



[Visit Our Website](#)

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

A New Year filled with Choices

While many may engage in New Year resolutions that fizzle within days or weeks; we offer you opportunities to make better environmental choices every day without such pressure. For instance, instead of becoming a vegetarian, you choose meatless Monday as a goal to cut back on the resource load attributed to cattle. You add insulation, install water saving faucets, or recycle responsibly. If buying a car, you try a hybrid plug-in, go completely electric or simply get one with over 30 mpg average. If you've got bike paths accessible to your office or other frequent destination, you try bicycling a couple days a week or car pooling with a friend. We applaud all your "green" choices and ask you to join us in applauding the retirement of our Environmental Educator, Joan O'Keefe.

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Electronic Recycling

While we may struggle with losing weight, our electronic devices have been steadily reducing. Thankfully, the Illinois Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) law was changed in 2016 from a weight based law to a comprehensive take-back service. This has resulted in more programs and participation but less weight totals. In 2022, Will County's eight electronics collection sites served at least 9,100 households and accepted over 720,000 pounds of electronics. These 8 sites accept string lights year-round. Currently, the County offers three additional locations in Joliet to increase convenience. Collection carts are inside the entrances at:

- County Office Building



String Light Recycling Additional Sites
December 1, 2022 - January 31, 2023
County Office Building, 302 N. Chicago St

- Land Use
 - Sunny Hill Nursing Home
- These County sites are available during each facility's business hours until Jan. 31. Address and hours of the eight year-round electronics collection sites offered by partnering communities can be found by clicking this link to our [website](#).

8:30am - 4:30pm
Land Use, 58 E. Clinton St.
8:30am - 4:30pm
Sunny Hill Nursing Home, 421 Doris Ave.
6:30am - 8:00pm

Warm Goodbye to RR&E Educator

Joan Bozych O'Keefe was Will County's first Environmental Educator, beginning her career here in August 1997. She established the Earth Flag School recognition program and, as a certified teacher, worked with hundreds of schools over the course of her career and countless children. Many teachers have relied on Joan to assist them with beginning butterfly and pollinator gardens and providing bins and instruction on classroom composting with worms (known as vermi-composting). She has given presentations to Scout Troops, at libraries and Park Districts throughout Will County. Thanks to Joan, nearly every year, almost 50 amazing schools are certified for waste reduction, recycling and conservation. Congratulations and thank you from all of us in RR&E and the County.



Joan O'Keefe Retires

Solar Incentives in Illinois

Illinois is offering generous solar [incentives](#) in 2023. You might be interested to learn that adding solar to a typical home runs around \$20,000 without incentives in our state. This investment in your home is currently exempt from property tax assessments. For businesses and residential properties, the power generated is eligible to be sold as an SREC (Solar Renewable Energy Certificate) for those that enroll in the [Illinois Shines](#) program. Of course you can use the electricity you generate, with the



Please click this link to learn more [Illinois Solar Incentive Summary](#)

current carryover lasting one year through ComEd. Learn more and consider solar options for your home, business, place of worship and community organizations.

Greenest Snow & Ice Removal

The Watershed Coalition wants to remind residents and businesses that removing wintertime snow and ice can be done in ways that avoid harmful impact to animals, lawns and waterways. When snow fall is light, use a broom to clean it off walkways and driveways. A shovel and snowblower can be used for larger or heavy situations. If ice forms, use a sharp ice chopping device to cut through it. Avoid salt or use a brine when needed. For more tips, [click here!](#)



Solar Success in Chicagoland

2022 was another successful year for the Grow Solar Chicagoland group buy program—76 properties across the region (including 7 in Will County) installed 553 kW of solar energy, surpassing the 300-kW goal and producing enough electricity to power the average Illinois home for over 76 years. By participating in the group buy, the average household saw a bulk buying discount of \$650, in addition to thousands of dollars in savings from state and federal incentives. The program also informed 1,150 residents about solar viability and affordability through free Solar Power Hours throughout the summer. Read more about [Grow Solar 2022](#) and [sign up for updates](#) as we work together to bring another group purchasing opportunity to you later this year.



Homes and Businesses that are adding Solar are supporting the switch to renewable supply and decentralizing the grid, increasing the power grid's strength and resiliency.

De-Clutter and Donate

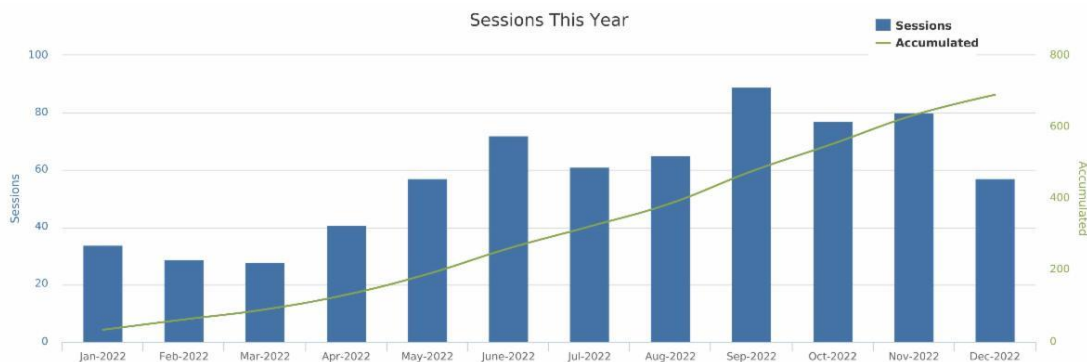
With all the gifts opened and the new clothes put away, it is a great time to clean out. Consider donating two items for every new item that came into your home over the holidays. There may be many useful knickknacks or even furnishings that you simply don't need or utilize any more. A variety of thrift stores are available throughout Will County to take these treasures off your hands and give them a chance at being useful to another. If you wish, you can also sell items online on a local or national level. Please consider "consignment shops" for items in great condition.



Thrift Stores include:
 Goodwill, Savers, Clothes Mentor,
 ReStore, New Uses, St. Vincent DePaul,
 Treasure Chest

EV Charging at County Growing

Installed in 2021, the first downtown Joliet EV Charging Station is located across from the new Courthouse and seeing a dramatic increase in usage with EVs often waiting for their turn. The chart below shows we are averaging 80 charges per month. The County also has a dual head charging station at the Health Department since 2020. These stations prevent pollution associated with the combustion of gasoline and diesel.



Recycling Drop-offs serving Will

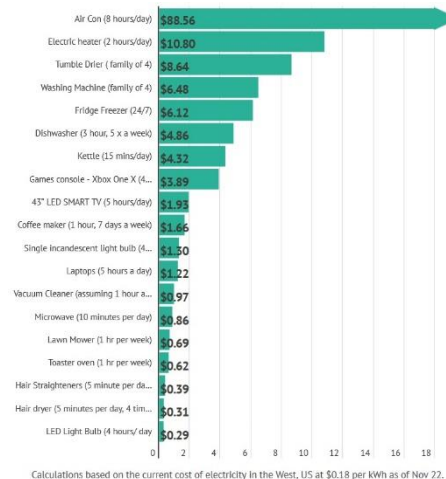
Since 1945, the Crete Lions Club has been operating a Recycling Drop-Off serving Will County residents and businesses. They are run with volunteer staff and the oldest, continuing operating recycling drop-off in Will County. Located at 1215 Douglas, next to the Public Works garage in Crete, they are open Monday thru Friday from 7 to 9 am, or Saturdays, from 7 am to noon. They take only items they can market so please check [their website](#) for the list. They also accept eyeglasses, a national Lions Club program. Will County offers Traditional Recycling Drop-Offs at six partnering locations: Braidwood, Channahon, Godley, Lockport, New Lenox, and Shorewood. The City of Naperville also offers a Traditional Recycling Drop-Off. All locations and hours are on our website. Please [click this link](#).



2022 Photo inside Crete Recycling Center courtesy of the SunTimes

Energy Awareness

If you are concerned about your electric bill, becoming aware of the biggest energy using items in the home may help you control those costs. Air Conditioning is the highest cost item which is why reflective roofs are a great investment. Insulation is also a great way to address both heating and cooling use. With a clothes dryer coming in third, it may be worth the time to use a drying rack or clothes line when possible. Gamers may be surprised at the amount of energy used by game consoles and should look online for ways to connect these to reduce some of the energy demand. Simple hair styles can also reduce the demand from hair dryers and straighteners and free some personal time!



This [link](#) offers more information on energy costs across the US and offers the graphic in a much larger, easier to read, format.

Cut Water Costs, Improve Home

While cold winter weather keeps you indoors, consider undertaking a minor bathroom remodel or a few simple improvements utilizing WaterSense faucets. A Watersense bathroom makeover can save households as much as \$150 dollars in utility bills annually! To learn more about conserving water in your home, from faucets to sprinkler systems, visit the EPA's [Watersense website](https://www.epa.gov/watersense).

How Much Will a Bathroom Makeover With WaterSense Save?

Water:
10,000 gallons annually
Enough to wash 11 months' worth of laundry

Electricity:
370 kilowatt-hours annually
Enough to run a refrigerator for 7 months

Money:
\$150 in utility bills annually
Fixtures pay for themselves in as little as 1 year

the WaterSense epa.gov/watersense

Re imagine Mobility

Over the past two years, Will County has been involved with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to reimagine how the Chicagoland [transportation network can better serve all residents](#). Together with 20 governmental agencies they have developed a visionary mobility strategy that can support an equitable recovery, sustain the transit network, and ease a rebound in congestion. This effort was supported through extensive research, analysis, and outreach. It tracked trends to better understand how our region's transportation needs evolved during the pandemic and identified numerous strategies to address these challenges. In the Final Report, just released, offers three solutions:

1. Invest in a stronger and more financially secure transit system
2. Balance the benefits and impacts of e-commerce and other freight activity
3. Develop a better transportation system that improves quality of life for all



[Click to view Report](#)

Alternative Fuel Fleet Survey

Each year, the Illinois Alliance for Clean Transportation (formerly Chicago Area Clean Cities) collects alternative fuel fleet data to produce a coalition report. The report reflects all the outstanding work taking place in the Chicago area and can be used to promote our coalition and our region. The Illinois Alliance for Clean Transportation is once again offering a **FREE** membership for 2023 to those who complete the [annual fleet survey](#). The survey is intended for any stakeholder with alternative fuel vehicles, advanced technology vehicles, alternative fueling stations, idle reduction technologies or policies to reduce vehicle miles traveled (such as carpooling, public transit or telecommuting programs). Individual data collected from stakeholders is not shared publicly.



Travel with Recycled Luggage

People are traveling again and you may want to update your luggage for an easier time of it. Consider this amazing carry-on closet from [Solgaard](#). This is made with recycled materials and includes plastic taken from the ocean. Not only does this company strive to design superior products for traveling, they recycle at least the weight of 29 plastic bottles, many recovered from oceans around the world, and incorporate the recycled material into the products.

**Will County does not endorse any businesses or products but strives to bring attention to those made with recycled content.*



Facebook: Reuse & Recycling

One of our recent posts depicted how much energy is saved by recycling metal clothes hangers. According to the US EPA's database on the measurement of recycling, recycling 30 metal hangers at a scrap yard or one of our Recyclepalooza events, saves enough energy to power a dryer for an hour. When we suggested reuse is even better, one of our residents, E. Sieh, suggested residents that besides Dry Cleaners, people could donate through local Buy Nothing groups. Offering unwanted items for reuse through Facebook Marketplace, local Patch online newspapers, homeowners associations, and donating to thrift stores are all going to save more resources than recycling. Also - great places to shop for your family!

Recycling and Reuse
 Goal: Save Resources and Energy



Recycling 30 metal hangers saves the energy equivalent of powering a clothes dryer for an hour!
 * Reuse saves even more resources!

Return metal hangers to Dry Cleaners

willcountygreen.com

Never place hangers in curbside recycling collection carts or in traditional recycling drop-off containers. They may harm sorting equipment or be a danger to workers.

Upcoming Events

now-January 31: String Light Collection
 February 2: World Wetlands Day
 February 18: Great Backyard Bird Count



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



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

**Will County
Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant
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