



Leelanau County Solid Waste Council

2025 Activities Report

The nine-member Solid Waste Council is an advisory committee appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Members include county and local government representatives, the general public, solid waste industry representatives, and environmentally concerned citizens. The Council meets quarterly on the first Tuesday to discuss policies on recycling, hazardous waste, and other solid waste issues. Meetings are open to the public.

This year the Solid Waste Council focused on possible composting pilot programs, continued oversight and maintenance of the recycling program; and organized several recycling collections where residents could recycle hazardous waste, electronics, scrap tires and mattresses.

Recycling

Recycling provides significant environmental, economic, and social benefits by converting waste into valuable new resources. By diverting waste from landfills, recycling also helps communities save on disposal costs and reduces the release of harmful pollutants into the air and soil. Over 2,500 tons of materials were collected from all (9) recycling sites and processed by GFL. The Elmwood recycling site led with 485.28 tons of materials, followed by the Road Commission site with 428.39 tons. Maintaining each recycling site requires consistent upkeep, surveillance, and ongoing public outreach and education.



Household Hazardous Waste Collections

Four household hazardous waste (HHW) collections were held; two in the spring and two in the fall. Over 55.4 tons of hazardous materials were collected from over 1,000 households. Among the materials collected were oil paints and stains, automotive fluids, batteries, fluorescent light tubes, household chemicals and much more.

Electronics Recycling

Electronics are made up of hundreds of materials, some hazardous such as: lead, mercury, cadmium, beryllium and more. When broke down or burned, they release chemicals that contaminate air, water, and soil. Heavy metals like lead and mercury do not break down naturally, leading to long-term environmental degradation. Managed by Bay Area Recycling for Community (BARC), the Leelanau County Electronic Recycling Collections diverted 32 tons of e-waste from landfills. Materials successfully collected were tv's, computers, phones, small appliances, wires, speakers, and much more.

Scrap Tire and Mattress Recycling Collections

A total of two collections were held in the spring where over 1,000 of tires and over 100 mattresses were collected. Residents prepaid a small fee of \$2.00 per passenger tire with a (10) tire limit per household and \$5.00 per mattress or boxspring.

Tires are non-biodegradable and when stockpiled, pose severe fire risks which then produces acid smoke that is harmful to humans and the environment. Tires contain valuable materials which can be repurposed for rubberized asphalt, playground surfaces, mulch, and fuel.

It takes several decades for one mattress to decompose in a landfill and each year millions of mattresses find their way to the landfills yet only a small percentage of mattresses get recycled. Mattress recycling is vital— especially since nearly 100% of a mattress can be recycled or repurposed. Mattresses collected from the collections are taken back to BARC where they are broken down into their components and repurposed.

Materials Management Planning

Leelanau County filed a notice of intent to prepare the Materials Management Plan (MMP) and has become the County Approval Agency as required by Part 115, Solid Waste Management, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended. This is a state-mandated, county-led planning process shifting from traditional landfilling to sustainable waste management. Replacing old solid waste plans, these EGLE approved plans aim to boost recycling, and improve materials management infrastructure.

Leelanau County intends to complete the MMP development as a multi-county plan with Grand Traverse and Benzie Counties. An Interlocal Agreement was signed by all three counties and the Notice of Intent was accepted by EGLE in 2024.

MMP 2025 Timeline includes:

- EGLE approved workplan
- Hired Fishbeck for consulting services and the development of the MMP
- Began conducting Residential, Business, and Local Unit of Government Surveys

Membership

The Leelanau County Solid Waste Council and Planning staff extend their sincere appreciation to John Fletcher and Tom MacDonald, who ended their terms in 2025.

We would also like to extend welcomes to the new members of the Solid Waste Council: Karen Hassevoort and Bill Perkins. We appreciate your eagerness to serve your community and look forward to working with you.

2025 Solid Waste Council
Marcia Harris, Chair
Andy Gale, Vice Chair
John Fletcher, Chair Pro-Tem
Kathy Dawkins
Karen Hassevoort
Tom MacDonald
Bill Perkins
Tom Petersen
Ty Wessell

Ex-Officio Members
Mark Bevelhymer
Jim Palmer



For additional information on solid waste and recycling, please visit our website at Leelanau.gov or contact Leelanau County Planning and Community Development at 231-256-9812

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