

# MCLEAN COUNTY SOLID WASTE PROGRAM 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN FULFILLMENT OF THE SOLID WASTE AND WASTE REDUCTION EDUCATION PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF JANUARY 1, 2017.

## LEADING INDICATORS: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS<sup>1</sup>

**Goal:** Visit **70%** of eligible classrooms in McLean County, Bloomington, and Normal and deliver elementary school recycling and waste reduction education programs. Reaching this target means directly engaging with approximately 1,500 students.

- ✓ There are 85 Fourth grade classrooms in McLean County, which includes all public and private schools. In 2017, we made visits to 72 fourth grade classrooms, 85% of eligible classrooms, and reached 1763 people.

**2017 TOTAL REACH:  
548,310 INTERACTIONS**

**DIRECT** (PROGRAMS, EVENTS, PHONE INQUIRIES): 23,355  
**MEDIA** (NEWSPAPER, RADIO, SOCIAL MEDIA, WEB): 525,055

**Goal:** Visit **60%** of public libraries within McLean County, Bloomington and Normal and provide a summer reading program on recycling and waste reduction topics. Reaching this target means directly engaging with approximately 300 library patrons.

- ✓ This is a summer program; presentations were held in June and July. There are 14 public libraries in McLean County. We visited 11 of the 14 public libraries in McLean County in the summer of 2017, and educated 367 people. This represents 79%, which exceeds our goal.

**Goal:** Provide recycling and waste reduction presentations for **25** local groups or approximately 750 individuals including civic groups, scouts, preschools, non-target school groups, university classes.<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ In 2017 we conducted 38 programs reaching 884 people, thus exceeding our program and reach goals.

**Goal:** Promote recycling and sustainable practices to direct audiences utilizing social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube with a target of **30,000** interactions annually.

- ✓ In 2017, our social media posts resulted in 190,787 interactions, with higher than average numbers in the third quarter due to the Household Hazardous Waste Collect, surpassing our goal of 30,000.

**Goal:** Provide and promote comprehensive online resources on recycling and waste disposal for Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County with a target of **12,000** visits to these pages annually.

- ✓ In 2017, our online resources received 43,729 visits, surpassing our goal of 12,000.

<sup>1</sup> The totals below represent Year-To-Date numbers. Specific details of this Quarter's activities are described on the pages that follow.

<sup>2</sup> In practice the EAC provides these programs for nearly 100% of those requesting the services.

## LAGGING INDICATOR – COUNTY RECYCLING RATE

The main goals of the McLean County Solid Waste Program are to increase recycling and source reduction simultaneously. The annual measurement and reporting of these rates by the EAC serve as lagging indicators of the success of outreach efforts. The value of this performance indicator is also limited by other factors affecting recycling and waste generation rates, such as accessibility of recycling programs and macroeconomic forces. While quantifying source reduction of municipal solid waste is difficult, tracking recycling rates is much more reliable. Per the 2012 Five Year Update to the McLean County Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan, the countywide recycling rate goal is currently set at 40%, which also serves as the EAC's target for purposes of this indicator.

Total volumes of waste recycled and waste generated decreased in 2016 in McLean County compared to 2015 rates. Despite that, the community finally met its long-standing recycling rate goal. Nearly 42% of municipal solid waste generated in McLean County in 2016 was recycled; this is the first time the county reached the 40% community-wide recycling rate since setting that target in 2007. The 40% goal was set to continue to drive improvements in local recycling programs after the county met state mandated recycling goals of 15% and 25%.



Action by the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal to contract with Henson C & D Recycling to recycle "bulky waste" or large items such as old furniture or materials from remodeling projects was a key factor in reaching the 40% recycling goal. Previously all of these items were landfilled; starting in April 2016, the materials were recycled through the construction and demolition recycling facility owned and operated by Henson Disposal. This resulted in a significant jump in the recovery rate of these materials from approximately 4% to an estimated 21%.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total MSW Recycled (tons)	66,737	73,833	85,196	91,866	73,760
Total MSW Landfilled (tons)	116,290	121,991	141,068	159,989	103,459
Total Municipal Solid Waste Generated (tons)	183,079	195,824	226,264	251,855	177,219
<b>Percent Change from Previous Year</b>	-12.0%	7.0%	15.5%	11.3%	-29.6%
Recycling Rate	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>41.6%</b>
<b>Percent Change from Previous Year</b>	6.7%	3.3%	0.0%	-3.2%	14.1%

## HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) COLLECTION



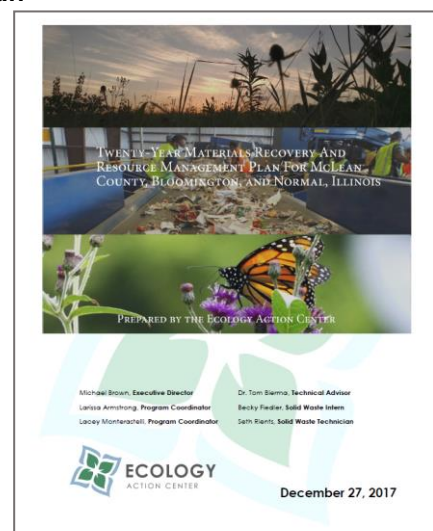
- The EAC successfully held a locally funded Household Hazardous Waste Collection in September 2017 for McLean County residents at Rivian Automotive.
- Successfully negotiated major sponsorship from a locally based organization; increasing private support of the HHW fund may help reduce dependence upon public funding.
- Created a new educational video on Household Hazardous Waste reduction and disposal, and promoted it online through EAC's social media channels; another previously released video was updated and released. Together, these had 3,967 views.
- This year's HHW Collection event had more marketing and publicity than any other event in the history of the EAC. This included:
  - July 21: Donation requests posted on Facebook
  - July 27: Event promotions on Facebook
  - August 3: WGLT interview
  - August 3: Distribution of HHW Collection Event t-shirts to sponsors, partners
  - August 3: Event announcement on Facebook
  - August 4: Story on WJBC
  - August 5: Story in Pantagraph
  - August 8: Volunteer recruitment on Facebook
  - August 8: Information in EAC Action News – email newsletter
  - August 14: Distributed car magnets for EAC & staff cars
  - August 17: Paid Facebook ads for volunteer recruitment
  - August 20-24: WGLT HHW promotional underwriting spots
  - August 21: WJBC HHW commercials
  - August 22: HHW presentation for U of I Extension educators
  - August 25: HHW poster distribution in Bloomington & Normal
  - August 27: Quarter page ad in Pantagraph
  - August 27: WGLT HHW promotional underwriting spots
  - August 28: Final event press release distribution
  - August 28: HHW postcard mailed to 1,000 households in McLean County
  - August 28: Paid Facebook ads for event
  - August 28: B104 ads
  - August 30: HHW Interview on Cities 92.9
  - August 31: Full page ads in the Normalite, The Ridgeview Review, The Chenoa Town Crier, The Gridley Village Times, The Lexingtonian, The Quill, The Heyworth Buzz, and the LeRoy Leader
  - Sept 1: Interview on WJBC
  - Sept 4: Yard signs around town
  - Sept 4: Paid ads on Great Plains media – The Bull and Cities 92.9



- Sept 7: Pantagraph strip ad on front page of Go! Section
  - Sept 8: Interview on WBNQ
  - Sept 8: Interview on WJBC
- 1,460 cars passed through the event, bringing waste from 3,022 total households – a new record. This represents a significant increase in the rate of “households per car”, meaning less traffic and reduced wait times but still a high volume of waste collected. These positive metrics are a result of specific marketing to residents.
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- 23,717 gallons of household hazardous waste materials were collected for safe disposal, with an additional 23,495 pounds of e-waste collected.
  - 115 volunteers put in over 300 hours of work to assist the EAC staff in managing the event.
  - Through several months of fundraising, the EAC raised \$41,198 in private contributions, sponsorships, and donations of in-kind services to supplement the \$140,000 in local government funding provided for the event. Total event costs came to \$144,294, leaving nearly \$37,000 in dedicated funding for the 2019 McLean County Household Hazardous Waste Collection.
  - Many months of planning on the part of the EAC staff went into this event, including negotiating site with Rivian Automotive, permitting process with the Illinois EPA, researching risk management and liability issues, developing marketing, advertising, and fundraising strategies, and volunteer coordination.

## SOLID WASTE COORDINATOR ACTIVITIES

- **McLean County Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan**
  - Early in 2017, the EAC staff continued its efforts in development of the new twenty-year McLean County Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan. EAC recruited and convened four additional stakeholder groups to discuss tentative priority areas of focus within the new solid waste plan with individuals representing institutions and businesses that create these waste types.
  - Surveyed area waste haulers, recyclers, municipalities, and institutions to compile relevant data for calculation of 2016 McLean County Solid Waste generation rate and recycling rate.
  - EAC staff interviewed multiple times with local



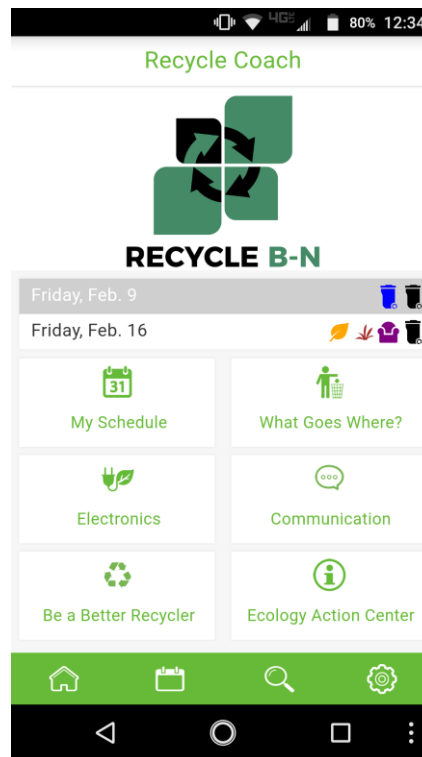


media on the issue of the declining capacity of the McLean County Landfill, the anticipated closure timeline, and the question of what happens to local waste post-closure. These issues are of great interest to the local community and received significant exposure.

- Facilitated Solid Waste Technical Committee Meeting including reviewing proposed priorities for the new 20-year solid waste management plan.
- After over two years of collaborative work with nearly 100 stakeholders, EAC staff completed the proposed 20-year Solid Waste Plan for McLean County, City of Bloomington, and Town of Normal.
  - Eight individuals submitted verbal comments at the December 7, 2017, public hearing in support of the plan as written.
  - 47 written public comments were submitted in support of the plan as written; one public comment was submitted critical of the proposed plan.
  - 2,333 signatures were submitted as part of a petition supportive of specific strategies within the plan.
  - In early 2018 the plan is scheduled for consideration for approval by the McLean County Board, the Normal Town Council, and the Bloomington City Council, prior to being submitted to the Illinois EPA for final approval.
- The Proposed Solid Waste Plan was the topic of several media stories:
  - October 5 interview on WJBC
  - November 27 Pantagraph article
  - November 29 interview on WJBC
  - November 30 editorial in Pantagraph

- **Recycle Coach**

- Extensive efforts and time put into transitioning all local waste and recycling listings to a new web-based recycling application. The new app is available free of charge to all community residents and is available for Android or Apple smartphones or via any computer browser at RecycleBN.org. The app provides geographic-specific listings for curbside, drop-off, traditional, and non-traditional recycling programs in addition to customized optional reminders of collection days, hazardous waste collection events, and more.
- Interview on WGLT about Recycle Coach web-based recycling application

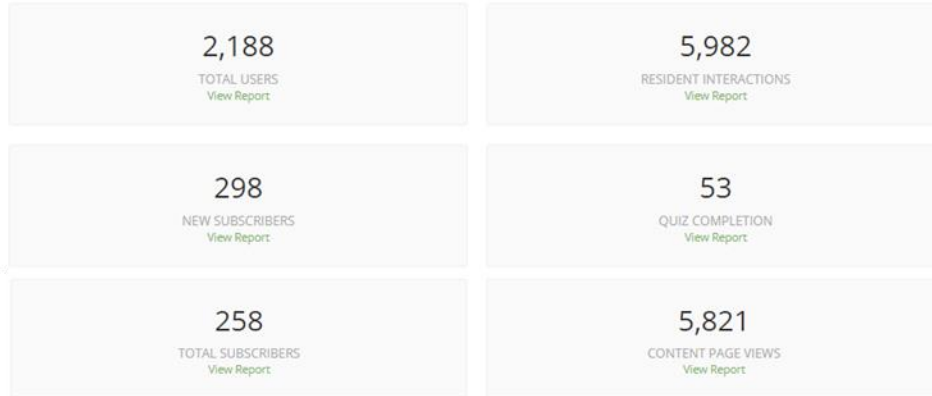


- **Recycle Coach (continued)**

## Reports

All Districts

January 1, 2017 → December 31, 2017



## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- **Earth Schools Recycling and Waste Reduction Fourth Grade Presentations:**

- Benjamin (4 classes, 110 students)
- Carlock (1 class, 21 students)
- Cedar Ridge (4 classes, 87 students)
- Cornerstone (3 classes, 66 students)
- Epiphany (1 class, 28 students)
- Fairview (2 classes, 40 students)
- Fox Creek (2 classes, 55 students)
- Glenn (2 classes, 52 students)
- Grove (4 classes, 120 students)
- Heyworth (3 classes, 72 students)
- Colene Hoose (3 classes, 74 students)
- Hudson (2 classes, 65 students)
- Irving (3 classes, 60 students)
- LeRoy (3 classes, 65 students)
- Lexington (2 classes, 48 students)
- Northpoint (4 classes, 115 students)
- Oakdale (3 classes, 80 students)
- Oakland (3 classes, 82 students)
- Olympia North (Danvers) (2 classes, 42 students)
- Parkside (2 classes, 52 students)
- Pepper Ridge (3 classes, 70 students)
- Ridgeview (Colfax) (3 classes, 56 students)
- St Mary's (1 class, 15 students)
- Sheridan (2 classes, 49 students)
- Stevenson (3 classes, 71 students)
- Sugar Creek (2 classes, 50 students)

- Towanda (1 class, 17 students)
- Tri Valley (Downs)(3 classes, 75 students)
- Trinity Lutheran (1 class, 26 students),

**2017: 30 Total schools; Total classrooms 72; people: 1,763**

- Other K-12 School Activities:
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling programs for
    - Home school family group (1 presentations, 14 participants)
    - High Roads School (1 program, 8 participants)
    - Chiddix Junior High Summer School program (1 program, 12 participants)
    - Epiphany Junior High 7<sup>th</sup> grade (1 program, 27 participants)
  - Recycling programs featuring Garbage Monster story/activity and games at 3 elementary school After School Programs: Northpoint, Hudson and Fox Creek (3 programs, 67 participants)

- Preschool Garbage Monster Presentations:

- Scribbles Preschool (1 presentation, 20 participants)
- LaPetite (1 presentation, 22 participants)
- Waste Reduction/Recycling program for Mulberry School (3 presentations, 85 participants)



- Scout Activities:

- Program for Daisy Scouts at Hudson (1 program, 16 participants)
- Program for Boy Scouts at Wesley United Methodist (1 program, 19 participants)
- Garbage Monster program for Daisy Scouts at Washington School (1 program, 10 participants)
- Performed a program about environmental stewardship to scouts from Northpoint School who were doing a clean-up and hike at Tipton Park (23 participants)

- University Programs:

- Presentations for ISU Criminology classes (2 presentations, 53 participants)
- Presentation for ISU Environmental Health class (5 students)
- Presentation for ISU students regarding alternate spring break opportunities, including information about solid waste, sustainability and conservation (60 students)
- Presentation about solid waste reduction for Paul Mitchell School (18 students)
- Presentation for ISU class (5 students)
- Presentation for ISU Faculty (11 participants)
- Presentation for Heartland College Biology class (24 students)

- Participated in Earth Day event at ISU Quad (48 students)
- Presentation for ISU Renewable Energy & Sustainability Class (13 participants)
- Presentation at Lincoln College (15 participants) (\*SWP)
- Program for Heartland College students at EAC (15 students)
- Community Solid Waste Reduction Programs and Information Booths:
  - Booth at Sugar Creek Arts Festival, plus distributed refillable bottles to artists (225 people)
  - In partnership with Midwest Fiber offered food waste composting and recycling at Sweet Corn Blues Festival along with an information booth (906 booth visitors)
  - U of I Extension Home, Lawn & Garden Show table (75 participants)
  - City of Bloomington/McLean County employee Health Fair (87 people)
  - Information booth at David Davis Glorious Garden Fest (2 days, 31 people)
  - Information table at Merwin In May ParkLands Foundation event (37 participants)
  - Information table at Unitarian Social Justice Fair (32 participants)
  - Information booth at ISU Sustainability Fair (7 people)
  - Information booth at LeRoy Wellness Fair (75 people)
  - Booth at McLean County Chamber of Commerce non-profit showcase (27 people)
- Library Programs:
  - “Creating Soil” presentation, including information about backyard composting, vermicomposting, and composting critters:
    - Bloomington Library (107 participants)
    - Normal Library (27 participants)
    - Carlock (28 participants)
    - Chenoa Library (5 participants)
    - Colfax (21 participants)
    - Danvers (18 participants)
    - Heyworth (54 participants)
    - Hudson (31 participants)
    - LeRoy (18 participants)
    - Lexington (15 participants)
    - Towanda (43 participants)
  - Recycling program at Carlock Library (22 participants)
- Other Programs:
  - Presentation at Association of Professional Energy Consultants (10 participants)
  - Recycling and waste reduction program for Mid Central Community Action employees (35 participants)
  - “The End Is Near” Lunch & Learn – (55 participants)
  - Program for Lutheran Women’s Group covering many solid waste topics (22 participants)
  - Program for Kiwanis group covering many solid waste topics (12 participants)
  - Program for Unitarian Universalist Church (67 participants)
  - Composting presentation at Green Top Grocery (13 participants)
  - Presentation at Normal Citizen’s Academy (30 participants)
  - Presentation at Neighborhood Action Team (35 participants) (\*SWP)
  - Presentation for Master Naturalists class (26 participants)
  - Participated in Panel Discussion at Multicultural Leadership Program (70 people)



## OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Produced four quarterly EAC paper newsletters featuring solid waste issues among other topics. Mailed to approximately 270 households each issue and made available as free download on the EAC website.
- Sent monthly issues of the EAC Action News email newsletters to over 930 email addresses to promote general recycling and waste reduction; issues released to coordinate with event promotion such as HHW, recycling, vermicomposting and more.
- Promoted waste reduction, recycling, composting and proper disposal of household hazardous wastes through social media. EAC posted messages on its Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube accounts on solid waste topics, with a resulting 191,200 interactions.
- Answered 1,023 phone calls and other inquiries about the disposal of household hazardous waste and recycling.
- Received 43,729 visits to solid waste, recycling, and hazardous waste related pages within EAC's website.
- Administration and promotion of McFreeCycle, a free listserv on the internet for the free exchange of materials in McLean County to avoid disposal of useable items. An average of 2,040 members with an average of 116 messages exchanged monthly.
- Awarded the annual McLean County Green Awards at the EAC's Sustainable Gourmet event in October. The McLean County Waste Reduction and Recycling Award recognized Tom Bierma. The Anne McGowan Making a World of Difference Award was presented to the YWCA's Perry Mayer.
- Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo – Zero Waste Event
  - Co-sponsored the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo (ISLWE) at IWU – estimated 2,250 participants. This event is purposefully designed to model “zero-waste” event planning. The event literature was presented electronically instead of through paper hand-outs, and vendors were encouraged to avoid distributing extraneous trinkets. The event was publicized in the Pantagraph, on WJBC and WGLT, with advertisements and interviews.
  - Held Mega Recycling event in conjunction with the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo at IWU in April. 291 households recycled electronics, textiles, Terracycle items, and corrugated plastic signs; participants were given information about recycling these items in our community throughout the year.



- Full-page ad in The Pantagraph on Earth Day listing the many resources the EAC provides to our community, including information about solid waste, recycling, and household hazardous waste.
- Promoted and participated in Bloomington-Normal Clean Up Day in April, removing trash from a 1.6 mile stretch of Sugar Creek from Tipton Park to Audubon Gardens; Clean-Up Week was promoted on WGLT interview and through social media posts and paid advertisements. 45 residents recycle volunteered with this effort.
- Promoted nontraditional recycling programs through annual America Recycles Day Mega Recycling Event in partnership with Illinois Wesleyan University in November. Although the event was ultimately cancelled due to lightning, 79 cars still came through the parking lot at IWU and were given information about year round places to recycle electronics, textiles, and miscellaneous items including eyeglasses, hearing aids, plastic shopping bags, mattresses and Terracycle items. Each participant was given local listings for recycling these items anytime throughout the year.
- Held seven build-your-own composter workshops with 28 participants making 20 wooden pallet compost bins and 14 garbage can compost bins to use at home, along with full instructions on best composting practices.
- Held one vermicompost class; students constructed bins and took them home complete with worms, bedding, and full instructions (4 participants).
- Loaned special event recycling containers to Mid Central Community Action.
- Executive Director attended the Illinois County Solid Waste Management Association annual conference.

