

CURBSIDE COLLECTION of Trash, Recycling, and Yard Waste: Potential Service Changes, Guidance and Recommendations related to COVID-19 for all SWALCO members

(Updated 4/10/20)

[Lake County, IL] - All curbside collection programs for waste, recycling and yard waste are operational at this time. Please continue to separate and recycle as usual. SWALCO staff, municipal representatives and the waste industry are working diligently to keep business as usual during this time and provide updates in a timely fashion when there are changes to service. Please call your hauler with any questions, all call centers are up and running remotely, phone numbers for the call centers are provided later in this document. To see the most recent updates for your community please visit swalco.org/NeighborhoodPrograms and click on your town.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR HAULING SERVICE

1. **NOW:** All waste haulers have reported they are providing the full range of services EXCEPT haulers will not collect bulk items or any other loose items left outside of the cart. Waste haulers are limiting this extra service to protect and ensure safety of their staff during this time. They may not collect bulky items (such as furniture, electronics, or large items), excess trash, recycling or flattened cardboard boxes that are left outside of the cart. As long as you put your waste and recyclables inside of a rigid container or a plastic bag the hauler will still collect the material.
2. **NEXT:** There may be further changes to your curbside services over the coming days and weeks. For example, seasonal yard waste collection service may need to be postponed at some point in time if there aren't enough drivers available to provide the service. Further, it may become necessary for waste hauling companies to take measures to collect materials on reduced schedules, such as providing recycling service every other week. The waste industry has asked the Governor to allow yard waste to be landfilled if they experience a shortage of drivers, but in order to do that they must first be granted official exemption from the state law, which to date has not been granted.
3. **LAST RESORT:** According to haulers it is unlikely but possible that they would need to collect trash and recycling together on the same day in the same truck. Municipal hauler contracts usually require separation of recyclables, which means that municipalities and their haulers would need to negotiate and amend contract terms in order for such changes to be made. We are asking you to please keep your normal behaviors, separate recycling and trash in your home and empty these into the correct curbside cart.

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE AT HOME

Maintain your green standards: If services are eventually reduced and/or if you would like to make extra efforts to maintain your green-standards, consider the following measures:

- **Yard waste and food scraps:** The following suggestions are general best practices, regardless of whether curbside service is running as normal or experiencing disruptions due to the virus. Check out composting information on [SWALCO's website](http://swalco.org).

- **Back yard composting:** Now is the time to start composting your yard waste and food scraps in a corner of the backyard if you have the space. There are many great guides available online about how to get started. Check out the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition (IFSC) resources on [backyard composting](#).
- **Green-scaping & lawn mulching** – mulch leaves into the garden beds and leave grass clippings on the lawn. Google either of these terms to find a wealth of guidance online.
- **Do not burn** your landscape waste or any other waste please! We do not want to fill the air with smoke and harmful pollutants at a time when people are struggling with respiratory-related illnesses. Instead, please mulch these organic materials properly, so that they will break down through a natural emission-free process. See the EPA information on the [hazards of backyard burning](#).
- **Recycling:** Please continue to separate your recyclables and place them in your curbside cart. If there are disruptions to recycling service, it is important to continue to practice and preserve the same behaviors of separating waste streams. In the event of a disruption, you can stockpile your clean recyclables in a corner of the garage or basement until business as usual resumes. If you chose to do this, keep in mind that you will need to feed the volume in over time when service returns, so as not to overwhelm the system. For more information on [recycling guidelines](#) and recent guidance on proper recycling during the COVID-19 time period please see the [flyer](#) created by SWALCO and Lake County.
- **Waste reduction and rethinking:** Return to the thrifty measures taken by our elders in times of national or global emergencies and rethink your consumer habits. Up your game with innovative ways to minimize your discards. Reuse everything you can. Reduce your consumption by considering your purchases, including the packaging they come in. Shop for food-items that are less perishable and invest in appliances that are durable and repairable. Do your part in helping maintain the viability of our resource recovery system.

We want to thank you for your cooperation and understanding during these uncertain times, please see a list of all call centers below:

LRS: (773) 685-8811

Lakes Disposal: (847) 366-8582

WM: (800) 796-9696

Groot: (847) 693-2700

Advanced Disposal: (847) 623-3870

Prairieland Disposal: (847) 381-9300

Illinois State Update on Waste and Recycling in Relation to COVID-19

On Friday, 3/20/20 the Governor of Illinois, J.B. Pritzker, issued an executive order for residents of Illinois to stay at home. This order allows essential infrastructure and associated employees to continue to travel for work related functions. Waste and recycling services are specified as essential infrastructure in the order.

Not allowed: Landscape waste or yard waste was banned from Illinois landfills in 1990 with Public Act 85-1430. As of the date of this document (3/26/20), no official approval has been given by the state for the combining of yard waste with trash.

Allowed changes to service: As of 3/23/20, recycling and waste haulers have been granted extended hours of operation as well as higher weight limits in trucks and trailers, in order for them to continue the essential service of collecting waste, yard waste, and recycling.

The Solid Waste Agency of Lake County
(847) 377-4950
Swalco.org

