

COUNTY OF KANE

**DIVISION OF
ENVIRONMENTAL & WATER RESOURCES**
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From: Jennifer Jarland
Kane County Recycling Program Coordinator

Elgin Habitat ReStore – no longer an Electronics Drop-off

As of May 1st, 2015 the Elgin Habitat for Humanity ReStore location will no longer be accepting electronics for recycling. The Kane County Electronics Program includes the [monthly collection event](#) and a number of [permanent drop-off locations](#). The drop-offs at public works in Batavia, Geneva, St. Charles, and West Dundee will remain open for the time being.

Electronics recycling programs in the state are struggling due to the certain flaws in the 2009 Illinois Electronic Products Recycling and Reuse Act ([PA 095-0959](#)). The main issues are as follows: (1) the manufacturer's weight goals were set too low, and recyclers are meeting those goals well before the end of each year, at which point the funding from the manufacturers is finished until the following year; and (2) TVs and monitors with leaded glass cathode ray tubes (CRTs) brought in for recycling are far exceeding projected volumes, and the cost of shipping and processing that material is proving financially unviable.

Kane County, in an effort to sustain the monthly event and some drop-offs, is making some changes in its program. The ReStore electronics drop-off has been slated for closure due to the large number of TVs they are receiving from individuals and possibly businesses. Unfortunately, due to sheer volume, ReStore is unable to physically store the TV's and electronic equipment until they are collected by the recycler. Kane County Recycles is grateful to the ReStore management and staff for their service to the program since August of 2012. ReStore will continue to accept donations of building materials and all other aspects of the business will remain the same.

The Electronics Recycling Act required electronics manufacturers to financially support residential recycling programs for their products at end-of-life and banned 17 electronic items from landfills. But unfortunately businesses have taken advantage of this program, where they should be contracting with a recycler for electronics recycling. Businesses, please see [this list](#) for companies that can recycle your electronics. Also [Elgin Recycling](#), at 660 Schiller Street in Elgin can take business materials for a fee.

Residents can continue to deliver their electronics to the [monthly collection event](#) on the second Saturday of each month between 8am-12noon, at 540 S. Randall Road in St. Charles, or one of the [permanent drop-offs](#) at the Public Works buildings in Batavia, Geneva, St. Charles, or West Dundee.

More information can be found at www.countyofkane.org/recycling
Questions: Kane County Recycling Coordinator, Jennifer Jarland, 630-208-3841, recycle@countyofkane.org

More information:

Since the ban came into effect in January 2011, recycling programs have flourished, with over 160 million pounds of electronics being recycled instead of landfilled in Illinois. During the five (5) years from 2010 to 2014 Kane County conducted 60 events, which, in addition to five (5) permanent drop-off locations, have served 69,000 residents and collected over 6.5 million pounds of electronics.

Recently however, many neighboring electronics recycling programs are struggling to survive because the manufacturer goals were set too low in the original bill, which requires that each manufacturer must recycle 50% (by weight) of what was sold two years ago. The problem is that what people are recycling is mostly old heavy TVs and computer monitors and what is selling are lighter-weight flat screens and smaller devices. Programs are collecting more material all the time and yet the weight goal is going down each year. So goals have been met well before the end of the year for the last two years. When that happens, manufacturers stop funding the programs, and recyclers stop receiving material from community collections, which are mostly run by counties and municipalities, and provided for free to the public. The intent of the law was to make the manufacturers responsible for the full life of their product and so the law prohibits charging a recycling fee to residents. A solution needs to be found because local governments cannot afford to sustain the full cost of these programs for half of each year or more.

Kane County currently contracts with a local R2 certified electronics recycling processor, eWorks Electronics Services Inc. (eWorks). eWorks was established in 2009 to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. To achieve this mission, eWorks partners with agencies such as AHRC and Misericordia that provide a variety of premium services to assist people with disabilities. eWorks provides competitive recycling, refurbishment, and resale services of all types of office and industrial technologies and consumer electronics. Their process uses the highest industry certifications in safety and security. The County has been working with eWorks since February of 2014, and is very happy with their comprehensive and professional service, for the monthly collection event in St. Charles as well as the permanent drop-offs. The event and drop-offs are for Kane County Residents only. While eWorks continues to provide these services as it is dealing with the above issues but the program could be in jeopardy, as it is currently in neighboring counties, due to the substantial increases in volume experienced so far this year.

Concurrent bills to be introduced this session, HB1455 and SB797, make emergency amendments to the Electronic Products Recycling and Reuse Act (ERRA). There are several amendments including increasing the manufacturer's recycling weight goals to 80% of the weight of products they sold in Illinois two years ago (up from the original 50% goal). The bill provides that a registered recycler or a refurbisher may not charge individual consumers or units of local government acting as collectors a fee to recycle or refurbish the equipment covered by the law, unless the recycler or refurbisher provides (i) a financial incentive, such as a coupon, that is of greater or equal value to the fee being charged or (ii) premium service, such as curbside collection, home pick-up, drop-off locations, or a similar methods of collection. The passing of these bills will help to stabilize some electronics recycling programs in Illinois in the short term while the longer term solutions will be addressed in the upcoming mandated ERRRA review and future amendments.