

ANNUAL REPORT



Porter County
RECYCLING
& WASTE REDUCTION



AT-A-GLANCE

www.PorterCountyRecycling.org | 219-465-3694

DEAR PORTER COUNTY RESIDENT,



The recycling industry was turned upside down in 2018. America's largest consumer of recyclables, the country of China, said it would no longer accept contaminated materials from us. Recycling businesses all over the United States became challenged to find other customers.

Major players in Illinois including waste haulers, sorting facilities and associations united to create a task force to increase the

consistency of messaging and education. Because all recyclables from NWI go to Illinois sorting facilities, your solid waste district is following their lead and working hard to help clean up recyclables coming from Porter County.

We have stepped up educational efforts to teach people how to recycle right. We recognized our drop-off recycling sites had to change in order to reduce contamination and its extra costs, so planning began to change the way we provide that service.

Please take a moment to review your recycling guidelines and join us in the fight to reduce contamination. The citizens of Porter County can make a difference in the environment and in the lives of fellow Hoosiers.

THERESE HALLER
Executive Director

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

The city of Portage stepped up to allow all Porter County residents to drop off organic material and collect compost and mulch from its street department, a more convenient site for north county residents. Access to their public compost site is expected in 2019.

Due to the remodeling of its facility, the Porter Street Department no longer accepts electronics on behalf of our recycling program. Staff educates the public on other resources available in the community.

The board voted to discontinue accepting latex paint at collection events due to soaring costs to landfill unusable paint. We stepped up efforts to teach people how to best manage their unwanted material.

NEW IN 2018:

Smoke detector recycling! Many use small amounts of radioactive material, americium-241, to detect smoke, posing a disposal issue. Our program sends detectors to Curie Environmental Services, where the americium-124 is segregated and sent to a special waste fill.



A GLIMPSE INTO OUR 2018 OPERATIONS

Residents in Porter County pay a \$20 annual user fee on their property tax bills, which is approximately \$8 per year per person, to fund district programs that include:

Services

- Drop-off Recycling
- Compost Site and Yard Waste Management
- Battery Recycling
- Electronics Recycling
- Fluorescent Bulb Recycling
- Household Hazardous Waste Collections
- Smoke Detector Recycling
- Tire Collection
- And much more!

Education

- School Programs
- Public Presentations and Programs
- Comprehensive Website
- Master Recycler Program
- Summer Camp Programs
- Social Media Outreach and E-newsletters
- Print Resources
- Advertising Campaigns
- NWI Earth Day Celebration



These roll-off boxes will be replaced at our drop-off recycling sites in 2019. The new boxes will limit the types and amounts of materials residents can place inside in order to fight contamination.

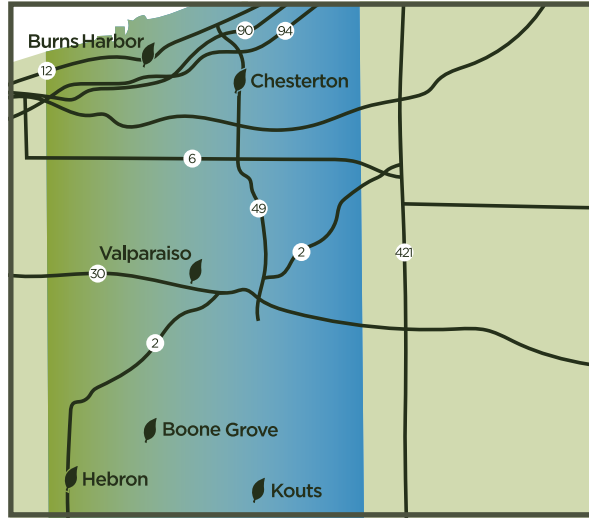
DROP-OFF RECYCLING SITES

 **1,517
TONS**

Six locations throughout Porter County are consistently well-used by residents.

We anticipate costs to increase in 2019 due to additional contamination charges.

Operating cost in 2018: \$124,806



ELECTRONICS

 **589,541
POUNDS**

We sponsor drop-off points to provide residents with free options to properly dispose of these materials. This quantity, from residents and County government facilities, is slightly lower than it has been over the last five years.

Operating cost in 2018: \$85,837

COMPOST SITES

Operating costs include staff, management of material, management of non public sites including Chesterton, Portage & Town of Pines.

Usage of the Valpo & Boone Grove sites has been consistent throughout the years.

Drop off yard waste • Take finished compost and mulch • Recycle certain items

**24,949
SITE VISITS** 

According to the EPA, landfills received around 10.8 million tons of yard trimmings in 2015, 7.8% of all the municipal solid waste landfilled. We are committed to recycling yard waste into usable gardening and landscaping material.

Operating cost in 2018: \$198,247

 **2,323
PEOPLE**

 **89LB
PER CAR**

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Six mobile household hazardous waste collections helped Porter County residents responsibly dispose of products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable or reactive ingredients, requiring special care upon disposal.

The number of participants at collections as well as the volume of HHW brought to these collections increased in 2018 from the previous year.

Operating cost in 2018: \$207,494

TIRES

 **34
TONS**

2018 saw an increase in participation from the general public as well as municipal partners at this one-day event.

Operating cost in 2018: \$4,754

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The District provides free, high-quality, interactive education programs that meet Indiana State Academic standards to Porter County schools, grades K-12. More than 11 different classroom programs are available.



8,966 KIDS

EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Master Recyclers make a difference

Master Recycler program graduates included two Ardaugh employees who spent their volunteer hours creating an educational coloring book the company uses as an outreach tool! They also held workshops for employees to learn how to properly recycle.



Northwest Indiana Earth Day Celebration

The event continues to be a highlight for families, drawing more than 2,000 to the Expo for the five-hour event.



ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

Adopt-A-County Road

This roadside cleanup program enlists volunteers to pick up trash and recyclables from roads in unincorporated Porter County. More than 20 groups of volunteers made up of families, neighbors, church and school groups, commit to clean two-mile stretches of county roads.

Event Recycling Container Loan Program

Each year dozens of event organizers, including the Porter County Fair and the Valparaiso Popcorn Fest, collectively "check out" more than 250 containers to ensure recycling at their events.

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sue Lynch, Chair, Portage City Council

Karen Conover, Vice Chair, Porter County Council

Tim Jones, Kouts Town Council

Jim Biggs, Porter County Commissioner

Laura Shurr Blaney, Porter County Commissioner

James Snyder, Mayor of Portage

Jeff Good, Porter County Commissioner

Therese Haller, Executive Director

Additional information on our budgets, services and operations can be found on www.PorterCountyRecycling.org



Administrative office located in the Porter County Government Center,
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