegal dumpsites, and prevent air pollution from the open burning of tires. This year's event was paid for by the Illinois EPA; saving the County an estimated \$60,000. A variety of tire sizes were included, from standard auto tires to extremely large tractor tires, with or without rims.

A total of 22,473 tires weighing nearly 562,000 pounds were accepted from municipal public works departments, township highway departments and residents. It took over five days for the IEPA's contractor to load all of them in semi-trailers and take them for recycling. Recovered tires are commonly used for retreads, industrial fuel, athletic surfaces, road aggregates and playground material.



**Traditional Recycling Drop-Off Program:** In the Spring of 2007, Waste Services staff sent each of the 37 municipalities and 24 townships throughout the County an application to be a "Traditional Recycling Drop-Off" location. This program was created to address small business recycling needs and residential needs. It allows both businesses and residents to drop-off cardboard, chipboard, and telephone books that are not accepted in some of the paper recycling programs offered to churches, schools or residents. It also accepts all other types of paper items (such as newspaper, construction paper, magazines, unwanted mail, etc.). The program also includes a wide array of containers, such as all colors of glass, plastic bottles (#1-5 and #7), aluminum cans, foil, trays, plastic carrier straps (6-pack rings), steel/tin cans, empty aerosol cans, milk/juice cartons and drink boxes.

Four jurisdictions worked with the County to open three permanent collection sites over the course of the year: the Troy Township Highway Department; Washington Township in cooperation with the Village of Beecher; and Plainfield Township. Each of these sites offers residents and businesses throughout Will County various weekly hours of operation and encourage more items to be included in curbside collection programs.

**Special Event Recycling – The I-355 Grand Opening Event:** For many years the extension of Interstate 355 through the Northeast portion of Will County, connecting Interstate 55 and Interstate 80 was anticipated. On November 11, 2007 a grand opening ceremony featuring the governor, state legislators, county officials and local representatives was held. This was coupled with a bicycle race, a walking event and two small festival-type celebrations

on the pavement of the expressway itself. Waste Services worked with the organizers of the “Veterans Memorial Tollway” opening and Waste Management, Inc. to provide waste and recycling services at the three interchanges where grand opening activities were offered.



Will County employees, Brant Bender and James Dantzler with County Executive Larry Walsh

Nearly 50 64-gallon carts were provided for recycling. Vendors were provided containers for garbage and recycling in equal proportions to encourage cardboard, paper, aluminum and plastic bottle recycling. Waste Management, who donated the containers and collection service, reported over 2,000 pounds of recyclables were recovered from the event. Waste Services collected athletic shoes, eye glasses, cell phones and batteries at all three interchanges featuring events. Residents were able to recycle at the top of each ramp. Land Use staff answered questions and distributed more than 500 copies of the most recent

edition of the *Will County Residential Waste & Recycling Guide*.

This event marked the first time that Will County provided recycling services to businesses and residents in a festival environment. While some residents expressed their satisfaction with being able to utilize ramp recycling containers so they could enjoy the festivities without carrying recyclables with them, others stopped at the Land Use booth to take batteries and eye glasses from bike pouches. All the containers were taken away by the early evening to allow for the official traffic opening that night. This was truly a unique and very successful event.



Dedication Ceremony – November 11, 2007 – featuring Governor Blagojevich

## **Current Accomplishments - Education / Outreach Programs**

Upon request, the Waste Services Division provides environmental education to residents, businesses, schools, or community groups. Staff routinely provides presentations, participates in public events (i.e. County Fair, Joliet Business Expo, Earth Day and America Recycles Day events). In 2007, over 3,500 adults were provided materials through these outlets.

**Business Recycling program:** The division's outreach to the business and non-profit community continued as staff attended several business meetings, gave presentations, performed telephone and in-person analysis of garbage and recycling service options for businesses throughout the county.

**County Office Recycling – Grant Award:** In late 2006, Waste Services applied for a grant from the State of Illinois Department of Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to improve recycling at all county buildings, offices and facilities. The grant of \$51,000 was awarded in the summer of 2007 and items began to be purchased shortly thereafter. The largest item, a baler for the Adult Detention Facility was delayed due to construction at the facility, but many new deskside containers and public recycling containers were installed. The County Courthouse began full-scale recycling in all their offices and prominently displayed public containers for the first time on all four floors and near the front entrance. The County Office Building and Health Department upgraded their public bins. Recycling began at some small outlying offices, such as University Park Health Dept office, Egyptian Trail Highway facility and the Crete Sheriff office.



**Local Government Collection Assistance:** This program began in 2006 to assist local governments with contract negotiations, ways to increase recycling, address waste collection for businesses and more. All municipalities are encouraged to contact the department for assistance with collection contracts and service enhancements. The Village of Homer Glen called Waste Services for preliminary curbside garbage/recycling/yard waste collection contract discussions. Meetings and formal consideration of the Village's first collection contract by the city council are expected to continue.

**America Recycles Day:** Once again the IKEA of Bolingbrook celebrated America Recycles Day on November 15 by creating a display featuring products they sell that have recycled content, setting up and advertising a presentation by the Waste Services staff. The Bolingbrook IKEA invited the County to give out literature and answer questions in-person on November 15 as they shared information on their 70% waste diversion success.

**Earth Day:** This appreciation for the environment event began on April 22, 1970, and has grown from a one-day event to a month long celebration throughout the County. Waste Services staff offered presentations at IKEA in Bolingbrook, participated in an Earth Day Fair at the Forest Preserve Nature Center in Beecher and held a collection event during the month of April. Special events continued throughout the month of May, using the awareness created in April as a means of increasing participation.





**School Program:** Since 1997 Will County has had a program to encourage schools to recycle. In 2007 the Waste Services Staff presented recycling and composting information to over 8,000 children and teachers across the county. Will County, with the support of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, awarded Earth Flags to the schools listed in the chart on the following page successfully reducing and recycling waste in their buildings and for receiving educational presentations to at least one grade level of students.

A replica of an Earth Flag awarded to schools.

<b>2006/07 Illinois Earth Flag Award Recipients</b> (Awarded May 2007)	
Beecher - Beecher Elementary Bolingbrook - Irene King Bolingbrook - Jonas E. Salk Braidwood - Reed Custer Middle Channahon - N.B. Galloway Elwood - Elwood School Frankfort - Chelsea Elementary Frankfort - Grand Prairie Elementary Frankfort - Frankfort Square Joliet - Gompers Jr. High Joliet - Joliet Central Joliet - St. Joseph Joliet - St. Jude	Lockport - Kelvin Grove Jr. High Lockport - Ludwig School Manhattan - St. Joseph Mokena - Arbury Hills Mokena - Mokena Intermediate New Lenox - Nelson Prairie New Lenox - Tyler School Peotone - Peotone Jr. High Plainfield - Meadow View Plainfield - Wesmere Elementary Wilmington - St. Rose Wilmington - Bruning Elementary

Each of the schools receiving an Earth Flag or award for continued “recycling excellence,” was invited to an award ceremony, held at Bicentennial Park in Joliet. Students and faculty arrived from throughout the County for an award presentation filled to standing-room-only capacity. The 2006-07 ceremony included an address from the County Executive, Larry Walsh and an environmental education presentation on reptiles.





## **Conclusion**

The year 2007 was an exceptionally great year for the Waste Services Division, earning two grants, evolving from one-day collections to permanent recycling programs, addressing unwanted chemical and medication waste collection programs in new ways and recording another increase in the County's recycling rate. The overall recycling rate reached 39%, up 4% from the previous year, nearly reaching the goal of 40%. A variety of educational activities, one-day special collection events, programs in partnership, inspections and reporting activities were completed. Analysis of participation levels, complaints and recycling measurements provided the means to establish the goals for 2008. These goals include:

- Assist Municipalities, Townships and unincorporated subdivisions to Increase Residential Recycling
- Build on the Program to Increase Commercial and Industrial Recycling
- Maintain award and educational programs for schools
- Target schools that have never earned an Earth Award to participate in program
- Increase Monitoring of Open-Dump Sites
- Review all Pollution Control Facility Applications and related IEPA :and Permit Applications
- Produce and receive approval of the Solid Waste Plan Update
- Continue Collection Events for HHW, Electronics, Tires and Books
- Expand permanent collection programs for Electronics, Medications and Traditional Recyclables

Waste Services staff will continue to work in cooperation with other Land Use divisions such as Planning & Zoning, Building, Subdivision Engineering and Community Development, in addition to relying upon the County State's Attorney for enforcement assistance. Waste Services will forge new partnerships with other units of local government to improve recycling. Waste Services is dedicated to providing safe disposal and recycling programs for all residents, businesses and organizations within Will County.

Comments, Concerns or Suggestions may be sent to:

Will County – Land Use  
Waste Services Manager  
58 E. Clinton Street  
Joliet, IL 60432  
815-727-8834  
[www.willcountylanduse.com](http://www.willcountylanduse.com)



**Lawrence M. Walsh**  
**County Executive**

# **The Recycling & Waste Disposal Evolution**

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