

COUNTY OF KANE

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Recycling Cut Trees and Light Strings in Kane County

If you are celebrating your holiday with a cut tree, you will probably be looking to discard it in early 2023. Kane County Recycles has updated its [Christmas Trees webpage](#) with some suggestions.

First, whatever route you choose for your tree, completely remove all the decorations. Ornaments, tinsel, tree stands and lights can damage composting or mulching equipment and contaminate finished mulch or compost. Bags or covers can be used to move trees and keep needles contained, but should be removed before discarding.

On the [Christmas Tree webpage](#), there's a new idea to repurpose cut trees (or, for smaller spaces, just portions of them) as wildlife habitat. Small brush piles in an out-of-the-way spot can create hiding places for native wildlife and perches for overwintering birds. Brush piles started from old Christmas trees provide backyard habitat for red foxes, our region's namesake.

There are five drop-off locations associated with programs that mulch or compost cut trees in or near Kane County - three in Elgin and locations further north, one in Aurora, and one convenient to the Tri-Cities in West Chicago. Check the webpage for details on costs and residency restrictions. If you want to be absolutely sure your tree won't be landfilled, dropping it off at one of these locations is the best bet. The region's waste haulers do their best to collect trees curbside and keep them from the landfill. It can be a challenge because some area compost facilities close for the winter, and very cold or icy weather can prevent the ones that are open from mulching at the scale necessary to dispose of thousands of trees. The information and dates for curbside collection of trees in Kane County is also on the [Kane County Recycling webpage](#).

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If you have light strings that didn't survive the season, Kane County accept them year-round at Kane County Recycling Centers. If you have bad lights that are incorporated into standing decorations, they need to be removed from the decorations before being dropped off.

Also accepted at Kane County Recycling Centers: defunct projector lights, air pumps from inflatables, inflatables made of woven nylon fabric (as long as hard plastic parts or rigid plastic valves are removed) and extension cords.

To cut down on travel time, you can also check with your municipality to see if they're doing a holiday light recycling collection.

Source: Clair Ryan, Kane County Recycling Coordinator