



Fact Sheet: Storm, Flood Debris and Disaster Areas

Dealing with Debris:

After floodwaters recede and storms have passed, debris remains that can cause serious pollution problems and potentially result in ill health effects. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) has developed this fact sheet for municipalities and residents to outline what you can do to ensure that the waste and debris are disposed of in a safe and environmentally sound manner. Please follow these guidelines to dispose of the debris. Any questions about which materials can be landfilled, burned or recycled will be answered by calling:

Landfill waste material and Household Hazardous Waste – 217-524-3300

Open burning waste – 217-782-2113

Immediate emergency – 800-782-7860

Outdoor chemical contamination – 217-782-3637

Recycling Storm and Flood Waste:

Household appliances, also known as “white goods,” can be recycled by taking them to a local scrap dealer, who will remove potentially harmful components. For information on scrap dealers in your area check the yellow pages or call a local appliance retailer.

Tires must be disposed at a registered commercial processing facility. Units of local government may accumulate used and waste tires recovered via storm/flood cleanup. It is important to drain all used tires of standing water and to store them in a manner that prevents the further accumulation of water. Contact the Illinois EPA at 217-524-3300 for further information and possible assistance. In addition, we encourage other recyclable materials to be separated and recycled such as glass, metal debris and plastics.

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal:

Household hazardous waste (HHW) and other chemical products should be disposed of properly to avoid health and pollution risks. The following long-term facilities are available for disposal of household hazardous waste:

Naperville: 156 Fort Hill Drive (*north of Naperville Public Works at 180 Fort Hill Drive*) · 630-420-6095

Saturday: 9 am - 2 pm, Sunday: 9 am - 2 pm

<http://www.naperville.il.us/services/garbage-and-recycling/household-hazardous-waste-facility/>

City of Chicago: 1150 N. North Branch on Goose Island, 312-744-3060

Tuesday: 7 am - noon, Thursday: 2 pm - 7 pm, First Saturday of each month: 8 am - 3 pm

<http://www.CityofChicago.org/hccrf>

Rockford: 3333 Kishwaukee, Rock River Reclamation District, 779-348-7425

Saturday: 8 am - 4 pm and Sunday: Noon - 4 pm

<https://rockfordil.gov/city-departments/community-and-economic-development/sanitation/household-hazardous-waste/>

Lake County: The Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO) currently operates a long-term household chemical waste collection program. Information and a collection schedule can be found at www.swalco.org, or by calling 847-336-9340.

Madison County: Madison County Building & Zoning. **Appointments are required.** See website to schedule.

First Saturday and Third Friday of every Month, 8 am—3 pm

https://www.madisoncountyiil.gov/departments/planning_and_development/recycle_events.php

Landfilling Storm and Flood Waste:

You may dispose of the following items in your local landfill: lumber, sandbags, plastic sheeting, shingles, insulation, animal carcasses, grain, animal feed, food, carpet, furniture, metal debris and machinery. Additionally, you may want to check with the operator of your local landfill to see if trees, branches, brush and other debris similar to landscape waste may be temporarily accepted there for disposal and, if so, for how long. Landscape compost facilities may also accept this type of material as long as it is not mixed with other types of storm debris.

Flood Water Sand Re-use and Disposal:

Flood water sand may be contaminated with human and animal waste, oil and gasoline residue, and farm 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 as waste at a 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.

Flood Sediments:

Care should be taken not to cause nuisance conditions in removing and accumulating flood sediment. If the sediments are contaminated and removed from the property at which they were found after the flood, these materials must be disposed of in a permitted landfill.

Sealed Drum and Propane Tank Disposal:

Sealed drums, propane tanks and other pressurized gas cylinders with unknown contents should not be handled by untrained persons. Please notify the Illinois EPA Office of Emergency Response at 217-782-3637 or Illinois Emergency Management Agency at 800-782-7860. To dispose of propane tanks, contact the nearest propane distributor. Propane tanks have serial numbers that will allow for identification of tank owners and locations.

Electronic Waste Disposal:

Most electronics items are banned from landfills. A list of Registered Residential E-Waste Collection Locations can be found at <https://illinois-epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1e86d9a5913a4ca49fb0cfd64f1c2872>. Please call the collector in advance to make sure the item(s) you have will be accepted at the collection site.

Electronics Banned from Illinois Landfills. A complete listing can be found at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/waste-management/electronics-recycling.html>.

- Televisions and Monitors
- Printers and Computers (laptop, notebook, tablet, desktop)
- Electronic Keyboards and Facsimile Machines
- Videocassette Recorders and Portable Digital Music Players
- Digital Video Disc Players, Recorders, and Video Game Consoles
- Small Scale Servers and Scanners
- Electronic Mice and Digital Converter Boxes
- Cable Receivers and Satellite Receivers
- Cell phones

Environmental Concerns About Oil from Electrical Transformers on Downed Power Poles:

After storms, electrical transformers on downed power poles have the potential to leak oil into the environment. Some transformers still contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which are persistent and toxic environmental pollutants. If you see downed transformers, please alert local officials who can then contact the appropriate electrical utility company about disposal or cleanup. If you observe leaks from a transformer, you may contact an Illinois EPA Regional office during business hours <https://epa.illinois.gov/about-us/locations.html> or call Illinois Emergency Management Agency at 800-782-7860 or 217-782-7860 any time.

Drinking Water Concerns After Storms and Floods:

Public Water Supplies: Be sure to listen to special announcements about local boil orders that may be in effect regarding public water supplies. If a boil order has been issued for your water supply, boil your water for five minutes. Water used to make ice, brush teeth, or wash dishes must also be boiled. As an alternative to boiling water, bottled beverages can be used for drinking purposes.

Private Wells: Your local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health regional office will provide you with information and assistance in testing your well. Additional tips on safety of private wells may be found at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/drinking-water/private-well-users.html>.

Open Burning of Storm and Flood Related Disaster Debris:

Disaster Debris includes the following materials: Tree limbs, brush, natural wood and plant debris, agricultural waste (bags, cartons, dry bedding, structural materials, and crop residue), canvas sandbags, clean wood building debris, and lumber.

Note: Asbestos, tires, rubber and non-wooden materials **CANNOT** be burned in any situation.

Open burning of Storm/Flood Related (Disaster) Debris may occur under the following conditions:

- When the Governor of Illinois or the President of the United States has declared a major disaster and local laws and regulations have been met.

Note: Some open burning requires a permit from the Illinois EPA and some does not.

The following examples of open burning of Disaster Debris DO NOT require a state open burn permit:

- Tree limbs, brush, natural wood, and plant debris may be burned on the site where they are generated and at community sites under the supervision of the local government.
- Agricultural waste, as described above, may be burned on the site where they are generated.

Please note, State Law does not override local prohibitions or limitations on open burning.

Burning of canvas sandbags, clean wood building debris, and lumber DOES require a state open burn permit.

The following websites contain more detailed information on permitting and an application for open burn permits.

<https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/air-quality/open-burning.html>

<https://epa.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/epa/documents/air/permits/openburn/open-burning-disaster-area-info.pdf>

For more information regarding open burn permitting please contact the Illinois EPA at 217-782-2113.

Guidelines for open burning:

- Coordinate the burn with the local fire protection district.
- Conduct the burn when the wind is blowing away from roadways, railroad tracks, airfields, and populated areas.
- Burn only from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (approximate) to take advantage of the best natural smoke dispersion conditions.

Other Helpful Links:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Fact Sheet: Clean Up Safely After a Disaster
<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/facts.html>

Illinois Department of Public Health

Flood Information
<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/emergency-preparedness-response/flooding.html>

American Red Cross

Flood Safety
<http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/flood#About>

Tornado Safety
<http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/tornado>

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
1021 North Grand Avenue East
Post Office Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Phone: 217-782-3397
Fax: 217-782-9039
www.epa.illinois.gov

