



(219) 326-0014  
(800) 483-7700  
www.solidwastedistrict.com

# "one man's trash..."

Solid Waste District of La Porte County



Spring 2024

Your guide to reducing, reusing, and recycling



Credit: Gam983 | iStock | Getty Images Plus

## May 7-in-1

**Saturday, May 11, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
**La Porte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2**

Accepting Tires\*, Appliances, Electronics, Confidential Papers for Shredding, Styrofoam, Cardboard, and Household Hazardous Waste (household, lawn, and automotive chemicals and oil-based paints, as well as batteries, fluorescent bulbs, sharps, and medications) \*Fee applies for tires.

**Saturday, June 15, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**La Porte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2**

Household Hazardous Waste *ONLY* (batteries, fluorescent bulbs, oil-based paints, sharps, and medications)

**Saturday, July 13, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**Marquette Mall, West Parking Lot, Michigan City**

Household Hazardous Waste *ONLY* (batteries, fluorescent bulbs, oil-based paints, sharps, and medications)

**Saturday, August 3, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**Kankakee Valley REMC, 8642 W. Hwy. 30, Wanatah**

Electronics and Household Hazardous Waste (batteries, fluorescent bulbs, oil-based paints, sharps, and medications)

## September 7-in-1

**Saturday, September 14, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
**La Porte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. State Road 2**

Accepting Tires\*, Appliances, Electronics, Confidential Papers for Shredding, Styrofoam, Cardboard, and Household Hazardous Waste (household, lawn, and automotive chemicals and oil-based paints, as well as batteries, fluorescent bulbs, sharps, and medications) \*Fee applies for tires.

**Saturday, October 19, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**Marquette Mall, West Parking Lot, Michigan City**

Household Hazardous Waste *ONLY* (batteries, fluorescent bulbs, oil-based paints, sharps, and medications)

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## Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk

This spring, we need your help cleaning up La Porte County, and we will provide the supplies! Gather your friends or go out on your own and help us create a cleaner and healthier community by pitching in to remove litter from your neighborhood, a county road, or the public space of your choice within La Porte County. Participants can choose any date between now and the end of May that is convenient for them or their organization. Feel free to choose a day or place that has special meaning to you!



Credit: dragana991 | iStock | Getty Images Plus

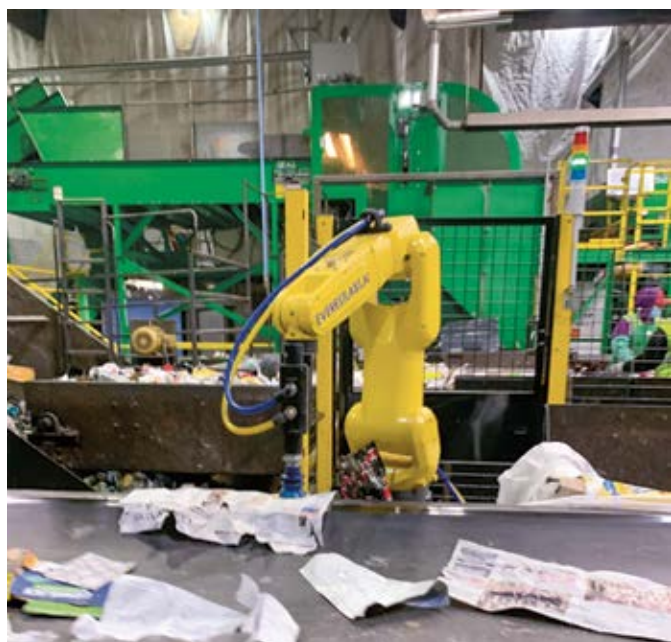
People and groups that sign up to participate in our Clean It Up! program will receive trash bags to fill, as well as bottled water to keep them hydrated while they work. Many La Porte County groups have already volunteered, including political and religious organizations, school clubs, scout troops, civic organizations, businesses, and families. To sign up or to donate supplies for this event, contact Sacha Gee-Burns at 219-326-0014 or sgeeburns@solidwastedistrict.com.

La Porte County Solid Waste District's Clean It Up! program is part of the Great American Cleanup. The national nonprofit group Keep America Beautiful sponsors the Great American Cleanup each year, with more than 15,000 communities participating in cleanup and community improvement activities nationwide. We are proudly celebrating our 12th year participating in this fun and worthwhile program.

Thanks for doing your part to help keep La Porte County clean!

Clay

"THERE IS SOMETHING INFINITELY HEALING IN THE REPEATED REFRAINS OF NATURE — THE ASSURANCE THAT DAWN COMES AFTER NIGHT, AND SPRING AFTER WINTER." ~ RACHEL CARSON, SILENT SPRING



## Borden and RecyclingWorks Use Artificial Intelligence Technology in Recycling

Have you ever wondered where your recycling goes after it is picked up by Borden Waste-Away? They transport it to their sister company, RecyclingWorks, in Elkhart, Indiana. There, the employees use various tools and equipment to sort the materials and prepare them to be shipped to outside facilities. These outside facilities are where the magic of becoming something new happens. With all the technology available today, it's not just people doing all the work — artificial intelligence is here to help!

Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are revolutionizing

the way that materials recovery facilities (MRFs) operate, and RecyclingWorks is leading the way. The MRF recently received an AI robotic arm (pictured), which has been named Pablo by the RecyclingWorks team members. Pablo has transformed the way that materials are sorted. The robotic arm can form a pattern of recognition to identify material differences in color, texture, pattern, and shape. From the sorting line that has mixed recyclables and trash, it can accurately and quickly sort many different recyclables. These recyclables include paper, cardboard, various types of plastics, aluminum,

glass, and compost from un-reusable materials. The benefits of the robotic arm are numerous. Other than being able to recognize and accurately sort recyclable materials, the robotic arm can be adapted to sort through different materials and can help MRFs track data more accurately. Plus, Pablo never gets tired or needs a break!

The introduction of robotics and AI into the MRF industry is transforming the way that materials are sorted and processed. RecyclingWorks is leading the way with its innovative use of AI in the industry.

# The Planet vs. Plastics



Earth Day 2024 signals a strong commitment from EarthDay.org and other organizations to combat the pervasive issues related to plastics in our environment. In a campaign themed “Planet vs. Plastics,” EarthDay.org is calling for a significant reduction in plastic production by 2040. Their aims are to heighten awareness of the environmental risks associated with plastics, push to phase out single-use plastics, advocate at the international level, and reduce the negative environmental impacts of fast fashion.

In our daily lives, each of us can play a role in contributing to this shared vision. Embracing reusable alternatives to single-use plastics is a good first step. You could also ditch disposable water bottles for reusable ones, trade single-use shopping bags for sturdy, eco-friendly options, and opt for reusable coffee cups and food

containers. These seemingly small changes collectively would lead to a significant reduction in our contribution to plastic waste.

Another impactful area for individual action lies in the realm of fashion. Choose timeless pieces over fleeting trends, prioritizing quality over quantity. Exploring secondhand or thrift stores not only adds a unique touch to your wardrobe but also contributes to the reduction of fast fashion’s environmental impact.

As Earth Day 2024 approaches, let’s recognize the power of individual action to collectively shape a sustainable future. Earth Day calls us all to be stewards of our environment, embracing a responsibility that extends beyond a single day and influences a lifetime of mindful consumption.



## Join Us for Earth Day!

Look for us at the Porter County Expo Center’s Earth Day event on Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and at Michigan City’s Earth Day Extravaganza at Krueger Memorial Hall on Saturday, May 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. Both events are free to attend and will have many earth-friendly booths and fun activities. See you soon!

# ATTENTION

We are now accepting plastic bags/films at our office for recycling through the NexTrex Community Collaboration program. Bring items Monday-Friday 8am-4pm and deposit into box marked for bag recycling.

## RECYCLE BEYOND THE BAG

Recycle your household bags & wrap into Trex’s Earth-friendly composite decking and railing!

FROM THE STORE

- ✓ Produce bags
- ✓ Store bags
- ✓ Ice bags

FROM YOUR PANTRY

- ✓ Ziploc® & other reclosable bags
- ✓ Cereal box liners
- ✓ Case overwrap
- ✓ Bread bags

FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR

- ✓ Newspaper sleeves
- ✓ Dry cleaning bags
- ✓ Bubble wrap
- ✓ Plastic e-commerce mailers

Plastics must be clean, dry and free of food and organic residue

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## Wasted! The Story of Food Waste

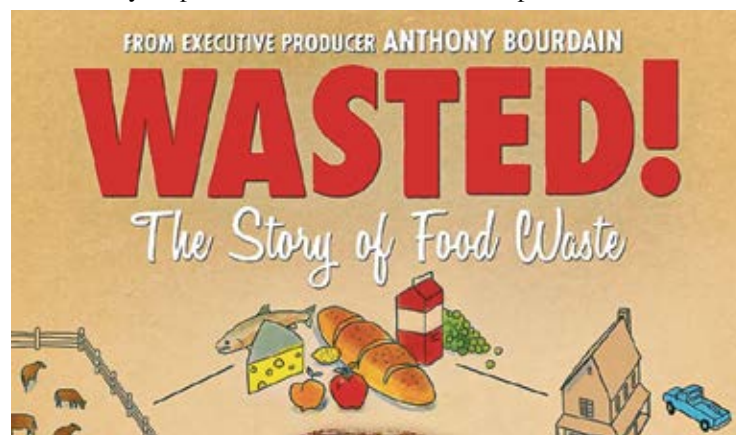
*Wasted! The Story of Food Waste*, directed by Anna Chai and Nari Kye, is a compelling and eye-opening exploration of a global issue that affects us all — the staggering amount of food wasted across the world. Narrated by the late celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, the documentary takes audiences on a thought-provoking journey, uncovering the root causes of food waste and offering solutions.

The film skillfully weaves together interviews with chefs, food activists, and experts, presenting a multifaceted perspective on the issue. Bourdain’s narration adds a touch of authenticity, guiding viewers through various locations worldwide to showcase the extent of the problem. The cinematography is visually striking, capturing the beauty of food juxtaposed with the harsh reality of its unnecessary disposal.

*Wasted!* not only sheds light on the environmental impact of food waste but also addresses its economic and social consequences. The film effectively communicates the magnitude of waste at different stages of the food supply chain, from farms to restaurants and households. It challenges viewers to rethink their consumption habits and encourages a collective shift toward a more sustainable and mindful approach to food.

The documentary also goes beyond highlighting the problem; it offers practical solutions. From creative culinary approaches for utilizing food scraps to advocating for changes in policies and consumer behavior, *Wasted!* inspires viewers to be part of the solution.

*Wasted! The Story of Food Waste*, which is available on several streaming platforms, combines the charisma of



Anthony Bourdain, the expertise of interviewees, and the artistry of filmmaking to create a compelling narrative that inspires action. A must-watch for those interested in sustainability, environmental issues, and the broader implications of our food choices.



Credit: huyume | E+ | Getty Images

# Grasscycling 101

Maintaining a vibrant and healthy lawn while being environmentally conscious may seem like a balancing act, but there's a simple and effective practice that can help achieve both goals — grasscycling. This eco-friendly approach involves leaving grass clippings on your lawn after mowing rather than bagging and disposing of them.

Grasscycling is essentially a recycling process for your lawn. Instead of handling grass clippings as waste, you simply let them remain on the lawn to decompose naturally. As you mow, the clippings are scattered across the grass, providing a layer of organic matter that benefits both the soil and the growing grass.

Grass clippings are rich in nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. By leaving them on the lawn, you're returning these essential nutrients to the soil, acting as a natural fertilizer. This promotes healthier grass growth and reduces the need for synthetic fertilizers. Grass clippings also act as a natural mulch, helping to retain soil moisture. This means your lawn will require less water, contributing to water conservation efforts and reducing your overall water consumption. Embracing grasscycling significantly decreases the amount of yard waste generated. Instead of filling up bags with clippings destined for the landfill or Compost Facility, you're allowing nature to recycle them on-site, minimizing your environmental impact.



Credit: StockWithMe | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Here are some tips to effectively grasscycle:

- Set your mower at the right height. Aim to cut only the top one-third of the grass blades, leaving the clippings small enough to decompose quickly.
- Stick to a regular mowing schedule to ensure that clippings are of manageable size. Infrequent mowing may lead to longer clippings that can smother the grass underneath.
- Mow when the grass is dry. Wet clippings can clump together, hindering their decomposition.

Grasscycling is a simple yet impactful practice that benefits both your lawn and the environment. By embracing this approach, you're not only taking care of your grass, but you're also contributing to reduced waste and water conservation. So, the next time you reach for the lawnmower, think about letting those clippings stay right where they belong — on your lawn.

## Reviving Gadgets

Electronics recycling is the process of collecting, dismantling, and reusing or refurbishing electronic devices. It is an essential practice in today's world where electronic waste has become a significant environmental concern. Electronic devices contain various hazardous materials, such as lead, mercury, and cadmium, which can cause serious harm to the environment if not handled correctly. By recycling our electronic devices, we prevent these harmful substances from contaminating soil and water when disposed of improperly or from ending up in landfills.

So how do you handle electronic devices in a sustainable and responsible manner? First, strive to extend the lifespan of devices by taking good care of them, protecting them, and investing in repairs as necessary. This reduces the demand for new products and the associated environmental impact of both manufacturing and disposal.

Second, when it is time to upgrade or replace electronic devices, consider donating or selling them instead of discarding them. Many organizations and individuals can benefit from used

electronics, promoting local reuse, giving devices a second life, and reducing waste.

Finally, with devices that are beyond repair or unwanted by others, please remember that in Indiana electronics are not allowed in landfills. In some cases, manufacturers and retailers may offer recycling programs and even discounts on new devices when you trade in an old one. Otherwise, be sure to recycle your old electronics at one of our electronics recycling drop-off trailers:

- 724 Zigler Road, at the Zigler Road Compost Facility, La Porte – Open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday
- 1801 Kentucky Street, along the side of the Street Department, Michigan City – Open daylight hours daily

By taking care of our devices while we are using them and after we are done with them, we contribute to a more sustainable future and minimize the environmental impact of our electronic devices. To learn more about electronics recycling, visit [www.solidwastedistrict.com/electronic-recycling](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com/electronic-recycling).

## Free Yard Waste Drop-Off

La Porte County residents may drop off yard waste at no charge at the Compost Facility, located north of the Fairgrounds, across from NIPSCO, at 724 Zigler Road in La Porte. (Businesses may also drop off yard waste but will be charged a tipping fee.) Spring hours begin on April 6, after which the Compost Facility will be open Monday through Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Drop off your grass clippings, brush, and logs, and we will work our magic and transform them into nutrient-rich compost and useful mulch. If you collect your yard waste in the large paper yard waste bags available from home improvement stores, they do not need to be emptied because the PAPER bags are compostable. However, you must empty all plastic bags or bins that you use to haul your leaves or clippings and then take the bags and containers home to reuse or dispose. Leave only yard waste, please. Please follow all signs at the facility. NO trash is accepted at this facility. All loads will be inspected before you are allowed to drop off your yard waste.



Credit: Evelien Doosje | iStock | Getty Images Plus

When available, residents can purchase and self-haul compost and natural mulch for \$15 per cubic yard. We have a special on mulch running through June 1 (see right).

Visit our website at [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com) or call Vince Sherman at 219-363-8962 for additional details.

## Need Mulch?

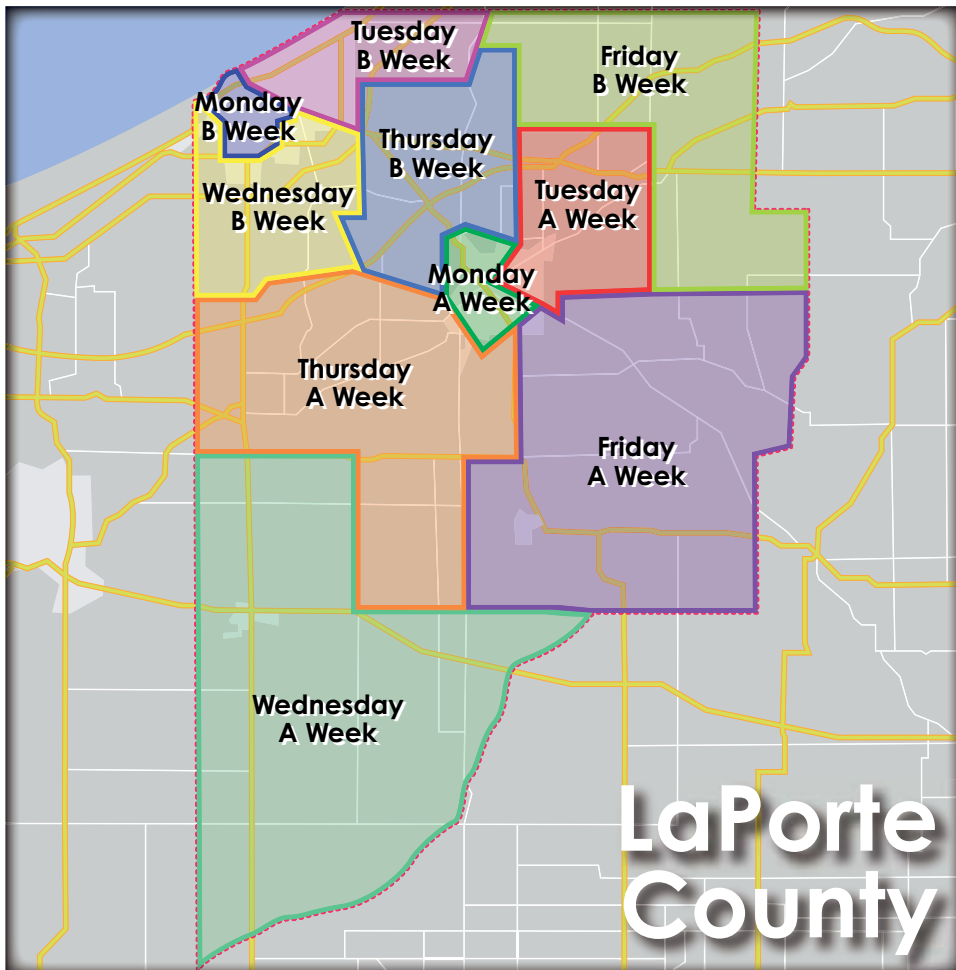
Starting April 9th, 2024 mulch will be free for La Porte County residents (up to 25 cu. yards) Tuesday – Friday through June 1st 2024

Contractors/ Businesses  
1/2 price mulch  
April 1st – June 1st 2024

Bring your own containers or we can load your truck/trailer  
Open 8am-4pm  
Solid Waste District Compost Site  
724 Zigler Road, La Porte



# Curbside Recycling Schedule



## APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

To verify your recycling day, please match your area color to the corresponding days listed on the calendars. If you're unsure of your recycling day, please call our office or visit our website where you can enter your address to access the calendar.

### Things to Remember:

Place cart at least 4 feet from items such as mailboxes, trees, or parked vehicles.

If recycling is missed, please call 219-326-0014 within 24 hours.

**Routes now begin at 5:00AM.**

Borden recommends having your cart set out for pickup the evening before a service day to ensure your recycling is serviced.



### District Board Members

Councilman Mike Mollenhauer – Chair  
 Councilman Don Przybylinski – Vice Chair  
 Mayor Tom Dermody  
 Commissioner Connie Gramarossa  
 Commissioner Joe Haney  
 Commissioner Rich Mrozinski  
 Mayor Angie Nelson Deutch

### Citizens Advisory Committee

Justin Kiel – Chairperson  
 Samantha Joll – Vice Chairperson  
 Chris Havens – Secretary  
 Paul Brooks  
 Juli Charlesworth  
 Amy Feikes  
 Jim Irwin  
 Jim Micheals  
 Amber Seiler

### Staff

Clay Turner, Executive Director  
 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 Moyao, Compost Utility



## Illegal Dumping Hurts Everyone

Discarding trash or other unwanted items in empty lots, along highways, or in other non-approved locations is considered illegal dumping, and it is against the law. Dumped items frequently include furniture, appliances, tires, construction waste, household trash, and hazardous materials. Oftentimes these illegally dumped items attract curious children — posing significant health and safety risks. Dirty diapers and food trash attract rodents, insects, and other vermin. Dumping items pollutes the soil and water and destroys Indiana's natural beauty. Please be sure to landfill or recycle items you no longer want or need.

To report illegal dumping, please contact the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) online at [www.in.gov/idem/5274.htm](http://www.in.gov/idem/5274.htm) or call 800-451-6027 and select option 3. All reports are confidential.

Keep our environment clean, safe, and healthy — now and for generations to come.

## Free Programs Offered to Answer Recycling Questions

We are available to visit businesses, clubs, classrooms, and organizations within our District to provide free programs on recycling and composting. Some of our most popular programs are How to Recycle Right, Composting 101, and Green Cleaning. However, we can design a program that fits your needs and answers your specific questions. We can even provide free employee training about recycling to area businesses. Contact Environmental Educator and Public Outreach Coordinator Sacha Gee-Burns at [sgeeburns@solidwastedistrict.com](mailto:sgeeburns@solidwastedistrict.com) or 219-326-0014 for details.



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[www.youtube.com/LPCoRecycling](http://www.youtube.com/LPCoRecycling)

*We want your suggestions, questions, and comments!*

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PLEASE RECYCLE AFTER READING.