

# MCLEAN COUNTY SOLID WASTE PROGRAM

## 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

### ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER



THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN FULFILLMENT OF THE SOLID WASTE AND WASTE REDUCTION EDUCATION PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF JANUARY 1, 2011.

#### HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) COLLECTION

- **EAC application to Illinois EPA resulted in funding for a fall 2013 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event.** EAC staff successfully identified and received permission for usage of Mitsubishi Motors North America manufacturing plant as a new event location after the availability of the Interstate Center did not correspond with the IEPA's schedule.
- **Coordinated all logistics of the successful October 5 HHW Collection including planning, promotions, volunteer recruitment and management, e-waste collection, site preparations and site take-down.**
- **1,300 cars carrying the HHW of 1,829 households took advantage of the McLean County HHW collection.**
- Extensive promotions of HHW Collection:
  - Multiple articles regarding the HHW Collection in the Bloomington Pantagraph as well as the McLean County News Bulletin.
  - Facebook posts announcing HHW Collection event – reached almost 3,000 people.
  - Sent HHW notification via email list to 1214 subscribers; 600 HHW notification postcards also sent in traditional mail.
  - HHW event posters distributed across the community.
  - In depth HHW radio interviews on WGLT's "Sound Ideas" and WJBC prior to the event.
  - HHW Ads on WJBC, WGLT, Bob FM, Hits 101 and the Pantagraph.
  - ISU TV coverage of HHW event
  - Coverage of the HHW event during the event from WJBC, WMBD-TV, and on the Pantagraph.com website.
  - Publicized HHW event during presentations at the Normal Rotary Club, McLean County Chamber of Commerce Non-Profit Showcase, and presentations to community groups.
- Pantagraph carried a story about HHW collection results with a sidebar about America Recycles Day event. Results also reported on WJBC and WGLT's Sound Ideas.

- Pantagraph published EAC letter to the editor thanking community for positive response to HHW event.
- Statewide survey conducted of Solid Waste Coordinators on issues relating to funding of Household Hazardous Waste collection in an effort to identify any untapped resources for local HHW collection.
- Authored an article detailing 2012 fundraising HHW strategy for statewide newsletter of the Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Association.
- Developed a proposal to provide for local funding of Household Hazardous Waste Collection. Presented proposal to representatives of Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County through the Solid Waste Technical Committee. Proposal is currently under consideration.
- Three educational videos on Household Hazardous Waste reduction and disposal produced and promoted online through EAC's social media channels.
- Provided funding for battery & CFL recycling at community recycling event sponsored by Senators Barrickman and Brady.

## SOLID WASTE COORDINATOR ACTIVITIES

- Surveyed area waste haulers, recyclers, municipalities and institutions to gather data for calculation of county-wide 2012 municipal solid waste generation rate and recycling rate. McLean County saw a **12% decline in municipal solid waste collection from the 2011 rate** with 183, 079 tons of municipal solid waste generated in 2012. At the same time, McLean County **recycling increased by 6.7% to an overall recycling rate of 36.5% of all municipal solid waste generated**. Marked growth in the recycling of household batteries, construction and demolition of material, food waste, and wood waste all contributed to the county-wide recycling rate increase from 2011-2012. **The upturn in recycling puts the community on track towards the established 40% recycling goal**. Official rates were reported to the Illinois EPA as well as announced publicly.
- Interviewed on WJBC and WGLT about county's waste generation and overall recycling rate. Local stories about McLean County's improving recycling rate were picked up and used in Chicago news.
- Developed new program proposal which was approved by Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County for renewal of solid waste education, outreach, and technical services following the expiration of the current agreement at the end of the current calendar year.
- Conducted search of possible consultants for pending pollution control facility site permitting review process.
- Presentation to McLean County Regional Planning Commission regarding EAC roles in the community including solid waste planning and outreach.
- Presented webinar for Illinois Sustainable Technology Center on topics of holding Zero-Waste special events and community based funding of Household Hazardous Waste collection (50 participants).
- Assisted with coordination of successful 2013 Illinois Recycling Conference and Trade Show held at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Conference Center in early June.
- Participated in statewide Illinois Electronics Recycling Summit.
- Facilitated quarterly Solid Waste Technical Committee Meetings including follow-up submission of materials to the McLean County Land Use Committee.

- Coordinated McLean County schools recycling grants program, resulting in \$2,400 in support for recycling programs awarded to Sheridan, Holy Trinity, Hammit, Lexington, Washington, and Epiphany Schools.
- Ongoing administration and promotion of Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) recycling program with 3 drop-off points in Bloomington and Normal.
- Ongoing administration and promotion of Household Battery recycling program in conjunction with Interstate Batteries, Batteries Plus, and Springfield Electric (**26,983 pounds recycled during calendar year 2013, more than any previous year**).
- Ongoing administration of Illinois Plastic Pot Recycling Program in cooperation with YouthBuild McLean County. Current efforts focus on the development of a longer-term, more sustainable means to support the volunteer-based program.
- Provided consultation on pollution control facilities regulations.
- Performed annual residential waste audit to determine trends in waste generation and usage of local recycling programs.
- Applied for Illinois EPA electronics recycling outreach grant; received \$2,000 grant award and implemented multi-faceted community outreach campaign including 100 radio spots aired over a period of two weeks on 3 local radio stations directing residents to local drop-off facilities that accept electronics for recycling. In addition, targeted social media ads were placed on Facebook encouraging residents to recycle their e-waste. A mailing was sent to 40 McLean County electronics retailers with 2 full-color posters showing information on local drop-off facilities that accept electronics for recycling. Retailers were encouraged to display posters prominently to fulfill their responsibilities under the state e-waste law. 94,000 residents reached through radio spots.
- Executive Director and Assistant Director attended annual Illinois Counties Solid Waste Management Association solid waste conference.
- Coordination of small McLean County municipal recycling grant program.
- Provided consultation on expansion of textile recycling programs with nonprofit partner.

## BLOOMINGTON OUTREACH

- Earth Schools Recycling and Waste Reduction 4th grade Presentations:
  - Fox Creek, Bent, Cedar Ridge, Benjamin, Northpoint, Cornerstone Christian Academy, St Mary's School, Trinity Lutheran, Sheridan, Stevenson Elementary (37 presentations, 878 people)
- Other K-12 School activities:
  - Compost information at Washington School Family Science Night (35 participants)
  - Western Avenue Community Center After School Program (two programs, 40 participants)
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling programs at Boys & Girls Club summer program (3 programs, 80 participants)
  - Instituted recycling at Boys & Girls Club with cooperation of Midwest Fiber. Provided training at After School program (3 programs, 45 people)
- Preschool Garbage Monster Presentations:

- Bright Horizons Preschool (1 presentation, 22 participants)
- Scout activities:
  - Garbage Monster program for Daisy Scouts at Oakland (1 program, 25 participants)
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling program for Oakland School Cub Scouts (1 program, 6 participants)
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling program for Cadet Girl Scouts (1 program, 8 participants)
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling program for Boy Scout Troop 20 (1 program, 42 participants)
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling program for Pepper Ridge Cub Scout Troop (1 program, 15 participants)
  - Solid waste reduction and recycling program for Pepper Ridge Daisy Scout Troop (1 program, 15 participants)
- University Programs:
  - IWU Environmental Studies Class – recycling and solid waste presentation (16 students)
- Community solid waste reduction programs and information booths:
  - City of Bloomington Health Fair (50)
  - Bloomington Cultural Festival (47)
- Library Programs:
  - Container source and recycling presentation at Bloomington Library (21 participants)
- Presentation Bloomington Parks & Recreation Senior Citizens group (30 participants) with emphasis on waste reduction
- Presentation at Luther Oaks home (20 participants) with emphasis on waste reduction
- EAC hosted Recycle Fest at Western Avenue Community Center with City of Bloomington (39 participants).
- Hosted Freecycle Free-For-All event at White Oak Park to encourage reuse of materials instead of disposal (62 participants)

## NORMAL OUTREACH

- Earth Schools Recycling and Waste Reduction Fourth Grade Presentations:
  - Parkside, Calvary Christian, Epiphany, Fairview, Glenn, Sugar Creek, Prairieland, Grove, Colene Hoose and Oakdale (29 programs, 745 participants)
- Other K-12 School activities:
  - McLean County COMPACT Partnership with Kingsley Junior High classroom programs focused on solid waste and field trip to Midwest Fiber's single stream sorting facility (5 programs, 85 participants)
- Preschool activities:
  - Waste Reduction/Recycling program for Mulberry School (2 programs, 54 participants)

- Scout Waste Reduction/Recycling programs:
  - Cub Scouts (1 program, 7 participants)
- Community solid waste reduction programs and information booths:
  - Presentation for Mennonite Church with emphasis on waste reduction (20 participants).
  - Booth at Sugar Creek Arts Festival (130 people)
  - Booth at Sweet Corn/Blues Festival (786 people). In partnership with Midwest Fiber offered food waste and paper napkin composting as well as recycling.
  - Information booth at ISU Quadfest (28 people)
  - ISU Horticulture Center booth focusing on composting and vermicomposting (50 people)
  - Marcfirst Wellness Fair (62 people)
- Library Programs:
  - Container source and recycling presentation at Normal Library (73 participants)
- Hosted Freecycle Free-For-All waste reduction event at Anderson Park to encourage reuse of materials instead of disposal (75 participants).
- Staff and Board Members participated in the Town of Normal’s Curbside Recycling Anniversary celebration.

## MCLEAN COUNTY OUTREACH

- **Launched newly redesigned, user-friendly website; received over 20,000 visits during the calendar year to solid waste, recycling, and hazardous waste related pages within the new site.**
- Redesigned the annual **Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo (ISLWE)** at IWU as a **public “Zero-Waste” event** to promote conscious waste reduction and recycling. Much of the literature was presented electronically instead of paper hand-outs, food service items were washable instead of disposable, and vendors were encouraged to not distribute extraneous trinkets, and food waste was composted. **Less than one bag of total trash was collected at this event which had over 4000 participants.**
- Mega-Recycling Event held at ISLWE collecting electronics, clothing, shoes, plastic garden pots, light bulbs and batteries from 300 families. Received coverage about nontraditional recycling on WJBC.
- Coordinated America Recycles Day Mega Recycling Event in partnership with Illinois Wesleyan University in November. Over 370 households recycled thousands of pounds of electronics, textiles, light bulbs, batteries and garden pots. Each participant was given local listings for recycling these items year anytime and also updates about the Household Hazardous Waste collection.
- Coordinated the **We Care Twin Cities races** as a **demonstration “Zero Waste” event**. This two day event includes a Kid’s Run, 5K, 10K and Half Marathon. Redesigned from the ground up to avoid waste generation, increase use of reusables, and increase recycling, **the event ultimately only landfilled about 5 pounds of waste for approximately 1500 people participating.**

- Promoted waste reduction, recycling, composting and proper disposal of household hazardous wastes through social media. EAC posted 183 messages on its Facebook page and Twitter account on solid waste topics, with **a resulting 48,404 views of these posts.**
- Earth Schools Recycling and Waste Reduction Fourth Grade Presentations:
  - Carlock, Hudson Lexington, LeRoy, Olympia North (Danvers), Heyworth, Colfax (Ridgeview School) schools (23 programs, 540 participants)
- Other K-12 School activities:
  - Attended Regional Office of Education's Principals and Superintendents meeting promoting programs
- Preschool activities:
  - Teacher training about waste reduction to staff at Heartland Headstart (2 programs, 60 participants)
- Scout Programs:
  - Gave program about environmental stewardship to scouts from Northpoint School who were doing a clean-up and hike at Comlara Park. (25 participants)
- University Programs:
  - Presentation at Heartland Community College (1 programs, 25 participants)
  - Facilitated Heartland Community College class hands-on recycling at plastic garden pot program and sorting of textile recycling at Home Sweet Home Ministries (2 programs, 50 participants)
  - Worked with representatives from ISU, Town of Normal, Home Sweet Home Ministries, Recycling Furniture for Families and the Habitat For Humanity ReStore to create a University Move-Out initiative to provide students who are moving out of dorms and apartments with resources to donate useful items to charity instead of sending them to the landfill. Involved staff from several departments at university as well as an anthropology class as volunteers. Positive coverage of the effort on WJBC news.
- Community solid waste reduction programs and information booths:
  - McLean County Chamber of Commerce non-profit showcase (30 people)
  - State Farm Earth Day event (three events, 183 people)
  - Presentation to PEO group (20 people)
  - Zero waste presentation for staff of Naturally Yours
  - Mitsubishi Wellness Fair (239 people)
  - We Care Twin Cities Run Expo
  - ISU Wellness Fair (70 people)
  - IRS Wellness Fair (100 people)
- Summer Library Programs about container sources and recycling:

- Crumbaugh Library (LeRoy), Towanda Library, Colfax Library, Heyworth Library, Lexington Library, and Danvers Library (7 programs, 246 participants)
- 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 EAC website.
- Sent nine EAC Action News email newsletters to over 900 email addresses to promote general recycling and waste reduction; issues were also targeted to timely events such as HHW, recycling, vermicomposting and more.
- Held two classes on vermicomposting with a total of 13 participants.
- Loan of special event recycling containers to ISU and Unit 5 Schools for August events.
- 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. (1811 current members with an average of 750 messages exchanged monthly).
- Updated county-wide recycling information at [www.ecologyactioncenter.org](http://www.ecologyactioncenter.org) and [www.Earth911.com](http://www.Earth911.com) as well as submission of local recycling data to the statewide EcoPoint website hosted by the Illinois Recycling Association.
- Answered phone calls and other inquires about the disposal of household hazardous waste and recycling (289 inquiries about recycling/waste disposal, 399 inquiries about household hazardous waste, and 207 inquiries about electronics recycling).
- Awarded the annual McLean County Green Awards at the April Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo. The McLean County Waste Reduction and Recycling Award recognized the Jewel-Osco for their zero-waste accomplishments and the McLean County World of Difference Award were presented to WGLT's Good to Go Commuter Challenge.
- Redeveloped "Renewable Fashion Challenge" program to promote textile reuse and waste reduction. Coordinated kick-off event at Mission Mart with 20 people attending to recruit participants in program that culminates in fashion show at the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo in April.
- 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.
- Spring issue of Talking Trash teacher newsletter sent out electronically to 106 subscribers as a resource for educators on solid waste issues.
- EAC featured on WGLT's Sound Ideas program about hazardous waste and source reduction.
- Promoted holiday waste reduction and recycling through social media.
- Promoted recycling to youth audience through "Generation Next" program on WXRJ radio.
- Installed new online volunteer system to more easily recruit, schedule and manage volunteer help with events and programs.