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Make everyday Earth Day - Green your Choices - Save Resources - Be Happy

Greening our Red, White & Blue

Independence Day is full of parties and celebrations of every kind. This year find ways to green the events you host or attend with some tips from our experts. Share information on our traditional recycling drop-off and special electronic recycling drop-off locations with friends. Take a break from mowing and watering with some native garden beds. Be sure to make time to bike to work or run an errand. Try Metra to visit Chicago or folks in suburbs along the route. Save money on utilities with some of our tips and a few programs from ComEd. Perhaps, plant a tree.

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Backyard Party Recycling

Having friends or family over for a backyard party is an excellent summer activity. Please be sure to set out recycling containers so your guests know what to do with aluminum cans. Encourage them to bring refillable bottles or offer durable stainless steel or glassware that can be washed and reused. Consider options for reusable utensils, including purchasing extra from the thrift store. If using charcoal, skip the starter fluid altogether and use a charcoal chimney for heating up the charcoal quickly. If using disposable, choose paper plates that will break down in a compost or landfill instead of plastic that will last up to 1,000 years in an Illinois landfill. Parties can be fun for us and safer for the environment.



A Charcoal Chimney completely eliminates the need for hazardous starter fluid

Glass Recycling at local bars

Restaurants, Hotels and Taverns that recycle cardboard often ask about glass recycling only to be told the service is NOT available to them. This is very disappointing given the amount of glass they generate and the fact that all glass bottles contain recycled glass! GlassKing, a firm headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, has partnered with the Glass Recycling Foundation to change this and Corona Beer has stepped up to provide services throughout Chicagoland in a fun and entertaining manner at several local establishments. Recently they offered patrons a chance to participate in turning the glass to sand at Double J Sports Bar and at The Dock in Joliet. They were in Naperville and at Backroads in Plainfield. **They will be coming to Paddy Bs in Orland Park and Baileys in Tinley Park on July 6.** Ask your favorite establishment to call us if they are interested in recycling glass bottles.



To learn more about this special glass recovery effort please [visit their website](#)

Are you seeing more Electric Cars?

Yes, yes you are! As of April 2023, more than 3.6 million plug-in electric vehicles have been sold in the United States, with more than half of those sold since 2021. Battery costs have fallen more than 90% since 2008, and energy density and performance have increased rapidly. Tesla, the leader in EV infrastructure, was asked to open their network of fast charging locations to all plug-in drivers and their plug is now to become standard. (Adapter plugs will be used to allow non-Teslas to charge safely). Each day seems to bring news of battery recycling and chemistry breakthroughs. We are in the midst of a transportation transformation. Try to enjoy the ride!



Experts cite **1910** as the year that automobiles finally outnumbered horses and buggies.

Recycling at the Festival

When attending a festival do you ever notice the amount of waste being created? The food containers and cups may be made of materials not easily recycled or composted. When you are using an aluminum can, recycling may be difficult to find. What about the food scraps generated by both vendors and participants? A Minnesota 3-day Rib Fest recovered 80% of their waste for recycling and composting in 2019. Ask the organizations involved in offering your favorite popular summer gathering to:

- require vendors to recycle cardboard
- serve food on compostable plates with compostable straws and utensils
- add recycling and composting service to their collection contract



Festivals are fun, together, we can reduce their waste.

[See our Festival Tip page!](#)

Learn if Solar Works for You

Solar Switch is an education and group buying program for solar now available to Will County residents. Interested residents will get a high quality solar education and can register to receive a personal recommendation at a discounted price. Participation is free, and there is no obligation to accept your recommendation. **Register by July 5th, 2023 to receive an offer by August 8th.** Visit solarswitch.com/WillCounty to learn more and watch this [40-second video](#).



[Click to register!](#)

The Irony of Needle Disposal

Steel is one of the most recycled materials in the world but when used to make needles, it is not recovered. By law, medical facilities (hospitals, doctor's offices, dentists) must send used needles for treatment to remove the bio-hazard. This is usually done by collecting the "sharps" (term for needles) in a plastic container, then sending the filled container to be autoclaved (pressurized heating process). This process eliminates the bio-hazard but it also melts the plastic to the metal, effectively making both materials impossible to recycle. They are sent to a landfill.

When residents self-inject insulin or other medications they are allowed to place the needles in a container, such as a laundry bottle, duct tape it, and place it in the trash. This is to keep sanitation workers safe. The added benefit is less cost to residents and less transportation.

*NEVER place in recycling. The needles may spill and become a serious danger to sorting personnel. The CDC estimates there are approximately 385,000 injuries with contaminated needles annually! Be safe.



Governor's State EV Symposium

The College of Business at Governors State University, Supply Chain Innovation Center and Business Incubator (SCICBI), in collaboration with the GSU School of Extended Learning, orchestrated the second annual Reimagining Electric Vehicle Industry in Illinois event on May 26. Will County staff were some of the 150 in attendance, listening to officials from the state and federal government, business leaders and more. JJC presented information on their relationship with Lion Electric, an electric bus and truck manufacturer in Joliet/Channahon. JJC students studying



[Click for YouTube videos](#)
from the event

auto mechanics may be eligible to go from the classroom to a job with Lion Electric.

ComEd Summer Discounts

ComEd understands the cost of producing more energy results in higher prices for power during the hotter summer months. They offer ways for residents to control those costs while also keeping their homes comfortable.

- Real Time Pricing allows residents to benefit from using less electricity during the day and running appliances in the evening at lower rates when demand is down.
- Central AC Cycling gives ComEd a way to reduce your AC power without cutting it to prevent your home from getting hot.
- Smart Meter Connected Devices allow your smart devices to communicate and gives you the power to adjust energy use even when you're away from home.



[Click to Visit ComEd](#)

Lockport Installs 2nd Charger

The City of Lockport has installed a 2nd EV Charging Station in their downtown area at the City Hall, steps from the library and shopping district. After experiencing increasing use at the first station installed a couple of years ago with Will County contributing \$3,500 towards the cost through their EV Charging Station grant fund. Lockport applied for a grant for a second station early this year and recently opened it to the public. They now have two stations serving four vehicles, offering free charging with a four hour limit to encourage employees and visitors to adopt plug-in vehicles and shop Lockport! [Apply](#) for your community.



Two Stations, Four Plugs
Free Charging in Lockport

Electronics Collections off 7/4

On most Tuesdays the County offers Electronic Recycling options in two locations. The first is Lockport at their public works facility from 6am to 11am. The second would be in Bolingbrook or Frankfort from 5pm-7pm. However, the first Tuesday of July is Independence Day and all sites will be closed for the Holiday. Please visit our [Electronics Recycling website page](#) for all the year-round drop-off options.



C-PACE Around Illinois

Along with Will County, neighboring Cook, DuPage, Kane, and Kankakee Counties, as well as Champaign, Lake, McHenry, Peoria, and 6 others in western Illinois have C-PACE programs administered by the Illinois Energy Conservation Authority NFP (IECA). Several have closed on significant revitalization projects, such as Kane County's \$3 million financing for revitalization at the former Copley Hospital in East Aurora. This financing was designed to support cleanup and redevelopment of the site into a multi-use complex with a pharmacy, senior housing units, healthcare facilities, schooling administration, and park space. Half the [development](#) was completed in 2022.



[Click to learn more about C-PACE through the IECA.](#)

Rain Barrels still Available

Will County's spring rain barrel sale may be over but our partner, The Conservation Foundation, is continuing to sell the rain barrels through Upcycle Products. These reconditioned recovered barrels outfitted with spigot and netting to keep leaves out, fit against the house or building and fill with rain flowing off the roof. An overflow valve can be altered to fill a second barrel for large roof areas feeding the downspout. Please consider using rain water for your garden, bushes and grass rather than drinking water from your faucet. This conserves the aquifer water and lowers your water bill.



[Click to learn more](#)
and order your Rain Barrel

Curtains & Blinds Increase Comfort

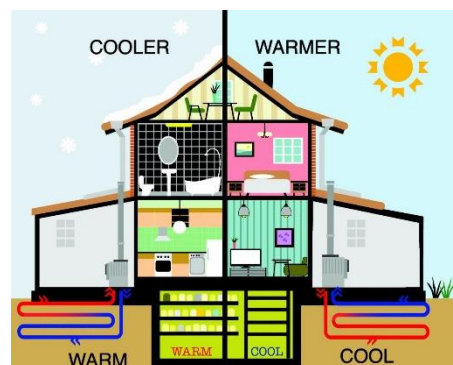
One weatherization strategy that can help keep your home comfortable throughout the seasons is to adjust your window curtains and/or blinds. On hot days in the summer, leave your curtains open where indirect sunlight comes into the room to take advantage of natural daylighting. **Close the curtains where direct sunlight comes in to reduce solar heat gain.** Do just the opposite on cold days in the winter: Close the curtains and/or blinds near windows with indirect or no sunlight to reduce heat loss. Open the curtains where direct sunlight shines in the morning to let the sun warm your home.



Summer heat may mean closing blinds and curtains to keep rooms cooler.

The Earth Cools & Heats Homes

You may still learn how ground-source heat pumps improve indoor building comfort and energy efficiency by exchanging heat with the earth below our feet. Watch a free virtual information session to hear more about the benefits of and financial incentives for geothermal installations. Homeowners in Will and neighboring counties can also participate in the first **group buy**, taking



advantage of economies of scale to make geothermal more accessible for all. Visit growgeo.org/events for upcoming Geo Power Hours, including the next virtual session on **July 5 from 6:00–7:00 PM**, cohosted by the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County.

[Click to View Recorded Session](#)

Biodegradable: Not always compostable

Items labeled Biodegradable are not necessarily natural nor acceptable at compost sites. A biodegradable plastic only means it breaks into smaller pieces when exposed to sun and oxygen but plastic doesn't go away. It can get into our food chain. Plant based items are more likely to be compostable but even some of them have coatings that cause problems for composting operations. California has a truth in labeling law that many hope will address the issues. Please know that biodegradable and compostable do **not** mean recyclable. If in doubt, check us out at www.WillCountyGreen.com. We may ask for a photo and description.



Labels may be confusing.

Pledge to engage in a "Plastic Free July"

Plastic surrounds us from eyeglasses and contact lens to clothing, automobile parts, building materials and more. Some of the plastic is unnecessary, a waste of the fossil fuels used to create it and is viewed as harmful to the environment. Single-use cups, straws, lids, plates, take-out containers, and more are items we should avoid. When they become litter, they breakdown into smaller pieces, entering the soil, air and water, even getting into our food. Many organizations, locally and globally, ask us to reduce single-use plastic and



Are you up for the challenge?

challenge us to start with a Plastic Free July. [Click to learn more.](#)

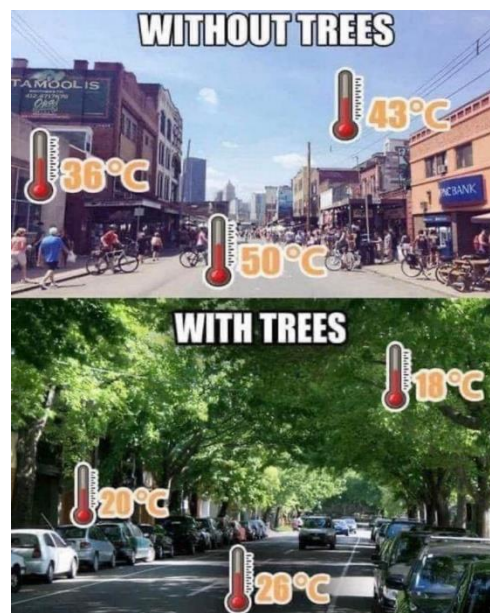
Slammers Save H2O

Will County teamed up with the City of Joliet and their hometown Slammers to offer water conservation tips and give everyone in attendance and opportunity to win water saving devices! Seven lucky people won rain barrels and/or water conservation kits after pledging to reduce their water use. The audience also viewed several water conservation tips and videos on the big screen. Many people interacted with the government staff on the concourse where tables were setup from Will County's RR&E division, the City of Joliet, the Home Depot, the American Water Works Association, and Joliet Junior College's Sustainability Union. Of course, the best part of the evening was the Slammers winning the game 9-1 against the Quebec Capitales! Hope we see you next year!



Facebook: Trees cool city streets

A recent post about the impact of tree lined streets was popular during our hot and dry weather. "As temperatures hit 90 Fahrenheit consider how more trees can cool. City streets tend to be hotter than forests. Asphalt reaching over 120 Fahrenheit can be cooled to 79 Fahrenheit when we line the streets with a green canopy of leaves, breathing in carbon dioxide and providing us oxygen." Perhaps you have noticed this temperature shift when crossing a hot parking lot into a park or forest preserve. Trees are also known to calm traffic, with motorists often driving slower on tree lined streets. They improve oxygen levels, clean some of



the air pollution, enhance the ability of the soil to capture rain water and support wildlife.

Upcoming Events

July 4: Independence Day Holiday

July 20: Greening Your Life Presentation at Troy Township in Shorewood

Aug 23 - Sept 1: World Water Week

Sept 7: Recycling Curbside vs Non-curbside items at Troy Township in Shorewood

Sept 9: Recyclepalooza in New Lenox (appointments taken after July 15)

Sept 30: Love Monee begins

Oct. 4: Energy Efficiency Day



Water Conservation



Search for recycling and disposal options on willcountygreen.com



Geothermal Energy



Green Business Star



School Earth Flag



Take a Virtual Tour



Solar Energy



Info on Electric Vehicles



Wind Energy



Cleaning Alternatives



Donate Items



Composting



C-PACE Program



Reporting Data



Sustainable Infrastructure



Electronics Drop-Off



Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Offs



Medication Take-Back

WillCountyGreen.com

A website of Will County
58 E. Clinton Street
Joliet, IL 60432
815-727-8834

Contributors:
Marta Keane
Briana Moore



Resource Recovery
& Energy
*A Division of the
Will County Land Use
Department*

**Will County
Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant
County Executive**



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Will County | Will County - Land Use Dept, Resource Recovery & Energy, 58 E. Clinton Street,
Joliet, IL 60432 willcountygren.com