Blue Earth County

Waste Disposal and Recycling Guide

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County and State Environmental Agencies and Facilities

Agency / Facility*	Location / Map*	Phone Number
Blue Earth County Environmental Services	Government Center 410 5th St. S. – 3rd Floor Mankato	(507) 304-4381
Blue Earth County Environmental Services 24-Hour Hotline	Government Center 410 5th St. S. – 3rd Floor Mankato	(507) 304-4242
Blue Earth County Recycling Center	725 Waseca Avenue LeHillier Area - Mankato	(507) 345-4255
SMC Compost Site	57032 231 Lane Mankato	(507) 388-3122
SMC Demfill	3290 3rd Avenue Mankato	(507) 388-3122
Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility	651 Summit Avenue Mankato	(507) 304-4242
Blue Earth County Product Reuse Center	651 Summit Avenue Mankato	(507) 304-4242
Blue Earth County Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program	651 Summit Avenue Mankato	(507) 304-4242
Blue Earth County Ponderosa Landfill	20028 Gooseberry Lane (Formerly Co. Rd. 34) Mankato	(507) 625-7301
Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department	401 Carver Road Mankato	(507) 304-4800
Emergency		911
City of Mankato Public Safety Center	710 S Front Street Mankato	(507) 387-8600
Minnesota Department of Health	12 Civic Center Plaza #2105 Mankato	(507) 344-2700
Minnesota Department of Agriculture	501 South Minnesota Avenue Saint Peter	(800) 657-3986
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	261 Highway 15 South New Ulm	(507) 359-6000
University of Minnesota Extension Service-Blue Earth County	204 S 5th St. Ste. 310 Mankato	(507) 304-4325
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	12 Civic Center Plaza #2165 Mankato	(507) 389-5977 (800) 657-3864
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Duty Officer		(800) 422-0798
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Spills Hotline		(800) 422-0798
Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTap)	200 Oak Street SE Suite 350 Minneapolis	(612) 624-1300 (800) 247-0015
Minnesota Waste Processing Company (MWPC) Transfer Station	1051 Summit Avenue Mankato	(507) 625-5746

***Click on links for more information about facilities or programs, or a map of the location.**

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Waste Disposal and Recycling Guide

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Are you a business? Check out the Disposal and Recycling Quick Guide for Businesses.

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Are you a business? Check out the Disposal and Recycling Quick Guide for Businesses.

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Automotive and Recreation

- Aerosol Cans
- Auto Fluids
- Auto Parts
- Cleaning Products
- Floor Absorbent (Floor Dry)
- Fuel
- Motor Oil and Oil Filters
- Propane Tanks
- Tires

Thanks for recycling your used motor oil! But you didn't finish the job if you threw the filter away.

Even a well-drained filter can hold up to a quart of oil. The only legal way to dispose of a used filter is to recycle it. Put your drained oil filter in a tightly closed plastic bag.

Are you a business? Check out the Disposal and Recycling Quick Guide for Businesses.

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Waste Disposal and Recycling Guide

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Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

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Disposal and Recycling Guide for Household Items

Aluminum Foil / Trays

Reduce: Use reusable dishes and containers instead of aluminum foil or trays. Do not use more aluminum foil than you will need.

Reuse: Wash and reuse aluminum foil more than one time. Aluminum trays can be used again for baking and heating food in a conventional oven.

Appliances

If handled improperly, appliances can damage the environment because many contain Freon, PCBs, and mercury. Minnesota law requires that all major appliances be either reused or recycled – it's **illegal** to put them with your trash.

Replace inefficient fixtures and appliances with energy- and water-efficient ones.

Major appliances include:

- Air conditioners
- Clothes washers and dryers
- Dehumidifiers
- Dishwashers
- Freezers
- Furnaces
- Garbage disposals
- Heat pumps
- Microwave ovens
- Ovens
- Refrigerators
- Stoves/Ranges
- Trash compactors
- Water heaters

Reduce: Buy quality appliances that are durable and energy savers. Run dishwashers, washing machines, and dryers only when full. Let clothes dry outside whenever possible. Use ceiling and floor fans instead of air conditioners.

Reuse: Donate working appliances to charities or friends. Sell them at garage sales or online. Consider buying a used appliance instead of purchasing new.

A dripping faucet can waste 15 to 20 gallons of water every day.

Repair: Repair old appliances when possible. However, very old appliances may be energy hogs. You may save more money in the long run by replacing old appliances with newer energy efficient models.

Recycle: When disposing of refrigerators or freezers, make sure that the doors cannot close and trap a child or animal inside. This can be done by removing the door or bending the hinges so the door cannot close. Appliances can be dropped off at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center for a fee, or at some retailers when you purchase your new appliance.

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Also accepted at Ponderosa for recycling. Be sure any appliance recycler you choose meets all State of Minnesota requirements.

Batteries

Some batteries contain metals such as mercury, lithium, nickel, and/or cadmium, which can be harmful to the environment if not disposed of properly.

Reduce: Buy equipment that can be plugged into an outlet instead of using batteries.

Reuse: Consider rechargeable batteries for frequently used equipment. Rechargeable batteries are the cheapest over time. Nickel metal hydride (NiMH) rechargeable batteries last for 300 – 600 charges. All rechargeable batteries must be recycled.

Recycle: Identify the type of battery to determine how to dispose of it. Label information, battery shape, or the packaging information may identify the type. Once you have determined the type, follow these disposal instructions:

Type: Alkaline and Carbon – Zinc (can be labeled "Heavy Duty" or "General Purpose")

Description: Mainly produced in the following sizes: A, AA, AAA, C, D, N, 9-volt and lantern. Not rechargeable.

Use: Calculators, digital cameras, portable stereos, radios, toys, flashlights, smoke detectors, clocks and other products.

Disposal Information: These are safe to throw in the trash if they were made after 1993. If made prior to 1993, drop them off at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Type: Rechargeable

Description: Lithium ion, nickel cadmium, nickel metal hydride, small sealed lead acid. Look for the **RBRC seal**. Mainly produced in the following sizes: D, C, AAA, AA, 9-volt and battery packs of various shapes.

Use: Cell phones, cordless phones, laptop computers, personal care products, power tools, video cameras and other cordless products.

Disposal Information: Some contain hazardous metals. Do **not** throw them in the trash. A depleted battery may still contain a residual charge. Place each battery into an individual plastic bag or place non-conductive tape over the battery terminals to prevent short-circuiting during storage and transport. Rechargeable batteries can be dropped off at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

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Batteries (continued)

Type: Lithium

Description: Lithium – non rechargeable. Cylindrical lithium batteries are produced in various sizes (AA, AAA, 1.5-volt, 3-volt, and 9-volt).

Use: Photographic and high-drain applications, medical devices, smoke detectors, and other products.

Disposal Information: Lithium batteries are hazardous if not completely drained. A depleted battery may still contain a residual charge. Place each battery into an individual plastic bag or place non-conductive tape over the battery terminals to prevent short-circuiting during storage and transport. Lithium batteries can be dropped off at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Type: Button

Description: May be alkaline, lithium (similar in appearance to coins), mercuric oxide, nickel cadmium, silver oxide or zinc air. May be combined into stacks to produce cylindrical batteries.

Use: Digital cameras, calculators, handheld games, hearing aids, keyless remotes, personal digital assistants, watches, and other products.

Disposal Information: May contain hazardous metals. Do not throw in the trash. A depleted battery may still contain a residual charge. Place each battery into an individual plastic bag or place non-conductive tape over the battery terminals to prevent short-circuiting during storage and transport. Some jewelers, photo stores, and battery retailers that sell button batteries will accept button batteries for recycling at no cost. Button batteries can also be dropped off at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. While some button batteries are not hazardous, recycle all of them to be safe. Some button batteries are now mercury-free but still contain lead and must be recycled.

Type: Automotive

Description: Lead acid

Use: Cars, motorcycles, boats, golf carts, other products.

Disposal Information: Lead acid batteries contain hazardous metals. It is illegal to throw lead acid batteries in the trash. Businesses selling automotive batteries are required to take used batteries (up to 5 per consumer) whether you buy a new one or not. Lead acid batteries can also be dropped off at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Retailers may offer a refund of a core charge paid when the battery was purchased. Some scrap yards purchase batteries, paying per pound.

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Books

Reduce: Instead of buying a book, see if it is available at a library.

Reuse:

- Share books with friends or neighbors.
- Donate books to libraries or charities.
- Sell or buy books at garage sales, used book stores or thrift shops.
- Sell books online.

Recycle: Books can be recycled at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center. Hardcover books must have the covers and bindings removed.

Cans and Bottles

Recycling cans and bottles is important for our environment and economy. Recycling aluminum saves 95% of the energy it takes to make the material from scratch. Recycling also generates $64 million in Minnesota tax revenue every year and involves over 36,000 jobs.

Americans use 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour. Most end up in the trash.

Reduce: Purchase food in bulk or frozen alternatives to reduce your need for many cans. Look for bottles and cans made out of recycled materials. Buy fresh food or grow your own if possible.

Recycle: Metal or aluminum cans are recyclable at the curb and at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center. Do **not** recycle aerosol cans. Aerosol cans should be disposed of at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Containers Recycling Guide:

Plastic

Recycle: Bottles and Jugs

- Water, soda, and juice bottles
- Milk and juice jugs
- Ketchup and salad dressing bottles
- Dishwashing liquid bottles and detergent jugs
- Shampoo, soap and lotion bottles

Do Not Recycle:

- Styrofoam ®
- Microwavable food trays
- Plastic wrap
- Motor oil bottles and containers that held hazardous products

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Containers Recycling Guide (continued)

Cartons

Recycle:

- Milk cartons
- Juice boxes
- Soup, broth and wine cartons

Most glass bottles and jars contain at least 25% recycled content.

Glass

Recycle:

- Food and beverage bottles and jars

Do Not Recycle:

- Drinking glasses, ceramics, mirrors, dishes and vases
- Window and automotive glass

Metal

Recycle:

- Food and beverage cans

Cardboard and Paper Packaging

Most cardboard and paper packaging is recyclable at the curb or can be taken to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center. Some paper packaging products, such as pizza boxes are not recyclable because of grease they may contain. Place these items in the trash.

Reduce:

- Buy foods with less packaging.
- Whenever possible, buy in bulk or in bags or bottles that can be reused.
- Look for packaging made from recycled materials.

Reuse: Reuse cardboard boxes for storage, hauling, carrying groceries, or moving.

Recycle:

- **Cardboard:** Found in heavier corrugated boxes. Can also be reused for storing or shipping items.
- **Boxboard:** Lighter weight paperboard used to package cereal, gifts, medications, toiletries, shoes, toothpaste, and other products.
- **Food Boxes:** If the product is stored in the cupboard, the box is recyclable. If the box is in contact with food, it is not recyclable. Place these items in the trash.

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Catalogs, Magazines, and Junk Mail

Reduce:

- Share subscriptions with friends, relatives, or co-workers.
- Write or call the companies whose catalogs you do not want to receive. Ask to be taken off their mailing list.
- For subscriptions you **do** wish to receive, tell them not to sell or give your name to other mail order companies.

The Direct Marketing Association is a national trade association for companies that send direct mail. Register at their website http://www.dmachoice.org/ to remove your name from catalogs, magazines and other mail offers.

Reuse: Donate magazines to doctors' offices, hospitals, nursing homes, shelters, or libraries.

Recycle: Catalogs and magazines that are made from shiny or glossy paper may be recycled curbside or at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center.

To remove your name from lists to receive phone books, visit www.donttrashthephonebook.org

Christmas Trees and Holiday Decorations

(Also, see* Holiday Lights, Decorations, and Wrapping Paper section*)

Live Christmas Trees: Christmas trees should be taken to the SMC Compost Site or other compost site, where they will be chipped into mulch. Christmas trees should **not** be dumped into lakes or burned in a fireplace. Whether you are dropping off your live tree or it is being picked up by your waste hauler, remember to remove all:

- Ornaments
- Lights
- Tinsel
- Stands
- Bags (Do **not** put your tree out on the curb in a bag, and if you drop it off, remove the bag and take it with you.)

Trees that have been flocked (sprayed with glitter, or other material) **cannot** be composted.

Artificial Christmas Trees: Reuse artificial trees as many times as possible. If you're getting rid of yours, ask friends or relatives if they would like it, or ask about donation opportunities in your area. If your tree is unwanted or not reusable, consider if any parts of the tree can be recycled. If not, place your artificial tree with the trash.

Live Wreaths and Greenery: Wreaths and greenery that are made from live evergreen can generally be composted in the same manner as above for live Christmas trees. They must be free of ornaments, lights, wire, and tinsel, and cannot be flocked.

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Cleaning Products

Many cleaning products contain harmful ingredients that should **never** be thrown out or poured down the drain.

Types of cleaning products include:

- Window cleaners
- Multi-purpose cleaners
- Ammonia
- Drain cleaners
- Oven cleaners
- Concrete cleaners
- Naval jelly
- Toilet bowl cleaners
- Waxes
- Polishes
- Degreasers
- Other petroleum-based products

Avoid products that say:

- Contains lye
- Avoid contact with skin
- Acid

Reduce:

- Use water-based cleaners in place of solvent-based cleaners as much as possible.
- Buy only the cleaners you need or try cleaners that do not contain caustic ingredients.
- Consider using non-toxic cleaning products. You can make your own using ingredients such as baking soda, vinegar, and plant-based soaps.
- To reduce your use of oven cleaners, invest in a self-cleaning oven.
- Avoid caustic oven cleaning products that use lye; look for heat activated ones instead.

Reuse: When possible, use up all cleaning products to avoid disposing of partially filled containers, or give it to someone who will use it.

Purchase items such as dish soap and laundry detergents in concentrate forms.

Disposal: Cleaning products, corrosive cleaners, and solvent-based cleaners, or products that are toxic, flammable, or poisonous should be taken to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Do **not** mix different cleaning products.

Clothing

Reduce: Buy clothes that will last and not go out of style quickly.

Reuse:

- Give old clothing to family or friends
- Buy or drop off clothing at thrift stores or consignment shops
- Buy and sell clothing at garage sales
- Use old clothing for cleaning rags
- Donate clothing to charities and shelters

Consignment shop items are usually priced at 25-50% of the new retail price.

Repair: When possible, mend torn clothing or alter clothes that no longer fit.

Recycle: Unwanted clothing can be recycled at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center. Several USAgain boxes for clothing are located throughout the area, also. They accept shoes as well as clothing. Some secondhand stores accept rags if they are clearly marked.

Diapers

Reduce: Consider using cloth diapers at home and limiting the use of disposable diapers to when you are away from home. Disposable diapers are not recyclable.

Disposal: Used disposable diapers should be thrown in the trash.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers should be disposed of if it is too old or if it is empty. Disposal options depend on whether or not the extinguisher is empty.

Not Empty:

- Check the pressure gauge. Your fire extinguisher should have a gauge saying if it is overcharged, if it is at the correct pressure, or in need of a recharge.
- Call your fire department. You might be able to exchange your extinguisher or get it recharged.
- Take it to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Empty:

- Squeeze the lever above the handle. This will ensure that all contents are discharged.
- Remove the head. This will let whoever disposes of the extinguisher know that all contents have been removed.
- Recycle the steel body with your regular metal recycling.

Fluorescent Light Bulbs

Compact fluorescent, fluorescent, high intensity discharge (HID) and neon light bulbs contain small amounts of mercury. In Minnesota, it is **illegal** to place them in the trash.

Replace old incandescent light bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs). Place old incandescent light bulbs in the trash (they do not contain mercury).

Reduce energy costs by up to $30 per bulb over its lifetime and use **75% less energy**. CFLs last up to 10 times longer and generate 70% less heat than standard incandescent light bulbs.

Recycle burned out or broken CFLs, fluorescents, HID and neon bulbs to prevent the release of mercury. You can now recycle your used CFLs for free at many Menards, Lowes or Home Depot stores in Minnesota, or at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Today's CFLs:

- Today's CFLs give a warmer, more inviting light than fluorescents you might be used to or CFLs from a few years ago, and they light up much more quickly than older CFLs.
- For optimum energy savings, use CFLs in the rooms you use most.
- CFLs are better used for area lighting than spot lighting. It is generally **not** recommended to place CFLs in fixtures where the bulb will be fully enclosed.

Furniture

Reduce: Buy durable, good quality furniture that will last and remain in style.

Reuse:

- Buy from a used furniture store
- Sell your old furniture instead of dumping it
- Donate old furniture to charities
- Buy or sell old furniture at garage sales or thrift stores
- Give old furniture to friends or neighbors

Repair: Have old furniture repaired or reupholstered instead of buying new.

Disposal: Unusable furniture can be taken to the Ponderosa Landfill or the MWPC Transfer Station.

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Holiday Lights, Decorations, and Wrapping Paper

Holiday Decorations: Reuse holiday decorations rather than throwing them in the trash. Consider giving old holiday decorations to a friend or family member, or donate them to a charity or thrift store.

Wrapping Paper

Reduce:

- Wrap gifts in newspaper, old maps, old sheet music, or your child's art project.
- Design your own wrapping paper from used brown paper bags.

Reuse:

- Buy wrapping paper with recycled paper content.
- Consider using reusable gift bags.

In 2003, 5,750,000 trees were not cut down because of paper recycling in Minnesota.

Disposal:

- Wrapping paper should not be recycled because the brightly colored inks in the paper contain heavy metals.
- Used wrapping paper should be thrown in the trash.

Light Strings

Recycle

- Take to Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or other drop off locations during the holiday season for recycling. Replace with energy-efficient LED light strings.

Mattresses and Box Springs

Reduce: Prolong the life of your mattress by following the manufacturer's instructions, generally by turning it four times per year.

Reuse: Give your old set to a friend or family member. Consider donating sets that are in very good condition to charities.

Disposal: Old mattresses and box springs can be taken to the Ponderosa Landfill.

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Medicine and Prescription Drugs

Properly disposing of medicines is important to prevent drug abuse or poisoning and protect the environment. Medicines flushed down the drain or disposed of in the trash can pollute bodies of water, harm wildlife, and end up in drinking water supplies.

Reduce: Use all antibiotics prescribed by your doctor. Buy only as much as you can reasonably use before the expiration date. Once a medicine is dispensed to a patient, it is **illegal** to dispense to others.

Disposal: Unused medications can be disposed of in a collection box at the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department. The City of Mankato also provides a collection box in their Public Safety Center Lobby, 710 S. Front St., Mankato. Walgreen's Pharmacy at 1270 Madison Avenue also accepts old medications. Remove as much packaging as possible. Containers with liquid contents should be placed in a plastic bag to prevent leaks. After being placed in the collection box, medications and prescription drugs are taken directly to an incinerator, where a deputy or police officer watches their destruction.

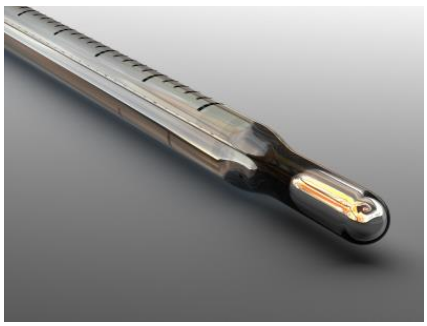
Items Accepted:

- Prescription medications
- Over-the-counter medications
- Narcotics and other controlled substances
- Medication samples
- Pet medications
- Vitamins and supplements
- Liquid medication in glass or leak-proof containers
- Inhalers
- Medicated ointments and lotions

Items NOT Accepted:

- Needles, syringes or other sharps
- Thermometers
- IV bags
- Bloody or infectious waste
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Business waste

Mercury Thermometers and Thermostats



Mercury may be harmful if swallowed, inhaled or touched. One broken thermometer releases enough mercury to contaminate a small lake. Broken thermometers should be cleaned up properly and immediately.

In Minnesota it is **illegal** to throw away a mercury thermometer or thermostat, even if it is not broken.

Reduce: Digital and alcohol thermometers and thermostats are safe alternatives to those that contain mercury.

Disposal:

- A mercury thermometer is made of glass and contains a silver, metallic gray or black liquid. Alcohol thermometers contain red liquid and can be thrown in the trash.
- Transport a mercury thermometer in a rigid, sealed container to avoid breakage. The Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility accepts mercury thermometers and thermostats.

Nail Polish and Nail Polish Remover

Buy only as much as you need. When you cannot use it up, take it to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Needles and Syringes

It is important to manage and dispose of needles, lancets, and syringes (sharps) safely to prevent injury and disease transmission from needle-sticks. **Never** leave needles or syringes on streets, in parks, or anywhere else where someone could get injured. **Never** place loose needles and syringes in the trash.

Storage:

- Purchase a sharps disposal container from a pharmacy **OR** get an empty laundry detergent bottle with a screw-on lid.
- Label the detergent container **"Do Not Recycle: Household Sharps."**
- Put needles in point-first into the container.
- Do **not** store used sharps in glass bottles, aluminum cans, or coffee cans.

Disposal

Home Needle Destruction Devices: Once the needle or lancet is destroyed by heat in a destruction device, the remaining syringe and melted metal can be safely disposed of in the regular trash. A needle clipper that stores clipped needles should be disposed of at a sharps collection site or through a mail-back program.

Mail-Back Programs: Mail-back disposal programs allow home sharps users to mail used sharps to licensed disposal facilities as a safe disposal option. There is a fee charged for this service. U.S. Postal Service approved providers of this service include:

- Medadyne Biomedical, Inc. (714) 887-0315 www.medadyne.com
- Safe Medical Systems (877) 722-3633 www.safemedical.com
- Sharps Compliance, Inc. (800) 772-5657 www.sharpsinc.com
- Stericycle, Inc. (800) 355-8773 www.stericycle.com

Downtown and Hilltop Hy-Vee, Mankato: Both pharmacies have partnered with Blue Earth County to provide a needles and syringes collection program. Be sure to follow storage and disposal instructions. There is currently a $5 fee per container (up to one gallon in size) charged for this service.

Paper

Reduce:

- Buy new paper products made from recycled paper.
- Use non-disposable alternatives like handkerchiefs, cloth towels, ceramic plates and cups.
- Use reusable or cloth bags for groceries or shopping instead of paper or plastic shopping bags.

Reuse:

- Reuse paper that has print on only one side. Use it for writing shopping lists, notes or for family art projects.
- Use newspaper as wrapping paper or packing cushion, or use it to wash windows.

The average American uses 7 trees every year for paper, wood, and other products made from trees.

Recycle:

- Mail, office and school papers
- Magazines and catalogs
- Newspapers and inserts
- Phone books
- Frozen food boxes
- Milk cartons and juice boxes
- Soup, broth and wine cartons
- Corrugated cardboard boxes
- Cardboard
- Pop and beer cases
- Cereal and cracker boxes
- Shoe boxes, gift boxes & electronics boxes
- Toothpaste, medication and other toiletry boxes

Do Not Recycle:

- Dark colored paper
- Carbon paper
- Shredded paper
- Thermal fax paper
- Kleenex or toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Paper soiled with food
- Paper plates and cups
- Paper napkins or towels
- Gift wrap
- Pizza boxes
- Paper egg cartons
- Paper contaminated with grease, oil or other non-recyclable materials

40% of our trash is paper. About 90% of that could have been recycled.

All recyclable paper and paper products can be recycled curbside or taken to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center. Paper and paper products that cannot be recycled may be placed in the trash.

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Plastics

On plastic containers there is a small triangular symbol made of arrows, and in the middle of the triangle there is a number. The symbol, and the number contained within, helps identify the type of plastic the container is made from.

The number on the bottom of a container indicates the general category of plastic it's made from, but does not contain any information on the details of the plastic composition. Plastic containers often contain different dyes, plasticizers, UV inhibitors, softeners, and other chemicals. Those additives change the properties of the plastic and make it incompatible with other categories of plastic.

Reduce: Purchase products with the least amount of packaging. When shopping, look for opportunities to buy in bulk.

Reuse:

- Cut off the tops and bottoms of plastic milk jugs to protect young plants.
- Reuse plastic jugs for mixing fertilizer, watering plants, or craft projects.
- Store used oil in old plastic jugs.
- Yogurt containers make great pots for starting plant seedlings; just punch a few holes in the bottom for drainage.
- Use containers of any size to sort out your jewelry, extra buttons, make-up and any other items that need organization.

Recycle:

- Rinse clean, leave caps and rings attached.
- Crush to conserve space.
- Plastics #1-7 are accepted curbside and at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center.
- Plastic trays, foamed plastic such as Styrofoam, and plastic bags are not recyclable at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center. Plastic bags should be recycled at the store.

Americans use 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour. Most are thrown in the trash.

Disposal: It is **illegal** and dangerous to burn plastic.

Shoes

Reuse: Purchase used shoes and leather items at thrift stores and garage sales. Give away or sell used items.

Repair: Have old shoes and leather items repaired instead of buying new.

Disposal: Shoes and leather items **cannot** be recycled in Blue Earth County. Unusable leather goods can be thrown in the trash. Place useable shoes, purses and leather goods in collection boxes located throughout the County.

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Shopping Bags

Paper or Plastic? Both types of bags are made from natural resources and have different environmental impacts so there is no clear choice to which is preferable. The best solution is a durable, reusable (plastic, cotton or canvas) bag.

Most plastic bags are recycled into composite lumber.

Reduce:

- Cotton or canvas bags can be reused many times. Some grocery stores will even give you a few cents back if you bring your own bag.
- Only take a bag if you need it. If you have one or two small items, consider carrying them instead.

Reuse:

- Reuse plastic bags. Wash them as necessary or use them to pick up after your dog.
- Some thrift stores will let you donate used plastic or paper bags.
- Paper bags can be used to wrap packages, as book covers, or to put your newspaper in for recycling.

Recycle: Many stores take back plastic shopping bags for recycling. The Blue Earth County Recycling Center does **not** recycle plastic bags.

Smoke Detectors

There are two types of smoke detectors, photoelectric and ionizing. Ionizing detectors contain a small amount of radioactive materials.

Reduce: When purchasing a new smoke detector, check the label and purchase a photoelectric detector.

Disposal: Smoke detectors should be wrapped in a plastic bag and disposed of in the trash.

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Styrofoam ®

Styrofoam is used in cups, trays, and packaging materials. Styrofoam **cannot** be recycled in Blue Earth County.

Reuse: Styrofoam packing peanuts can be reused at home for storing or moving fragile items. If you don't know anyone who can use them, call the Blue Earth County Environmental Services 24-Hour Hotline at (507) 304-4242 and leave a message to find a person who will reuse them.

Disposal:

- Distinguish between polystyrene and starch-based packing peanuts. Starch-based packing peanuts dissolve in water, which is a good way to dispose of them if they cannot be reused.
- Put non-reusable Styrofoam and polystyrene cups, trays, and packaging materials in the trash.

Toys

Reduce:

- Buy fewer commercial toys.
- Encourage younger children to play with items around the house, such as pots and pans or plastic containers.
- Encourage older children to play outdoors or share toys with friends.

Reuse:

- Donate unwanted toys in good condition to charities, friends, relatives and day-care centers.
- Sell them at garage sales or thrift stores.

Disposal: Toys may be placed in the trash.

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Disposal and Recycling Guide for Electronics

Cell Phones

Although small, cell phones contain hazardous materials. There are many options for recycling and reusing cell phones.

Follow these steps before reusing or recycling your cell phone:

- Remove personal data such as phone number or emails
- Deactivate service
- Fully discharge the battery
- Turn the power off

Recycle: Cell phones and PDAs can be taken to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center for **free**. Most cell phone carriers (Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, etc.) offer trade-in programs for old cell phones. For other options, click on the

For every one million cell phones recycled, 75 lbs of gold, 772 lbs of silver, 33 lbs of palladium, and 35,274 lbs of copper can be recovered.

Computers, Televisions, and Other Electronics

Electronic waste, or e-waste, is any waste that has a circuit board or a cathode ray tube (CRT). This includes products such as:

- Televisions
- Computers: central processing units (CPUs), monitors, laptops
- Computer keyboards, speakers, printers, other peripherals
- VCRs and DVD players
- Fax machines and copiers
- Game consoles
- Media players
- Other audio, video, telecommunication equipment

The average lifespan of personal computers has fallen from 4.5 years in 1992 to an estimated 2 years in 2005.

Reduce: Choose items with a long product life in order to create less waste in the long run.

Reuse: Whether you have replaced a product with a newer version or simply do not use it anymore, try to find someone who would use it. Give the item to a friend or family member, or donate it to a local organization.

Recycle: Most electronics can be taken to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center for a fee. It is **illegal** to throw televisions or any video display device in the trash. Businesses must recycle all electronics.

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Disposal and Recycling Guide for Lawn and Fertilizer

Fertilizer

There are two general types of fertilizer products:

Fertilizer without pesticides: These are products that contain only plant nutrients and do not require special disposal.

Fertilizer with pesticides: Those products containing pesticides are labeled with words such as “pre-emergent”, “weed preventer”, “weed and feed”, “plus 2”, “insect control”, “disease control”, etc. These products should **not** be thrown in the trash and should be disposed of as Pesticides.

- **Fertilize in the fall.** Mid- to late-October is the best time to fertilize your lawn. At this time of year, fertilizer nutrients, including nitrogen, are taken up and stored in the plant where they help provide for healthy spring growth. Most fertilizers require water after application; follow the instructions on the label to ensure best results.

Reduce:
- Have your soil tested to determine your fertilizer needs.
- Use the smallest amount of fertilizer needed to do the job. Using too much may burn plant roots, make the plant more susceptible to disease and insect damage, and increase the chance of fertilizer run-off.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to reduce the need for fertilizer application during the growing season.
- Follow application instructions and use up all fertilizer products

Reuse:
- Give extra fertilizer in its original container to someone who may need it.
- Be sure to apply fertilizer only on the targeted plants. If granules fall on hard surfaces like streets, driveways, or sidewalks, sweep them up for reuse. Fertilizer run-off ends up in our local lakes, ponds, and rivers, causing excessive growth of algae.

Disposal:
- Use it up if you can.
- Bring **household fertilizer** with pesticides to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.
- For information on how to dispose of **agricultural fertilizer** contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture at 1-800-657-3986.

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Pesticides

Pesticides can make people and animals sick. Pesticides should never be thrown in the trash, regardless of what pest the product is designed to kill – insects (insecticides), weeds (herbicides), fungus (fungicide), or small household pests (rodenticides).

Reduce:

- Control weeds by maintaining a thick, healthy lawn and by mulching your garden.
- Mow your grass to a height of 2 ½ to 3 inches. By keeping your grass a little longer, the roots grow deeper and can reach more water during dry periods. Longer grass also helps shade the soil surface, making it harder for weeds to get established.
- Use hand tools to remove weeds or decide to live with a few weeds in your lawn.
- Use corn gluten meal for crabgrass control.
- Choose plants that are resistant to disease and insects, remove diseased plant debris and weeds that harbor insects, and plant a wide variety of plants in your landscape.
- Follow pesticide application instructions.
- Store food, garbage, bird seed, and grass seed in tightly sealed containers to keep away hungry pests.
- Take garbage out of the house often and always keep the lid closed on trash cans.
- Clean up food spills immediately.
- Caulk cracks and weatherstrip windows and doors to eliminate easy paths of entry for pests. Check your foundation for cracks or spaces.
- Buy less-toxic pesticides.

Disposal:

- Homeowners can take unused pesticides to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.
- Small amounts of agricultural pesticides from Blue Earth County farmers are accepted free of charge on days the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility is open to the public. For larger loads, please make an appointment by calling (507) 304-4381. Farmers from outside Blue Earth County should call their County Solid Waste office.

Yard Waste

Reduce:

- Trim trees and bushes often. Don't let unwanted growth get out of hand. Smaller growth means less waste and lower disposal costs.
- Mow your lawn regularly to keep the clippings short and leave them on the lawn to help feed the lawn and make it healthier.
- Leaves and grass clippings can be used as mulch in gardens and flower beds to reduce weeds, nourish the soil, and retain moisture.

Reuse: Backyard composting is a good way to reduce the amount of food you throw away, as many types of food scraps, along with leaves and yard waste trimmings, can be combined in your backyard compost bin to create a valuable soil additive for your lawn and garden.

Food waste that CAN be composted:

- Vegetable and fruit scraps, rinds, and peels
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Tea leaves and tea bags
- Egg shells
- Nut shells
- Plant trimmings
- Grass and leaves

If your composting starts to smell, add more dried leaves and grasses, used coffee grounds, or shredded newspapers.

Do NOT compost fats or animal products:

- Butter, cheese, or dairy products
- Meats or bones
- Gravies or sauces
- Pet waste
- Seeds
- Walnut tree leaves (these contain a substance that inhibits growth in other plants)

Food waste items that cannot be composted can be thrown in the trash. Cooking oil and grease is accepted at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. For more information on composting techniques, contact Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Disposal:

- Contact your city or waste hauler for options and material preparations for curbside pick-up.
- Drop off your yard waste, branches, and brush at the SMC Compost Site or other compost sites.
- Branches and brush may **not** go to the Ponderosa Landfill or into your trash.

Disposal and Recycling Guide for Automotive and Recreation

Aerosol Cans

Reduce: Buy products in pump spray containers rather than aerosols. Some pump containers can be refilled.

Reuse: Aerosol cans are not reusable. They contain propellants that may be harmful. Pump spray containers can be reused (if thoroughly cleaned) for other things such as misting plants.

Recycle: Bring aerosol cans to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility where they will be recycled properly.

Disposal: All aerosol cans whether empty or not should be taken to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. **Never** burn aerosols; they are a safety hazard. **Never** place aerosols in your recycling bin, even if you think they are empty.

Auto Fluids

Auto fluids include:

- Antifreeze
- Brake and steering fluid
- Fuel
- Gasoline and kerosene
- Transmission fluid
- Windshield washer fluid

Reduce:

- Purchase only the amount you need. Use it for its intended purpose.
- Maintain your car regularly and fix any fluid leaks.
- Drive a fuel efficient vehicle.
- Use your car less. Walk, bike or carpool instead.

Disposal: Do **not** mix auto fluids with oil or other solvents. Place in a leak-proof container if the original container leaks. Auto fluids can be taken to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Auto Parts

Reuse: Find out if used or rebuilt engines or parts are available from a salvage dealer. Look for “Automobile Parts & Supplies – Used and Rebuilt” in the phone book yellow pages or search online.

Recycle: Many parts can be taken to scrap metal dealers or salvage yards.

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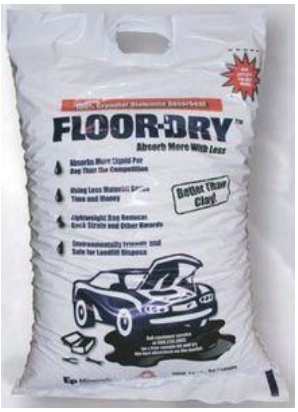
Floor Absorbent (Floor Dry)



Reuse: Many absorbents can be reused often. In most cases, discolored absorbent does not mean that the absorbent is expired.

Disposal: Safe disposal depends upon the type of absorbent and the kind of liquid that was absorbed. If hazardous waste is absorbed, it must be evaluated prior to disposal. Call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Hazardous Waste Program Development Section at 1-800-657-3864.

Fuel

Fuels are toxic, flammable and explosive. **Never** put fuel in the trash, on the ground, or down a sewer or storm drain.

Types of fuels accepted at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility:

- Gasoline and gas/oil mixtures
- Diesel fuel
- Kerosene (lantern fuel)
- Naptha or white gas (camping stove fuel)
- Butane (lighter and camping fuel)
- Sterno (used to heat food)

Reduce:

- For small engines buy only the amount of fuel you will need at that time.
- Use refillable fuel containers when possible.

Reuse:

- The best way to get rid of leftover fuel is to use it up.

Disposal:

- Store gasoline and other fuels in their original container if possible.
- Label the container with the fuel name.
- Do **not** fill the container completely. Liquid fuel needs room to expand.
- Avoid mixing fuels.
- Avoid breathing fuel fumes. Properly vent storage areas or vehicles used for transporting fuels.
- **Never** smoke around fuels.
- Unused or unusable fuels can be taken to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

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Motor Oil and Oil Filters

Disposal:

- It is **illegal** to put motor oil or oil filters in the trash.
- Store used motor oil in a sealed, labeled container.
- Do **not** mix used motor oil with antifreeze, water, gasoline, or any other fluids.
- Do **not** store used motor oil in a container previously used to store antifreeze, bleach, paint, pesticides, or any other chemicals.
- Local retailers who sell motor oil are required to accept used oil or give you information on where you can take it instead. A list of retailers that accept certain automotive wastes, including used motor oil, is available from Blue Earth County Environmental Services. Call the 24-hour Hotline at (507) 304-4242, and leave a message requesting the list.
- The Household Hazardous Waste Facility also accepts used motor oil and filters at no charge from April through October (seasonal hours).

Propane Tanks

There are two general types of propane tanks:

- Refillable tanks commonly used to run backyard grills
- Non-refillable tanks designed for use with camping stoves, lamps and torches

Reuse: Use refillable propane tanks whenever possible, or give them to a friend or neighbor who can use them.

Disposal:

- Use up all fuel before disposing of your propane tank to reduce the chance of an explosion.
- **Never** throw away or attempt to puncture a propane tank or other compressed gas cylinder. Tanks that no longer produce a flame still contain enough flammable gas to cause an explosion.
- Call the retailer where you purchased your propane tank, and inquire about “take back” or other recycling options.
- The Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility accepts propane tanks.

If you have an **underground fuel storage tank** that you wish to dispose of, call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for information on disposing of it properly.

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Tires

Reduce:

- Follow proper tire maintenance recommendations, including inflation, balancing, and rotating.
- Avoid quick acceleration or braking that could cause premature wear.

Recycle:

- It is **illegal** to burn tires, throw them in the garbage, or dump them along the roadside.
- Avoid stockpiling tires to reduce the chance of water collecting in the tire and breeding mosquitoes.
- Local tire dealers recycle old tires. Most tire dealers will accept tires for a fee, even if you did not buy new tires from them. To receive a list of retailers that accept tires, leave a message at the Blue Earth County Environmental Services 24-hour Hotline by calling (507) 304-4242.
- Tires can be taken to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center or Ponderosa Landfill for a fee.

Shredded recycled tires can be turned into basketball courts, shoe parts, asphalt, and rubber landscape mulch that reduce the use of other natural resources.

Disposal and Recycling Guide for Home Improvement and Construction

Adhesives

Types of adhesives include:

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- Glues
- Caulking compounds
- Epoxy resins
- Pastes
- Joint fillers
- Wood putty
- Grout
- Spackling compounds
- Rubber cement

Reduce:

- Buy only as much as you need for your project.
- Try to purchase the least toxic adhesive needed for your project.
- Water soluble adhesives are the most environmentally-friendly.

Consider renovating an existing house rather than building a new one. Where possible, downsize space, but make it open and more flexible.

Reuse: Save and use adhesives for future projects. Use them up, or give unused adhesives to a contractor or someone else who can use them.

Disposal:

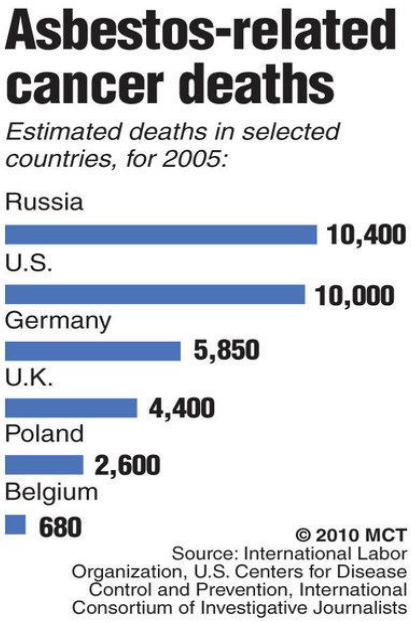
- Water-based glues (like white school glue) can be placed in the trash.
- Epoxies and any adhesives that are flammable, corrosive, poisonous, or contain any petroleum distillates, should be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Asbestos

Asbestos was used in building construction (in items such as shingles, siding, insulation, and linoleum) as fire-proofing until the mid 1980's when it was found to be harmful to human health. The primary concern with handling asbestos is exposure to airborne fibers. These fibers, if inhaled, can cause lung damage or cancer.

Disposal: Asbestos is accepted at the *Ponderosa Landfill. Before you start an asbestos removal project, call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Asbestos Hotline at 1-800-657-3864.

***When contained in 6 mil plastic bags. (Two 3-mil bags do not constitute a 6 mil bag. Call the Ponderosa Landfill at 507-625-7301 for instructions).**



Building Materials

Reduce: Measure your construction project carefully so you have as little waste as possible.

Reuse: Consider donating material to school theater groups or organizations such as Habitat for Humanity.

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Recycle: Separate items such as metal, clean (untreated) wood, and clean corrugated cardboard. These items can be recycled, which costs less than disposal.

Disposal:

- Building materials **cannot** be burned.
- Materials such as concrete, sheetrock/drywall, wood, plastic, metal, insulation, roofing/shingles, siding, bricks, etc. can be taken to the Ponderosa Landfill or the SMC Demfill.

The following items may contain chemicals that are **unsafe** in the SMC Demfill. **Separate them from other materials before disposal.**

- Tar and adhesives
- Carpet
- Tires
- Garbage
- Paint
- Caulking Tubes
- Appliances
- Treated wood (plywood, particle board, or green lumber)

In Minnesota, 75% of building materials thrown away could be recycled or reused.

If the above items are not separated from building materials, you may pay a fine for an improperly sorted load or a higher fee if the entire load has to be disposed of as garbage.

Carpet

Reduce:

- Purchase durable carpets, or buy carpet and padding made from post-consumer recycled materials.
- Consider using carpet squares as an alternative. When an area is worn or damaged, the area can easily be replaced with new squares.
- Clean your carpets often to reduce the need to replace them. Rent carpet cleaning equipment of hire a professional carpet cleaning service.

Utilize building techniques that generate less waste and use fewer resources. Check out advanced framing techniques and new ways to insulate.

Reuse: Reuse carpet for floors in cars, trucks, boats, fishing houses, cabins, and utility rooms.

Disposal: Carpet can be disposed of at the Ponderosa Landfill.

Caulk and Caulking Tubes

Caulk and caulking tubes should be separated from building materials.

Disposal: Caulk should be disposed of at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. If the containers are completely empty and dry, they may be thrown in the trash.

Demolition Debris

Waste resulting from the demolition of buildings, roads, driveways, and other structures may include:

- Concrete
- Brick
- Bituminous
- Untreated wood
- Masonry
- Glass
- Trees
- Rock
- Insulation
- Drywall
- Plastic building parts

Demolition debris does **not** include the following:

- Asbestos waste
- Caulking tubes
- Tires
- Appliances
- Paint cans
- Tar and adhesives buckets
- Carpet
- Other wastes that may contaminate groundwater

Disposal: Demolition Debris **cannot** be burned. Demolition debris can be taken to the SMC Demfill or the Ponderosa Landfill.

Dirt Fill

Clean fill consists of dirt, sand, rocks, and similar naturally occurring materials. Clean fill is **not** considered a waste.

If it is **contaminated with oil**, it is considered a Spill.

If it is **contaminated with concrete or other wastes**, it should be handled separately.

For more information, call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency at 1-800-657-3864.

Seek out and employ designers, builders, or remodelers who are aware of and committed to environmentally friendly, sustainable building approaches.

Latex Paint

Reduce:

- Carefully measure the space to be painted and determine how many coats of paint are needed before purchasing paint.
- Calculate how much paint to buy. Generally, purchase **1 gallon of paint for every 400 square feet** of area to paint. Ask your paint retailer for additional help.

- Visit the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility's Product Reuse Center for **free paint**.

Reuse:

- Do **not** allow latex paint to freeze. Latex paint should be stored in a dry area above 40˚ F. Do **not** keep paint in an unheated garage.
- Keep leftover paint free of contaminants such as mold and rust. Put a sheet of plastic wrap over the can before putting on the lid to keep out rust.
- Keep leftover paint in the original container, with a tight lid on it.
- Give unwanted leftover paint to school theater groups or Habitat for Humanity.

Avoid toxic materials like conventional glues, solvents and paints, which have high levels of volatile compounds (VOCs). VOCs are what make paint smell.

Disposal:

- Take unwanted latex paint to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. For current PaintCare locations that take paint, visit www.paintcare.org/drop-off-sites.
- Empty paint cans may be thrown in the trash. Make sure the lid is off and the can is empty and dry.
- Paint rollers and brushes that are not reusable may be dried out and placed in the trash.

Oil-Based Paint, Stain and Varnish

Reduce:

- Consider the advantages of using water-based (latex) paints and stains. Using them eliminates the need for solvents, lessens exposure to potentially harmful vapors, and reduces the amount of toxins in your home.
- Carefully measure the space to be painted.
- Check the label on the can to determine how many coats of paint are needed.
- Calculate how much paint to buy. Generally, purchase **1 gallon of paint for every 400 square feet** of area to paint. Ask your paint retailer for additional help.
- Visit the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility's Product Reuse Center for **free paint**.

Before, during, and after construction, protect the environment around your home. Take care to disturb the ground as little as possible. Use as little concrete and asphalt as possible to avoid runoff. Create a water catchment system to catch rainwater for use in landscaping and gardens.

Disposal:

- Take oil-based paint, stain, and varnish to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.
- **Never** put oil-based paint, stain, or varnish in the trash, on the ground, or down a sewer or storm drain.

Oil-based products typically require the use of thinner or other solvents for cleaning. Solvents can be flammable and/or toxic, and should never be thrown away, poured down the drain or dumped on the ground. For more information, click on Paint Thinners and Solvents.

Paint Thinners and Solvents

Common solvents include:

- Paint thinner, remover and stripper
- Nail polish remover
- Rubbing/wood alcohol
- Spot and stain removers
- Gasoline additives
- De-icers
- Mineral spirits

Reduce:

- To reduce the need for thinners and solvents, choose water-based (latex) alternatives when buying paint, stain or varnish. Clean-up requires only soap and water.
- To protect your air quality, choose products that produce less toxic vapors. Ask retailers about products with lower levels of volatile organic compounds (low VOCs).

Disposal:

- Avoid breathing vapors. Carefully ventilate work areas, storage spaces and vehicles when transporting solvents.
- Do **not** mix solvents.
- Do **not** fill containers full; solvents need room to expand.
- **Never** smoke near solvents.
- Store solvents in a labeled container away from children or pets.
- Store solvents away from flames, sparks, or heat sources, such as a furnace, boiler, or water heater.
- Store and transport solvents in sealed containers.
- Solvents can be flammable and/or toxic, and should **never** be thrown away, poured down the drain or dumped on the ground.
- Bring unused or unusable paint thinners or solvents to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Consumer demand influences the products retailers carry. Let your retailers know you want sustainable, healthy, environmentally sound products. Ask for products with recycled or salvaged content, low or no toxic chemicals, and items made from renewable materials such as bamboo, wheat straw, and other natural materials.

Scrap Metal

Scrap metal can be a valuable material that can be recycled to create new products.

Disposal:

- Many scrap yards will accept a wide variety of metals, from aluminum cans to siding. They may also store equipment or parts you may need. However, many of the materials accepted by scrap yards in the past are now considered special or hazardous wastes. Items such as appliances, fuel tanks, tires, and automobiles now require special handling to prevent pollution.

- Find scrap yards and salvage operations in the phone book yellow pages under “Scrap Metals” or “Recycling Centers”, or search online.

Treated Wood

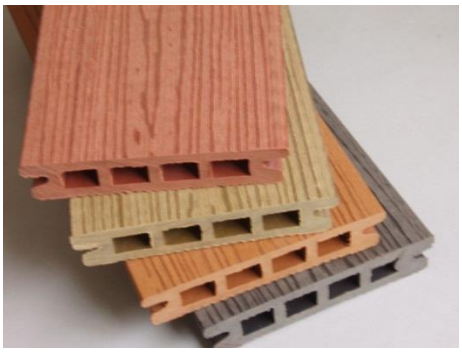
Treated lumber is saturated with chemical preservatives that inhibit fungal decay and extend the life of wood, but some of the chemicals used are toxic.

Reduce: Consider treated wood alternatives for your next outdoor construction project. Ask your lumber yard or home repair retailer for non-toxic treated wood alternatives.

By purchasing products made locally or regionally, you are supporting the local economy and reducing energy use. Durable products help reduce waste, pollution, and resource consumption.

Safer alternatives include:

- Redwood and Cedar, which are naturally resistant to pests and rot
- Salvaged wood
- Wood-plastic composite materials
- Recycled plastic decking and construction boards
- Stone and metal products
- Wood treated with less toxic chemicals, such as ammoniacal copper quarternary (ACQ), copper azole, or ammoniacal copper citrate.



For more information, click on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s Treated Wood: Use, Disposal and Alternatives for Consumers fact sheet.

Disposal:

- **Never** burn any type of treated, stained, or painted wood in stoves, fireplaces, or recreational or cooking fires. The emissions and ash are toxic and very harmful, especially to children and pets.
- **Never** put treated wood sawdust in your compost pile or bin or on the ground.
- Avoid breathing sawdust from treated wood.
- Seal existing treated wood structures every two years with a penetrating sealant to prevent release of toxins.
- Treated wood and treated plywood should be taken to the Ponderosa Landfill.

Blue Earth County Disposal / Recycling Facilities and Programs

Animals

Dead animals can be picked up by a rendering service or composted on site. Look up "Rendering Companies" in the phone book yellow pages or search online. For information on composting animals, visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture website at www.mda.state.mn.us or call the MDA at 1-800-657-3986.

Burning

Burning garbage has been **illegal** in Minnesota since 1969.

We live in the country but aren't farmers. Why shouldn't we burn garbage? We've been doing it for years.
We now know that many ordinary items such as paper products, painted items, and brightly colored plastics contain harmful compounds such as cadmium, mercury, lead, and dioxins which are not properly controlled by open burning. Chemicals in the ash get into the air and can create health and environmental risks.

But if I take my garbage to the MWPC Transfer Station it gets burned at the Wilmarth Waste to Energy Facility anyway. What's the difference?
The Wilmarth Waste to Energy Facility utilizes careful combustion practices to maximize destruction of potential contaminants. Additionally, it has pollution control devices to control harmful air emissions. The facility is strictly regulated by state and federal law. The heat produced from burning garbage also creates steam for electricity. The ash from Wilmarth goes into a landfill designed especially for ash only (called a monofill). It is built to prevent groundwater pollution.

But what do I do with my garbage?
Reduce, reuse, and recycle all that you can. The rest can be collected by a licensed hauler or you can take it to the appropriate facility yourself.

5 Reasons Why You Should NOT Burn Your Garbage

1. **It's been illegal to burn garbage in Minnesota since 1969.** State law does allow some farmers to burn their garbage, but not rural residents. Farmers may not burn plastics or most other household items.
2. **One burn barrel creates 80 times more pollution than an industrial incinerator.** Burn barrels have low-temperature fires, and no emission control equipment.
3. **Burning garbage creates carcinogens.** Dioxins and many other chemicals are produced when garbage is burned. These chemicals cause cancer and other health problems.
4. **Burning garbage poisons our food.** With no smoke stack, smoke (and the chemicals in it) doesn't travel far. It lands on your garden, farm fields, and on the food animals eat.
5. **It stinks! Enough said!**

Environmental Enforcement and Hauler Licensing

- Call the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office by dialing 911 with **complaints about illegal dumping of garbage**.
- For questions about **licensing of garbage haulers**, or to receive a list of licensed haulers, call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381 or visit www.blueearthcountymn.gov

Farm Disposal

- Farmers are people actively engaged in the business of raising crops or livestock. Farmers (no other person) can burn or bury their own waste on their own land **ONLY** if it is done in a nuisance-free, pollution-free, and aesthetic manner. With the make up of today's garbage, that is nearly impossible to accomplish.
- A farmer **cannot** burn or bury waste from another household or business. Minnesota law prohibits farmers from burning or burying lead acid batteries, appliances, hazardous waste, household batteries, used motor oil and oil filters, tires, or recyclable items. In addition, plastics **cannot** be burned except plastic baling twine.
- If you, as a farmer, decide to burn or bury your waste, restrict access and design your operation to reduce pollution. Call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for information on how to safely manage waste on your farm. An environmentally preferred alternative would be to take your garbage to the Ponderosa Landfill or the MWPC Transfer Station, or hire a licensed hauler. Perhaps you could share hauler services with a neighbor.

Feedlots

Owners of feedlots with 10 or more animal units are required to complete a feedlot permit application whenever any of the following conditions occur:

- A new feedlot is constructed
- A feedlot is expanded or modified
- A change in ownership takes place
- An existing feedlot is restocked after being abandoned for more than 12 months
- An inspection by Blue Earth County Environmental Services staff or Minnesota Pollution Control Agency staff reveals that the feedlot is creating a potential pollution hazard.

Permit applications can be obtained from Blue Earth County Environmental Services, 507-304-4381.

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Garbage Collection and Disposal

One out of every 6 trucks in the U.S. is a garbage truck.

Blue Earth County residents can choose to hire a hauler or haul their own garbage to a permitted facility. These facilities have safeguards in place which reduce pollution and limit liabilities for potential future clean-up.

I don't pay for disposal now, why should I bring my garbage to a facility and pay for throwing it away?
Although garbage may look harmless, if disposed of improperly, it can cause pollution of air, soil, and drinking water. Since citizens are liable for the clean-up of environmental damages caused by their "regular" garbage, they should bring it to a facility that meets state and federal environmental protection standards. It is **illegal** to bury or burn your garbage unless you are a farmer.

Reduce: By recycling, composting, and preventing waste, you will have less garbage and use fewer natural resources. Because Blue Earth County garbage haulers offer fees based on the amount you throw away, you should also have lower garbage disposal costs. You could also share garbage services with a neighbor to save money.

Disposal:

- Check the phone book yellow pages under "Garbage Collection" for hauler choices, or search online. Be sure to ask them about volume-based pricing and if they are licensed in Blue Earth County.
- If you do not have garbage collection service available, or your hauler will not pick up large items, you may take them directly to the MWPC Transfer Station or to the Ponderosa Landfill. Call the Blue Earth County Environmental Services 24-hour Hotline at (507) 304-4242 for more information.

Hazardous Waste

The first rule about hazardous products is to avoid them or use them up for their intended purpose. Improper use or disposal can be harmful to human health and the environment.

Generally, if the container says any of the following words, it probably contains hazardous chemicals:

- Danger
- Poison
- Warning
- Corrosive
- Contains acid
- Contains petroleum distillates
- Causes burns to skin
- Caution
- Flammable
- Toxic
- Combustible
- Contains lye

Disposal: Do **not** place hazardous wastes in your trash. They should be disposed of properly by taking them to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

HOME

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility will accept household hazardous waste for **free** from residents of **Blue Earth, Nicollet, Le Sueur, and Sibley Counties**. This service is for **households** only. Click on Hazardous Waste for more information.

Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility

651 Summit Avenue, Mankato

April – October
Tuesdays: Noon – 6 PM
Second Saturday of each month: 8 AM – 12:30 PM

For more information, call the Blue Earth County Environmental Services 24-hour Hotline at (507) 304-4242.

These are some of the products accepted at the HHW Facility:

Household Products

- Aerosol cans
- Aluminum cleaners
- Ammonia-based cleaners
- Bug/insect sprays
- Cooking oil
- Degreasers
- Floor care products
- Furniture polish
- Household cleaners
- Metal polish
- Oven cleaners
- Paints
- Window cleaners

Automotive and Garage

- Adhesives
- Antifreeze
- Battery acids
- Car waxes
- Caulking compounds
- Charcoal lighter fluid
- Diesel fuel
- Fuel oils
- Gasoline
- Glues
- Kerosene
- Mineral spirits
- Motor oil
- Oil filters
- Paint thinners
- Roofing tars
- Solvents
- Turpentine
- Vehicle batteries
- Wood preservatives

Miscellaneous

- Artists' paint and mediums
- Button batteries
- Decorative light strings
- Dry cleaning solvents
- Extension cords
- Fertilizers
- Fiberglass epoxies
- Fire extinguishers
- Fluorescent bulbs
- Lawn/garden products
- Lighter fluids
- Moth balls
- Photographic chemicals
- Propane tanks up to 20 lbs.
- Rat poisons
- Rechargeable batteries
- Swimming pool acids
- Thermometers (Mercury)
- Thermostats
- Weed killers

Not Acceptable:

- Unknown or unidentifiable products
- Explosives
- Medical wastes
- Radioactive materials
- Business, commercial and institutional wastes

Check out the Product Reuse Center for free paint and other materials.

Getting It There

- Keep products in the original containers with labels in place if possible. Place in a leak-proof container if original container leaks.
- Do not mix different products together.
- Prevent "tip over" while transporting.
- Avoid contact with materials while handling.
- Keep products out of the hot sun, and do not allow them to freeze.

HOME

Litter

Littering in any public area is **illegal** and a misdemeanor in Minnesota. The law reads:

> *"Whoever unlawfully deposits garbage, rubbish, or the body of a dead animal, or other litter in or upon any public highway, public waters or shoreland areas adjacent to rivers or streams, public lands, or without the consent of owners, private lands, or water or ice thereon, is guilty of a misdemeanor."*

Ponderosa Landfill

PO Box 3204
20028 Gooseberry Lane (formerly Co. Rd. 34)
Mankato, MN

The Ponderosa Landfill is a state-of-the-art land disposal facility meeting or exceeding environmental protection requirements of Minnesota and federal laws. It features a lined fill-area, with leachate and gas collection and treatment systems designed to protect groundwater.

In 1996, Blue Earth County purchased the Ponderosa as a component of its Integrated Waste Management System, and to provide long-term disposal opportunities for waste which cannot be processed or managed in more beneficial ways. The Ponderosa's role in the integrated system is to receive residuals left after processing.

Hours

May – October
Monday – Friday: 8 AM – 4:30 PM
Saturday: 8 AM – 3 PM

November – April
Monday - Friday: 8 AM – 4 PM
Saturday: 8 AM – Noon

Phone: (507) 625-7301
Fax: (507) 625-2775

The County encourages the use of this system to process waste through use of the MWPC Transfer Station whenever possible. Between waste processing and proper management of waste at the landfill, the County seeks to reduce liability risks for all who use the Ponderosa Landfill for waste disposal.

The Ponderosa Landfill is permitted to accept mixed municipal waste, some industrial wastes, and contaminated soils. Wastes not permitted include any hazardous waste, liquid waste, or yard waste.

Examples of wastes that may NOT be placed in the Ponderosa Landfill:

- Paints
- Oil filters
- Yard and garden wastes
- Liquid wastes
- Aerosol cans
- Motor oil
- Yard or farm chemicals
- Hot loads
- Vehicle batteries
- Hazardous waste of any kind
- Medical or infectious wastes
- Tires*
- Appliances*
- Electronics from businesses*
- Residential video display devices*

*Tires, appliances, and electronics are accepted to be recycled for an extra fee. Please separate these from the rest of your load.

Ponderosa Landfill (continued)

The following is a guide to how the public can make use of the new Customer Service and Recycling Building:

Please be sure your loads are tarped or covered when you come to the Ponderosa Landfill. It is against the law to have loose loads that could fly off your truck or trailer.

Upon arriving at the Ponderosa Landfill:

1. **Pull onto the Scale** until you reach the speaker on your left. The scale operator will ask questions, then give you instructions, & when ready, you will get the "green light" to pull off the scale.
2. **Proceed to Building**. Most general public loads will be directed to take their load into the building. To do this, turn RIGHT when you get off the scale & follow road.
3. **Wait your Turn**. If there are vehicles inside dropping off waste, the door may be closed. Please wait until the door opens to enter building. If the door is open and several vehicles are already inside, please wait outside until there is room to safely enter.
4. **NO SMOKING in the building.** Fire is a serious problem for waste facilities. Please do not smoke in the building or in your car while you are in the building.
5. **Waste Drop-off Areas.** Inside the building there are several different areas for waste materials. An attendant is usually available to answer your questions. Please get assistance before unloading waste to ensure it is put in the correct area. The following areas are currently available: Mattress drop-off area, Materials re-use area, Mixed Recycling, Garbage, Scrap metal, and the Special Wastes area (tires/appliances/electronics)
6. **Exit the Building**. Pull straight ahead and exit the large door on the east side of the building.
7. **Weigh Out**. Drive around to the right and drive across the scale from the same direction you entered the first time. Pull up to the speaker and wait for the attendant to tell you to proceed and with a green light.
8. **Pay your Bill**. Drive off the scale and turn sharply to the right. You can drive past the drive-up window and pay your bill. The weight of your load is determined by subtracting the empty weight of your vehicle from the full weight taken when you drove across the first time.
    a. The price of disposal is based on the weight of your material. It also includes extra charges for special waste items, such as tires, appliances, electronics and mattresses.
    b. For most waste, the State of Minnesota adds a 17% tax.
9. **Claim your prize.** If you saw something in the Material Re-Use area you wanted, now is the time to pick it up. Park your car and contact the attendant to assist you in picking up your item.

Ponderosa Pricing:

Cash Customers

- Loads are charged 3 cents per pound
- Minnesota State tax on garbage is 17% (Blue Earth County does not charge taxes on disposal)
- Minimum charge of $3.00 per load

The scale at the Ponderosa Landfill more accurately measures the waste received. As of October 2000, all loads are charged by weight rather than volume.

Charge Customers

- Commercial MSW loads are charged $45.00 per ton
- Minnesota State tax on garbage is 17% (Blue Earth County does not charge taxes on disposal)
- Minimum charge of $5.00 per load

Bulky Waste Prices (prices include tax)

- Box spring $9.36
- Mattress $9.36
- Sofa $9.36
- Recliner $9.36
- Bulky item with mixed load $5.85

For Bulky Items brought separately, or in a segregated (Bulky Item) load, the customer will not be charged for the weight of the item, but will pay the per unit charge.
For Bulky Items brought in a mixed load, the item will be weighed with the mixed load, and the customer will be charged the weight of the item in addition to the Bulky Item mixed load price per unit.
If a Bulky Item is found in a mixed load on the workface, the mixed load charge will be added to the customer's account.

Industrial Waste / Special Waste

Base rates for wastes defined as Industrial or Special Waste will also be $45 per ton plus SWM Tax, as above. Prices on some of these wastes may vary according to waste characteristics, but all Industrial or Special Waste pricing will be on a per ton basis. To receive consideration for special rates on wastes defined as Industrial or Special waste, contact the Ponderosa **at least one week before waste delivery.**

Post-Consumer Recycled Content

Look for and buy products that have "post-consumer recycled content". That means that the product was made from material that we (the consumers) have recycled. Check product labels to see if they contain recycled material.

Common items that may have post-consumer recycled content include:

- Toilet tissue
- Carpeting
- Trash bags
- Reflective paint
- Notebook paper
- Computer (office) paper
- Paper towels
- Sandpaper
- School supplies
- Copy paper

Product Reuse Center

The Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility's Product Reuse Center is available at **no cost** for residents 18 years and older from Blue Earth County and participating counties. **Free usable household products such as paint, stain, adhesives, and lawn and garden products are available.** Though products on the shelves are free, there are limits to quantities that may be taken.

If you have a product that is good and usable that you cannot use up, consider giving it to a friend to use, donate it to a charity, or bring it to the Household Hazardous Waste Facility where it will be accepted at no charge.

If you need a product, check the Household Hazardous Waste Facility Product Reuse Center before buying new. It's **free**, and you can return what you don't need to the Facility.

If you must buy a product containing hazardous chemicals, buy only what you need, and use it up.

Before you buy, ask yourself:

- Do I really need this?
- Is there a safer alternative?
- Am I buying more than I need?
- Have I checked for words on the label that indicates a hazardous product?
- Can I safely store leftovers at home?
- Is this product offered in a non-aerosol form?

HOME

Recycling Center

The Blue Earth County Recycling Center is operated by Waste Management, Inc., and is located at 725 Waseca Avenue, Mankato (LeHillier area). The 24-hour drop off is for residential recycling **only**. Commercial recycling is welcome at the drive through facility free of charge.

Drive Through Hours:

Monday-Friday: 9 AM – 5 PM
Saturday: 9 AM – 1 PM
Sunday: CLOSED

24-hour drop off facility is available for most recyclables when drive through is closed.

For more information, call the Blue Earth County 24-Hour Hotline at (507) 304-4242.

Materials accepted free of charge include:

- Paper
- Metal
- Glass
- Plastic
- Textiles

Not Accepted:

- Plastic wrap, bags, or films
- Styrofoam, cups, containers, or packaging
- Ceramics, pyrex, auto or window glass, light bulbs, or drinking glasses
- Gift wrapping paper, black/dark colored paper, or tissue paper
- Shredded paper
- Egg cartons
- Tubes

A fee is charged for these materials:

- Electronics
- Automotive batteries
- Tires
- Pallets
- Major appliances

- **Household televisions and computer monitors <u>must</u> be recycled.**
- **All business electronics <u>must</u> be recycled.**

Please:

- Empty and rinse all containers.
- Flatten cardboard and boxboard.
- Cans do not need to be flattened and there is no need to remove labels.
- Do **not** remove zippers or buttons from clothing before dropping it off.

HOME

Recycling Collection

As a resident or business of Blue Earth County, you have two options:

1. You may contract with a private garbage hauler to pick up your garbage. As part of their services, they may offer you curbside recycling service. To contact a hauler about services, look in the phone book yellow pages under “Garbage Collection” or search online.

2. If you choose not to contract with a garbage hauler, you may take your recyclables to the Blue Earth Recycling Center yourself, 24 hours per day.

Sanitary Sewers / Storm Sewers

Sanitary sewers and storm sewers should only be used for their intended purpose. They should not be used as a means for chemical waste disposal.

SEMREX (SouthEast Minnesota Recyclers Exchange)

An organization comprised of public and private members that work together to promote recycling and waste reduction in Blue Earth County plus several other counties in Southern Minnesota.

Services offered include:

- Materials Exchange
- Cooperative Marketing
- Market Development

Call SEMREX for more information at (507) 328-7022.

Shopping SMART (Saving Money And Reducing Trash)

There are lots of ideas for saving money and reducing trash. When shopping, buy products with less packaging, such as:

- Purchasing a 72 oz. bag of oatmeal instead of a box with 12 individual packets reduces waste by 84% and is 72% cheaper.
- Purchasing pudding in a 5.9 oz. instant box instead of a 6-pack snack size reduces waste by 89% and is 64% cheaper.
- Purchase reusable containers to use in a lunch box.

Call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for more information at 1-800-657-3864.

HOME

SMC Compost Site and Demfill

Compost Site:
57032 231 Lane
Mankato

Demfill:
3290 3rd Avenue
Mankato

Southern Minnesota Construction operates a yard and garden compost site in Mankato. Items accepted include bags of leaves, brush, garden waste, Christmas trees, and wreaths.
Call SMC Compost for hours and fees at (507) 388-3122.

SMC also offers a demfill to accept demolition debris from the public.
Call SMC Demfill for hours and fees at (507) 388-3122.

Spills

If you are aware that petroleum products, pesticides, or other hazardous wastes have spilled or leaked into the ground or water, immediately call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Duty Officer at 1-800-422-0798.

Volume-Based Fees

- A Blue Earth County Ordinance requires licensed garbage haulers to offer volume-based fees. This means the less you throw away, the less you should pay. You should pay **less** if you set out one bin per week than if you set out three bins per week.
- Some haulers offer a “per bag” service in which you buy the bags in advance and the hauler picks up the bags when they are full. By preventing waste you can save money on collection and disposal.

Waste Reduction

- Your first option in handling your waste should always be to not produce waste in the first place. Be a SMART shopper and buy only the amounts that you need with minimal packaging.

- Any homeowner, business, school, or organization can request more information about how to reduce your waste by calling the Blue Earth County Environmental Services 24-hour hotline at (507) 304-4242.

Water Testing

- Call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381 for information.

Disposal and Recycling Quick Guide for Businesses

Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

- Antifreeze
- Appliances
- Asbestos
- Bags
- Batteries
- Caulk and Caulking Tubes
- Cell Phones
- Computers, Electronics, and Office Equipment
- Concrete and Bituminous Asphalt
- Construction Waste and Demolition Debris
- Fuel Storage Tanks
- Gas Bottles
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection
- Industrial / Commercial Waste
- Infectious Waste
- Light Bulbs
- Magazines and Newspapers
- Mercury
- Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP)
- Office Paper and Cardboard
- Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program

HOME

Antifreeze

- Businesses may **not** discharge it into a sanitary sewer system. **Never** place antifreeze in a septic system or storm drain.
- Antifreeze is considered hazardous waste and must be disposed of properly. It is **illegal** to dump antifreeze on land or with solid waste.
- Businesses are encouraged to recycle their antifreeze. For more information call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Appliances

Businesses may take old appliances to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center for a fee. If you purchase a new appliance, ask the company to recycle the old one for you.

Asbestos

Asbestos is accepted at the Ponderosa Landfill. Before you start an asbestos removal project, call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Asbestos Hotline at 1-800-657-3864.

Bags

Ask if customers need a bag or sell reusable bags stamped with your name and logo and encourage reuse. Give monetary credit to customers who bring their own bags.

Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Batteries

Call2Recycle (Call 2Recycle.org) offers a free service to retail businesses that would like to collect rechargeable batteries from their customers. Collection boxes are provided. If you would like more information about becoming a collector, contact Call2Recycle at 1-877-723-1297.

Button batteries contain mercury and **cannot** be thrown in the trash. Check with the company that supplies you with your batteries for recycling options.

Caulk and Caulking Tubes

Unless the caulk is water soluble, it should be treated as Hazardous Waste. If the containers are completely empty, they may be thrown in the regular trash.

Cell Phones

Businesses can recycle old cell phones for **free** by taking them to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center.

Computers, Electronics, and Office Equipment

Every device that contains a printed circuit board is considered and electronic device and **must** be recycled.

The Blue Earth County Recycling Center accepts the following electronics:

- Personal computer or laptop
- VCR / DVD player
- Desktop copier, fax, or printer
- Computer monitor
- TV (console or large screen)
- Hi-Fi / Stereo (includes console)
- Electronic typewriters
- Keyboards, mice, handheld devices (cell phones, PDAs)

Click here for a list of retailers and manufacturers who have electronics recycling programs.

Concrete and Bituminous Asphalt

Concrete and bituminous asphalt can be disposed of at the SMC Demfill.

Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Construction Waste and Demolition Debris

Construction waste and demolition debris can be disposed of at the SMC Demfill.

Fuel Storage Tanks

Salvage operators must notify the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency at 1-800-657-3864 if underground storage tanks are to be disturbed because the contents may be considered hazardous.

Gas Bottles

Contact your propane and LP distributors for proper disposal information.

HOME

Hazardous Waste

Some wastes that you are now handling as hazardous waste may in fact be non-hazardous Industrial Waste. Click for information about the Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program for businesses. Businesses may **NOT** use the household program.

Businesses that generate hazardous wastes must obtain an EPA identification number. Call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency at 1-800-3864 for more information.

There are ways to reduce the use of hazardous chemicals and save money in the process. To receive fact sheets or reference lists, call the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) at 1-800-247-0015, or check out their website at www.mntap.umn.edu.

Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Industrial / Commercial Waste

- If your business generates non-hazardous solid waste that is not typical of regular garbage (such as ash, dust collector fines, metal filings, paint residue, paint filters, sludges, epoxy, fiberglass, lighting fixtures, etc.), you may be producing industrial wastes. These types of waste may require special testing and handling to assure proper disposal at the lowest possible cost. These wastes may be able to be disposed of at the Ponderosa Landfill.
- Call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381 for more information or click to learn about the Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program for businesses.

Infectious Waste

Typical generators of infectious waste include clinics, hospitals, ambulance services, nursing homes, dental offices, funeral homes, care services, and veterinary services. Infectious waste **cannot** be thrown in the regular trash. It must be handled separately to protect workers and the environment.

Potential generators of infectious and pathological waste are required to contact the Minnesota Department of Health at (507) 344-2700.

HOME

Light Bulbs

Fluorescent and High Intensity Discharge (HID) bulbs contain mercury and **cannot** be thrown in the trash. There are companies that offer collection and recycling of these bulbs. For more information, contact your electric utility company or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Magazines and Newspapers

Buy one subscription and route the copy to other offices instead of having multiple subscriptions.

Magazines and newspapers can be recycled at the Blue Earth County Recycling Center.

Mercury

Businesses should treat any items containing mercury as hazardous waste. There are mercury recyclers that will take, or in some cases, pay for mercury.

Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP)

- MnTAP is a non-regulatory program based at the University of Minnesota that works with Minnesota businesses, providing technical assistance in the areas of pollution prevention, waste management, and related environmental protection activities.
- They have developed or collected material that businesses can use to reduce waste and emissions based on current industrial practices and available technology.
- Among their many services are telephone assistance, site visits, and referrals.
- For more information, call 1-800-247-0015.

HOME

Office Paper and Cardboard

Much of the paper used in businesses is recyclable. Place recycling containers throughout your workplace.

Paper items that can be recycled in the workplace include:

- All white, pastel, and colored office paper
- Mail including envelopes with windows
- Magazines, catalogs, and glossy paper
- Newspapers and inserts
- Cardboard boxes
- File folders
- Boxboard such as office supplies boxes or cereal and cracker boxes
- Frozen food boxes

Paper items that cannot be recycled in the workplace include:

- Tyvek envelopes or envelopes lined with bubble wrap
- Shredded paper
- Pizza boxes or boxes soiled with food
- Paper towels, napkins, plates, and cups
- Gift wrap, wrapping paper

Can't find what you were looking for? Click here to go to the residential Disposal and Recycling Guide or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at (507) 304-4381.

Reduce cardboard waste and long-term costs with reusable transport packaging, such as plastic totes, collapsible boxes, bins, crates, or other multiple-use options.

Recyclable office paper and cardboard can be taken to the Blue Earth County Recycling Center.

HOME

Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program

What is the VSQG Program? The Regional VSQG Program is set up to help businesses and non-profit organizations dispose of small amounts of hazardous wastes they produce. Any business generating hazardous waste must comply with state and federal rules and regulations in order to protect themselves, their employees, and the environment. This program gives businesses easy access to cost-effective means of disposal, avoiding potential environmental, financial, health, and safety problems.

Who can participate? Businesses and/or organizations which generate 660 pounds or less of hazardous waste per year and are located within the six-county region can participate in this program. The 6-county region includes **Blue Earth, Watonwan, Brown, LeSueur, Nicollet, and Sibley**. Some businesses that have accumulated hazardous wastes over several years may be eligible for a one-time clean out.

How to get started? The first step in the process is to acquire an EPA ID (Environmental Protection Agency Identification) Number. To do this, complete a Notification of Regulated Waste Activity Form according to the instructions for Waste Activity. This will register your business or organization with an EPA ID Number and qualify you to participate in the Regional VSQG Program. All (business) generators of hazardous waste are required by federal and state regulations to obtain an EPA ID Number. To receive and EPA ID Number application and/or assistance, contact your County Environmental Services Department. In Blue Earth County, call (507) 304-4381.

The following is a partial list of acceptable wastes:

- Aerosols
- Acids and Bases
- Antifreeze
- Batteries
- Cleaning Agents
- Degreasers
- Gasoline/Fuel
- Glues and Adhesives
- Laboratory Wastes
- Mercuric Wastes
- Paints (oil and latex)
- Paint Related Products
- Pesticides
- Plating Wastes
- Poisons
- Pool Chemicals
- Resins and Epoxies
- Solvents/Thinners
- Strippers
- Waste Inks
- Wood Preservatives

Not accepted:

- Explosives
- Infectious Wastes
- Radioactive Wastes
- Gas Cylinders

The Next Step. Businesses that have their EPA ID Number can receive the VSQG Information Packet from their County Environmental Services Department. This will provide instructions on how to safely package, store, transport, and manage hazardous wastes. Once all forms are completed correctly, a drop-off date will be scheduled. Waste will be accepted at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility at specific times, by pre-approval process only.

Costs to Participate. The VSQG Program offers a cost-effective method to dispose of hazardous wastes. Only direct disposal costs will be charged to businesses, while handling and administrative costs are paid for by the County. Costs are calculated depending on the type and amount of waste to be disposed. A current price list will be included in the VSQG Information Packet sent to businesses who have already obtained their EPA ID Number.

HOME

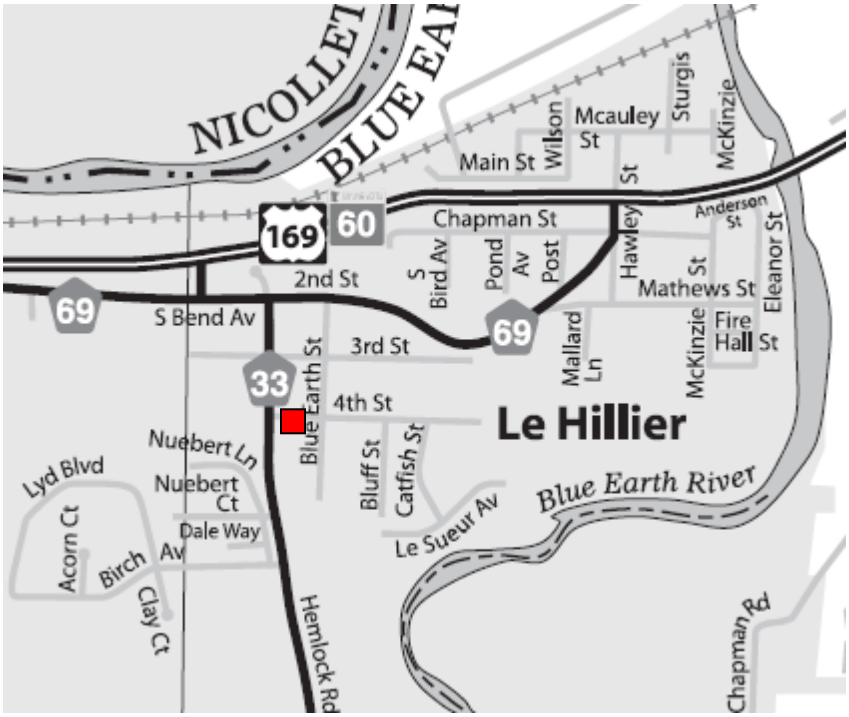
Maps

Blue Earth County Environmental Services

Government Center
410 5th St. S. – 3rd Floor
Mankato

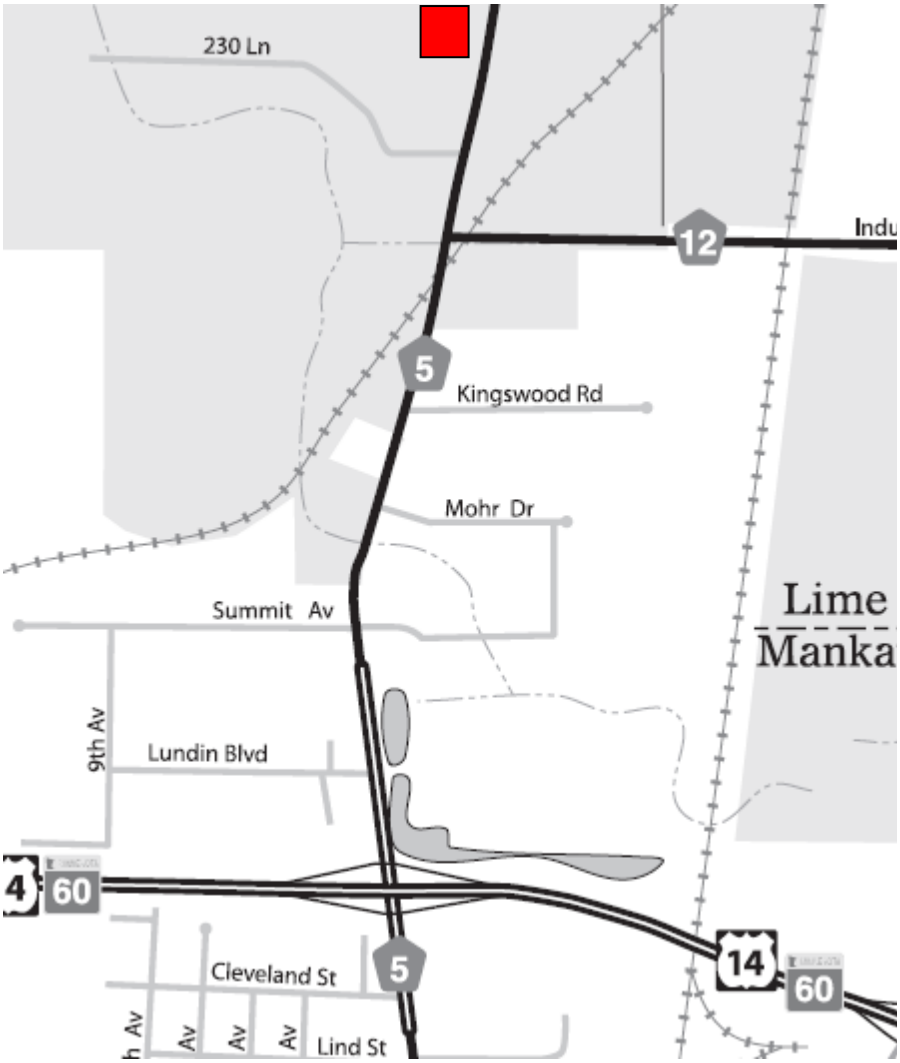
HOME

Blue Earth County Recycling Center
725 Waseca Avenue
(LeHillier Area)
Mankato



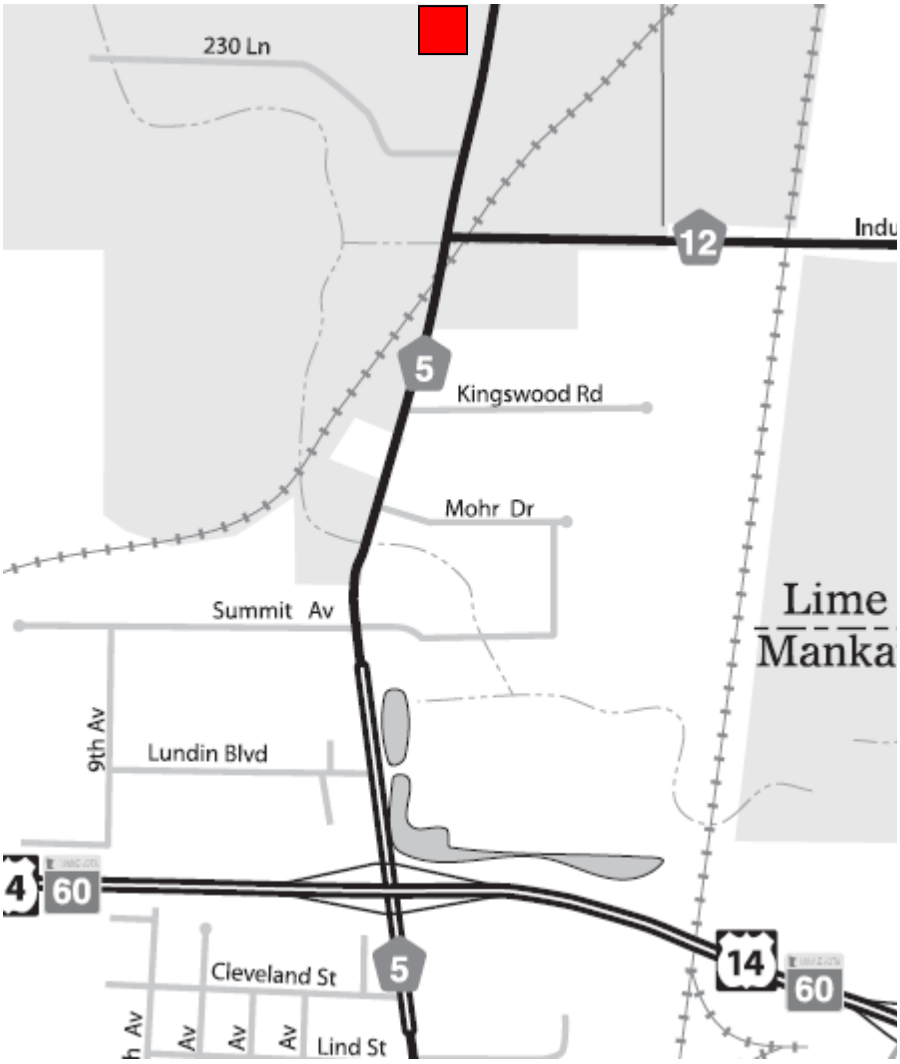
HOME

SMC Compost Site
57032 231 Lane
Mankato



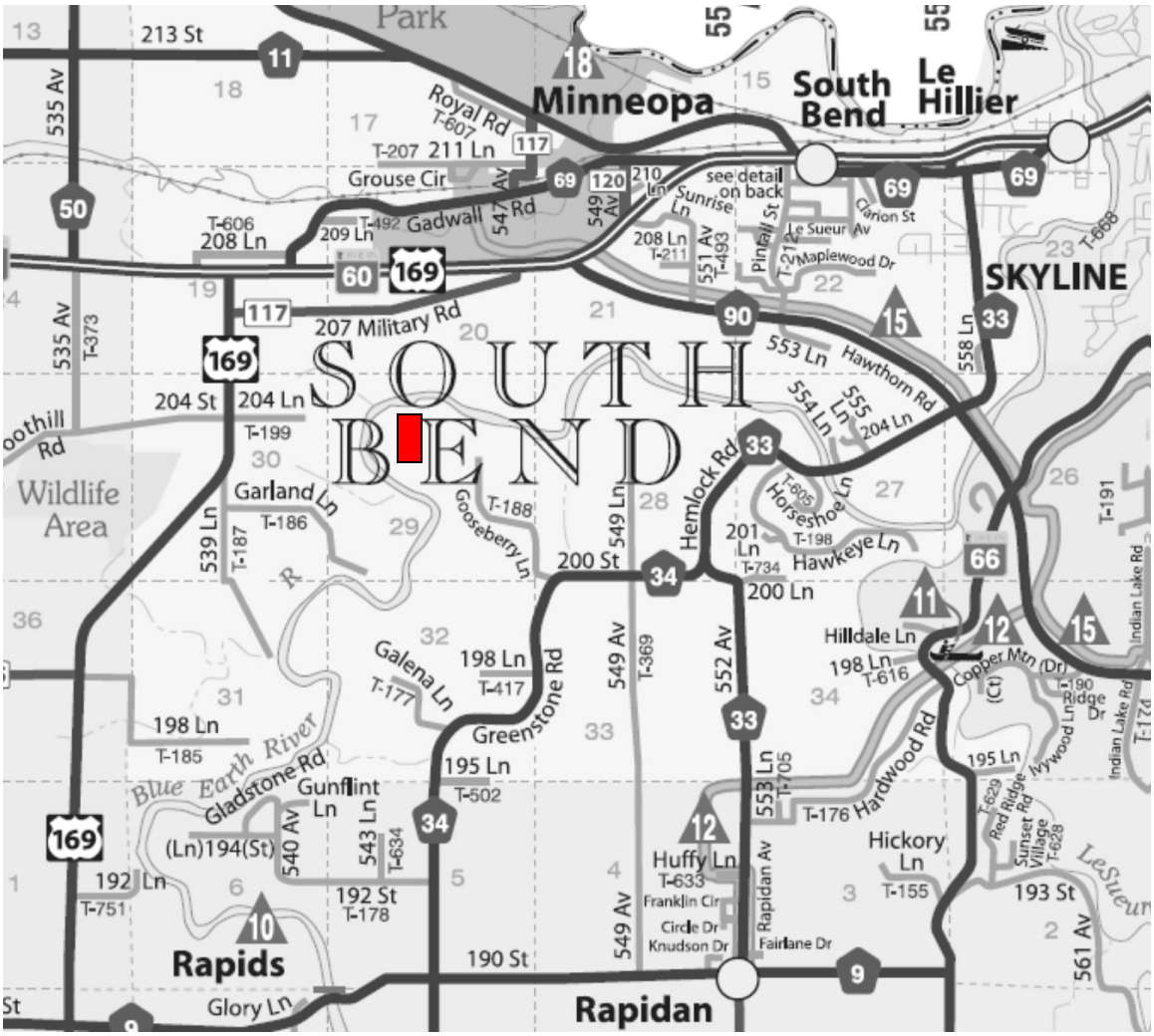
HOME

SMC Demfill
3600 3rd Avenue
Mankato



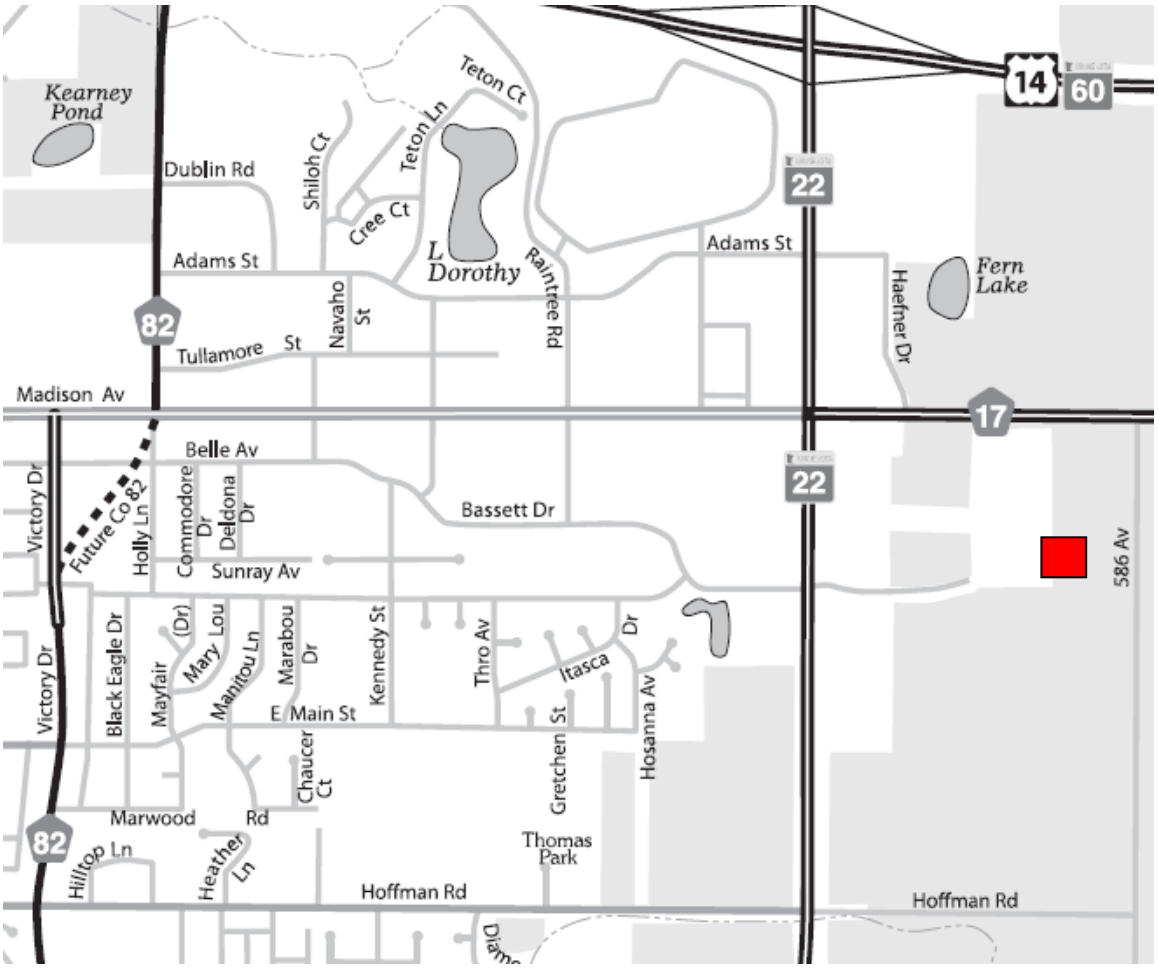
Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility, Product Reuse Center, and Blue Earth County Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program
651 Summit Avenue
Mankato

Blue Earth County Ponderosa Landfill
20028 Gooseberry Lane (Formerly Co. Rd. 34)
Mankato



HOME

Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department
401 Carver Road
Mankato



HOME

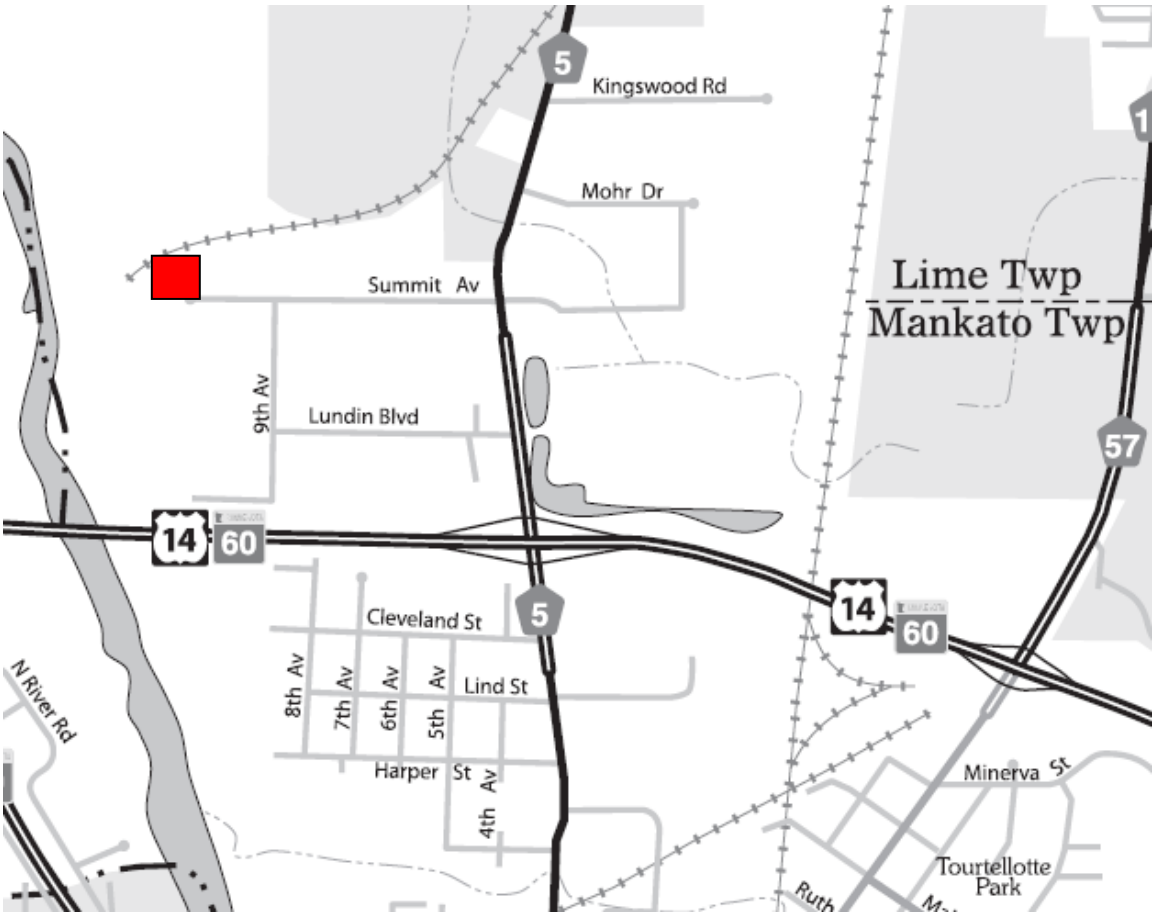
Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
12 Civic Center Plaza
Mankato

HOME

University of Minnesota Extension Service – Blue Earth
Historic Courthouse
204 S 5th St. - Suite 310
Mankato

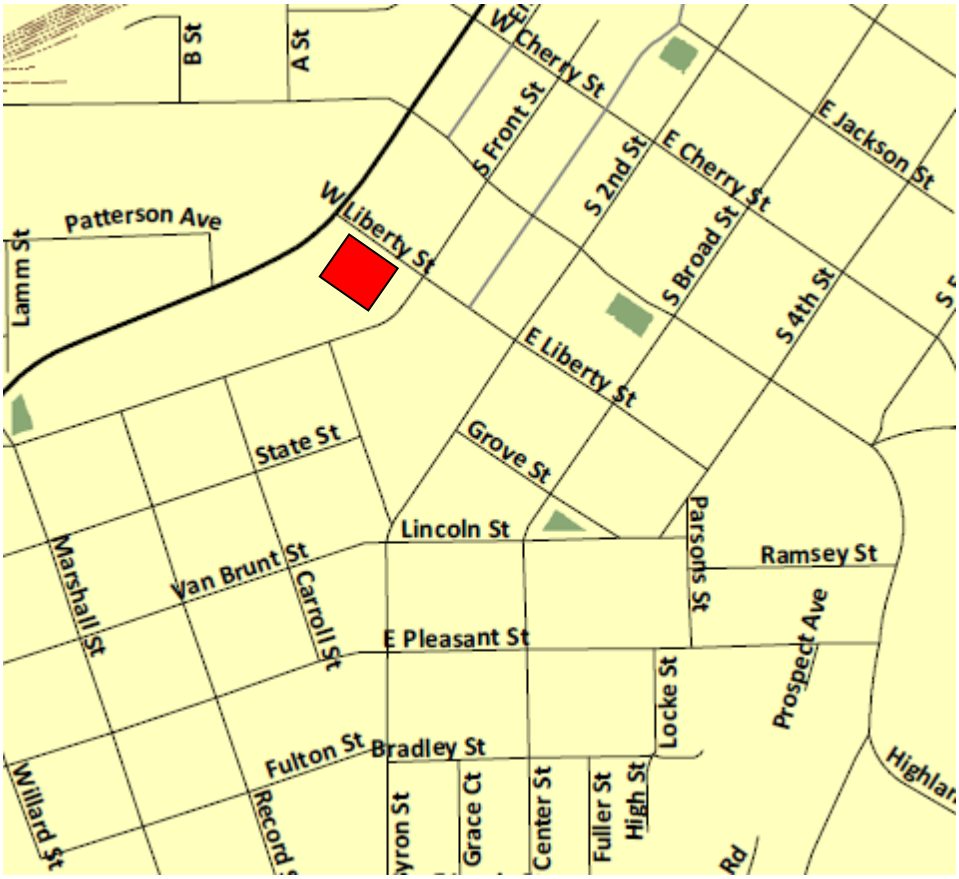
HOME

Minnesota Waste Processing Company (MWPC) Transfer Station
1051 Summit Avenue
Mankato



City of Mankato Public Safety Center

710 S Front Street
Mankato



HOME