

## **After a Disaster: Tornado, Flood, Storms, Power Outages, etc. Debris Management Guidance**

### **Can all of my damaged items be placed at the curb?**

Debris is often generated following a disaster such as a tornado, flood, storms, power outages, etc. Not all items may be discarded with garbage and trash. Proper disposal is dependent upon the item to be discarded. These items include electronics, appliances, certain recyclable materials, household hazardous waste, landscape waste, paint, tires etc. These items must be handled separately and their management is further described in this fact sheet. Additional fees may be charged for special pickup or drop-off services. Residents should always call a service, drop-off location or facility directly to confirm the cost of disposal, acceptable items and hours or other restrictions.

Individual property owners of the affected private property are responsible to separate out and prepare non-hazardous solid waste and recyclable materials for pickup by a McHenry County licensed municipal solid waste hauler. The sorting of debris should be handled in a safe manner; personal protective clothing and equipment should be used. These may include disposable protective suits, gloves, eye protection, and face masks (i.e. dust or N95 mask). Municipal solid waste haulers provide curbside collection of non-hazardous solid waste and transport the waste and recyclable materials to approved recycling, compost and disposal facilities.

Garbage, rubbish and trash should be containerized in covered trash containers or secured garbage bags whenever practical to prevent nuisance conditions such as litter, prejudicial odors and disease-causing rodents, mosquitoes, flies, etc., and placed at the curb for pickup by a McHenry County licensed municipal solid waste hauler. Larger items such as furniture, carpeting and drywall would likely require you to make special arrangements with your waste hauler.

Store all waste away from water wells and prevent vehicles and heavy equipment from driving or parking over any portion of a septic system.

Please be patient as clean-up efforts may take time. Collectively residents and waste haulers can prepare and manage the debris in an orderly and safe way for recycling and disposal while protecting public health.

### **How do I contact a waste hauler?**

Many municipalities and several unincorporated areas of the county are served by designated municipal waste haulers who have exclusive contracts to serve specific geographic areas. Residents who are unsure if they have a designated waste hauler should contact their municipality or the McHenry County Solid Waste Manager for further information. Residents who do not have a designated waste hauler may contact any municipal solid waste hauler licensed in McHenry County. Maps of specific unincorporated areas served by a designated municipal waste hauler and a list of McHenry County licensed municipal solid waste haulers are available on the Solid Waste Program webpage at [www.mcdh.info](http://www.mcdh.info)

## **Can I burn damaged items and debris?**

The burning of materials other than landscape waste, such as garbage, paper, cardboard, construction materials or animal waste is prohibited throughout McHenry County. The open burning of landscape waste is restricted in McHenry County. Many municipalities may further restrict or prohibit the open burning of landscape waste; please check with your municipality. Where a more restrictive Ordinance does not apply, the open burning of landscape waste is limited to specific setback, location, time and other applicable restrictions:

**Setbacks:** The burn area must be a minimum of 100 feet from any habitable structure and 50 feet from a detached garage, shed, barn or other non-habitable structure.

**When:** Weekend days (Saturdays and Sundays) in April, May, October and November.

**Time:** Between dawn and dusk.

**Other restrictions:**

- No burning is permitted when winds are greater than 10 mph.
- Adult supervision throughout the duration of the burning until extinguished.
- A water/extinguisher source must be available.

A burn area 500 feet or greater from a habitable structure is not subject to the time restrictions; however, all other prohibitions/restrictions would apply.

A full copy of the McHenry County Public Health Ordinance is available on the McHenry County Department of Health website at [www.mcdh.info](http://www.mcdh.info)

Please note only the Chairman of the County Board has the authority to waive any of the requirements of this Ordinance in the event of emergencies resulting from natural phenomenon or civil strife.

MCDH encourages residents to consider more environmentally sound alternatives to open burning of landscape waste such as mulching, native landscaping, composting, using landscaping service companies, taking advantage of municipal solid waste haulers' landscape waste collection services, and dropping off landscape waste at an approved composting facility or landscape waste transfer station in our county. These alternatives ensure landscape waste is beneficially reused as wood chips, wood mulch and compost, etc.

Yard waste recycling facilities:

**Thelen Sand and Gravel Compost Facility**

815-675-6613

[www.thelensq.com](http://www.thelensq.com)

**Peterson Pit Landscape Waste Transfer Facility**

815-675-6613

**Garden Prairie Organics**

815-597-1318

[www.qpocompost.com](http://www.qpocompost.com)

## **Traditional residential recyclable materials**

The McHenry County Residential Recycling Ordinance requires residents who receive curbside collection service from a municipal solid waste hauler to prepare and separate out the following recyclable materials from discarded material for the purpose of recycling: newsprint, corrugated cardboard, mixed fiber (including magazines, high grade printing and writing papers, phone books, and chipboard), plastic, aluminum and steel cans, and glass containers. Municipal solid waste haulers collect the recyclable material and transport it to the appropriate resource recovery facility or recycling center.

Recyclable materials should be empty, clean and dry as is practical before being placed in your recycling cart or bin. Aluminum foil may be balled up and cardboard boxes should be flattened. It is acceptable to leave caps, lids, rings and labels on plastic and glass containers, bottles and jars.

NOTE: Plastic bags and plastic film, shredded paper and Styrofoam™ cannot go into the curbside recycling. Simply stuff clean, empty dry plastic bags and plastic film into one bag and recycle them at the nearest participating grocery or retail store such as Jewel, Meijer, Walmart and Target. Styrofoam™ may be disposed of in the regular trash.

## **Electronics**



Certain electronics cannot be transported to a landfill or transfer station for the purpose of disposal and are required to be recycled. Residential electronics may be set aside and taken to a special community event or to an electronics recycling drop-off location.

Below are electronic devices that cannot be disposed of in landfills:

- Televisions
- Computers ( laptop, notebook, netbook, tablet, desktop )
- Videocassette Recorders
- Video Game Consoles
- Satellite Receivers
- Cable Receivers
- Monitors
- Electronic keyboards, mice & peripherals
- Portable Digital Music Players
- Small Scale Servers
- Digital Converter Boxes
- Digital Video Disc Recorders
- Printers
- Facsimile Machines
- Digital Video Disc Players
- Scanners
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Local residential electronics drop-off locations are listed below. Residents should always call a service, drop-off location or facility directly to confirm eligibility, the cost of disposal, acceptable items and hours or other restrictions.

## **Everyday Electronics Recycling Options**

### **Elgin Recycling**

5114 Terra Cotta Ave., Crystal Lake IL

will accept electronics for recycling Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more information, please visit their website at [www.elginrecycling.com](http://www.elginrecycling.com) or contact them by phone at (847) 741-4100.

### **Best Buy**

5880 Northwest Hwy, Crystal Lake IL

Visit their website at [Best Buy](http://Best Buy) or call (815) 459-7874 for information on the items they accept.

Some municipal solid waste haulers also provide a premium curbside pickup service for their customers for a separate fee and require a scheduled appointment. Contact your hauler directly to determine if they offer this service, acceptable items, the cost of disposal, and/or other restrictions.

## **Household appliances (white goods)**

Household appliances also called “white goods” include refrigerators, freezers, ranges, water heaters, air conditioners, humidifiers, and other similar domestic and commercial large appliances. Appliances typically contain chemicals such as CFCs, Freon, PCBs and mercury containing switches that require special handling and disposal. If your appliance cannot be reasonably repaired, then there are several recycling options for the proper management of your discarded appliances:

- Many appliance retailers will remove your old appliance with the purchase and delivery of a new one. Make arrangements to have them remove the old appliance when scheduling delivery.
- Metal scrap yards may also provide a drop-off service for appliances. Take the appliance to a metal salvaging facility:
  - Behr Iron & Metal, Woodstock IL (815) 206-5511
  - Elgin Recycling, Inc., Crystal Lake IL (847) 741-4100
  - Falcon Green Resources, Harvard IL (815) 334-8689
- Contact a licensed municipal solid waste hauler to arrange for a special pickup.
- Secure refrigerators and freezers that are placed curbside until they are properly removed. This can be done by removal of the doors or padlocking the doors.



Contact your hauler directly to confirm if they offer this service, acceptable items, the cost of disposal, and/or other restrictions.

## **Household Hazardous Waste**

Household hazardous waste may include fuel, pesticides, herbicides, motor oil, antifreeze, cleaners, oil-based and other petroleum-based paints, paint thinner, degreasers, solvents, etc. Residents should bring their household hazardous waste to an Illinois EPA approved Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) drop-off location. There are 4 permanent locations located in our Northern Illinois area and are open to Illinois residents at no additional cost. If you have residential household hazardous waste to transport, please consider the following safer transportation guidelines:



- ✓ Keep HHW in its original containers. Do not mix any substances together.
- ✓ Transport the waste in a clean, dry plastic container or plastic lined cardboard box and place in the trunk of your vehicle.

### **Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful**

3315 Kishwaukee, Rockford, IL  
Phone: (815) 637-1343  
[www.knib.org](http://www.knib.org)

### **Gurnee: The Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO)**

1311 N. Estes Street, Gurnee, IL  
Phone: (847) 377-4950  
[www.swalco.org](http://www.swalco.org)

### **Naperville: Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off**

156 Fort Hill Drive, Naperville, IL  
Phone: (630) 420-6095  
[www.naperville.il.us/services/garbage-and-recycling/household-hazardous-waste-facility/](http://www.naperville.il.us/services/garbage-and-recycling/household-hazardous-waste-facility/)

### **City of Chicago: Household Chemicals and Computer Recycling Facility**

1150 North Branch on Goose Island  
Phone: 311 or for general info (312) 744-7672  
[www.cityofchicago.org/hccrf](http://www.cityofchicago.org/hccrf)

## **Construction Debris**

General construction and demolition debris may be placed at the curb or in a roll-off container for special curbside pickup; contact a municipal solid waste hauler for its disposal preparation and any fees. This debris may also be brought to a permitted facility for recycling or disposal. Additional fees apply:

**Lowe Enterprises C&D Material Processing Facility**  
Cary, IL (847) 639-2775

**Virginia Road Transfer Facility**  
Crystal Lake, IL (847) 658-5157

**Asphalt shingles only** may be brought to an Illinois EPA approved asphalt shingle recycling facility:

**Southwind RAS, LLC**  
Lake In The Hills, IL (630) 461-8330



## Tires

**Households:** Most tire retailers will accept used/waste tires even if the individual resident is not a customer purchasing new tires. Store tires in a way to prevent stagnant water conditions which provides suitable breeding conditions for vector mosquitoes until the tires are properly recycled. Tires may be taken to tire drop-off locations for a per tire user fee:

- Auto Tech Centers
  - McHenry IL (815) 385-7300
  - Crystal Lake IL (815) 459-7300
  - Woodstock IL (815) 338-5700
  - Huntley IL (847) 802-4051
- Discount Tire
  - McHenry (815) 528-9192
  - Crystal Lake (815) 526-4276
  - Algonquin (847) 458-2774
- Mavis Tire & Brakes, Crystal Lake IL (815) 242-1968
- Waukegan Tire
  - Grayslake IL (847) 543-0300
  - Park City IL (847) 336-5305



**Local units of government** (i.e. public works departments and township highway departments or road districts): Store tires in a way to prevent stagnant water conditions which provides suitable breeding conditions for vector mosquitoes and store tires in a manner to discourage open dumping of other waste. The best methods for tire storage and vector control may include indoor storage or in an enclosed semi-trailer. If tires are stored outside, have a licensed pest management service design and implement a mosquito larvaciding plan until the tires are properly recycled. The Illinois EPA may offer a local unit of government a Consensual Removal Agreement program dependent upon available funding. For program availability and information, contact the Illinois EPA Bureau of Land Region 2 Used Tire Program in Des Plaines IL at (847) 294-4000. If the Illinois EPA does not offer this program, then local units of government should contact a licensed tire hauler to arrange for pickup.

For larger quantities of tires (approximately 50+ tires), you may want to contact an Illinois EPA licensed tire hauler to arrange for a pickup:

- STAR Used Tire Disposal Inc. (815) 961-8615
- Liberty Tire Recycling (773) 871-6360

## **Paint**

Latex paint is discouraged from a household hazardous waste (HHW) drop-off location due to its low toxicity. Licensed municipal solid waste haulers cannot accept liquid latex paint because it contributes to adding liquid to the landfills and may accidentally spill onto the roads during transport. Latex paint can be solidified by mixing it with cat litter or using a paint hardening agent and discarded with your regular trash pickup. Knock out the solid clump into the trash and the steel or plastic paint container can be recycled.



New PaintCare® paint recycling program is available in Illinois December 1, 2025! Interior and exterior paints, stains, sealers, undercoaters, lacquers, varnishes, urethanes and similar paint products may be taken to convenient PaintCare® recycling drop-off sites call (855) PAINT09 or visit their website at [www.paintcare.org](http://www.paintcare.org)

Zieglers Ace Crystal Lake Crystal Lake, IL (815) 455-2510	Zieglers Ace Lake in the Hills Lake In The Hills, IL (847) 658-1783	Ace Hardware McHenry, IL ) (815) 385-3660	JC Licht Paint & Decor Algonquin, IL (847) 658-3622
RP Lumber Woodstock, IL (815) 356-8600	Sherwin-Williams Crystal Lake, IL (815) 477-1070	Sherwin-Williams Fox River Grove, IL (847) 516-7002	Sherwin-Williams Huntley, IL (847) 669-3066
Sherwin-Williams Lake in the Hills, IL (847) 658-1459	Sherwin-Williams McHenry, IL (815) 578-1752	Sherwin-Williams Woodstock, IL (815) 337-0942	

Transport the paint in sealed, leak-proof containers.

Residents should always call a service, drop-off location or facility directly to confirm eligibility, the cost of disposal, acceptable items and hours or other restrictions.

## Sharps



Residential sharps (i.e. needles, syringes and lancets) generated from households are considered general household waste in Illinois. The Illinois EPA – Potentially Infectious Medical Waste (PIMW) Section encourages the following safer disposal methods:

Residents may contact their healthcare provider to ask if they would be willing to dispose of your sharps for you or contact a local healthcare facility, clinic or pharmacy to ask if they offer a drop-off program for home sharps disposal. If a sharps drop-off program is unavailable, then mail-back home sharps disposal services are encouraged for safer home sharps disposal. The least desirable option for residents includes disposal of untreated home sharps in the trash. Residents may place their home sharps in a rigid, puncture-resistant and leak-resistant container (such as a coffee container or laundry bottle) with secured lid and discard in the regular trash pickup. Make sure the lid is secured with duct tape and clearly label the container: **“Do Not Recycle; unused sharps.”** Never place used sharps in your recycling container.

## Potentially Infectious Medical Waste (PIMW)

PIMW (i.e. sharps, needles, pipettes, scalpels, glass, PPE, etc. used in connection with diagnoses and treatment) generated from hospitals, nursing homes, veterinary clinics, dental offices, clinical laboratories, pharmaceutical laboratories, university and research facilities, etc. is subject to the regulations per the Illinois Environmental Protection Act. Place these materials in leak-proof containment and all PIMW must be treated to eliminate its infectious potential prior to proper disposal. Commercial transportation of PIMW requires an Illinois EPA PIMW hauling permit, PIMW manifest and certification of treatment would be required. For additional information on PIMW regulations in Illinois, contact the Illinois EPA - Bureau of Land (217) 524-3300 visit their website at <https://epa.illinois.gov>

## **Sandbags**

Floodwater sand may be contaminated with human and animal waste, oil and gasoline residue and chemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides:



- Sand or sandbags that did **not** contact floodwater can be reused without restrictions.
- Sand or sandbags that **contacted** floodwater should not be reused in ways that would involve direct human contact such as in children's play areas or in residential gardening.
- Sand or sandbags that are visually contaminated with oil or fecal matter, for example, should be disposed of as waste at a permitted landfill.

Visual inspection of the sand as well as local emergency responder knowledge can be used to assist in determining if sand has come into contact with flood waters. When in doubt, it is generally safer to assume that the sand has come into contact with flood waters.

**NOTE:** Addition of sand or other fill material may be regulated by the McHenry County Stormwater Ordinance. Please contact your municipality or the Department of Planning & Development regarding applicable regulations or restrictions.

### **Remember...**

Please be patient as clean-up efforts may take time. Work collectively with waste haulers.

Additional fees may be charged for special pickup or drop-off services. Residents should always call a service, drop-off location or facility directly to confirm the cost of disposal, acceptable items and hours or other restrictions.

For additional disposal/recycling options and locations, please view the McHenry County Recycling Directory Green Guide <https://mchenry.edu/green/green-guide.pdf> Should you have any questions that are not answered by this fact sheet or the websites noted, then please contact the McHenry County Solid Waste Manager at (815) 334-4585.

#### ***Related Sources or Links:***

Illinois EPA Fact Sheet: Storm, Flood Debris and Disaster Areas

<https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/waste-management/waste-disposal/storm-flood-debris-and-disaster-areas.html>

[EPA.Recycling@illinois.gov](mailto:EPA.Recycling@illinois.gov)

2026 McHenry County Recycling Directory Green Guide

<https://mchenry.edu/green/green-guide.pdf>