

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WILL COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN
FIVE-YEAR UPDATE

September 2001

In January 1991, the Will County Board adopted the Solid Waste Management Plan prepared pursuant to the Illinois Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act (415, ILCS 15/1 et seq.). Implementation of the 1991 Plan began immediately following adoption. The Act also requires that each County Solid Waste Management Plan shall be updated and reviewed every 5 years, and any necessary or appropriate revisions shall be submitted to the Agency for review and comment. In March 1996, Will County adopted its first five-year Solid Waste Management Plan Update. The purpose of this document (Plan Update) is to meet the requirement for the second five-year update.

Pursuant to the Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act (415 ILCS 15/4 (c)7), the Will County Land Use Department, Waste Services Division is the entity responsible for implementing the Plan recommendations on behalf of the County. The Waste Services Division currently consists of ten personnel: Manager, Solid Waste Engineer, Recycling Coordinator, Environmental Specialist, Environmental Educator, three Waste Analysts, one full-time secretary, and one part-time secretary. The County expects to maintain this level of staff unless budget levels are too low.

The 1991 Plan contained seven volumes, which included technical information on volume reduction, recycling, and landscape waste composting, combustion for volume reduction, and landfilling. The analysis conducted for the 1991 and 1996 Plans regarding these technologies remain unchanged.

The Legislative changes that have occurred since the 1991 Plan are included in this Plan Update. Some of the legislation that has been adopted during the past five years has pertained to transfer

stations, waste storage, landfill bans, recycling of construction and demolition debris, and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's solid waste fund.

This Plan Update includes updated population figures from the 2000 census. This incorporates new population projections and disposal needs during the planning period from 2001 to 2020 for the Will County Service Area. The Will County Service Area includes all municipalities either fully or partially within Will County. Based upon these projections, as much as 2,110,865 tons of waste could be generated (assuming no recycling) in the Will County Service Area by 2020. This assumes that a third airport is built in Will County during that timeframe.

Over 70 service providers collect solid waste that is generated in the Will County Service Area. The waste generated in the County was, until recently, direct hauled to the CDT Landfill in Joliet, Wheatland Prairie Landfill in Wheatland Township, and the Laraway Landfill near Elwood. Now the majority of the County's waste is hauled to transfer stations, from which waste is transported to landfills out of the County. This is due to in-County landfill capacity being depleted.

The County has planned for its disposal needs for the next 20 - 23 years. A landfill (now named the Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility) to be located at the former Joliet Arsenal was approved through the local siting process in March 1999. However, in October 1999, a restriction was placed on the deed for the land that is to be transferred from the federal government to the County. The restriction allowed only waste from the Will County Service Area. As a result, delays have occurred in going forward with the project. The County and the landfill operator are currently working out an agreement to continue with the development of the facility. Additionally, any transfer stations that are developed in the County must adhere to the County's landfill contract and provide waste to that facility.

Since 1996, the County's recycling rate has increased to 34%, with most municipalities implementing curbside recycling, while more commercial recycling programs have also been established. In addition, this higher recycling rate can be attributed to an aggressive education program to schools and the public. The County also established collection events for residents to

drop off hard-to-handle items such as tires, household hazardous waste, oil, electronics, and books. A reporting ordinance was adopted which provided more complete reporting from the haulers in each waste segment.

The 1991 Plan and 1996 Plan Update addressed various waste management alternatives to disposal, which included waste reduction and recycling. In this second Plan Update, many recommendations in the areas of recycling and waste reduction have been reestablished and reinforced, especially in the area of commercial recycling outreach. To complete the recycling circle, the County will assist in the promotion of markets for recyclable materials, particularly in the construction and demolition (C&D) sector. Outreach programs such as collection events and solid waste education will be continued. A Solid Waste Education Center is planned at the Joliet Arsenal pursuant to the contract with the landfill operator. A recycling facility for C&D materials may be developed there as well.

Since 1988, the County has maintained a delegation agreement with the IEPA to conduct inspections at permitted and unpermitted sites throughout the County. During the past five years, Will County has dramatically increased the amount of inspections conducted pursuant to this program. The results have been several hundred sites remediated, and landfills, transfer stations, compost and land application sites monitored for compliance according to the operator's permit and the regulations. Additionally, the County regularly monitors the groundwater at the landfills, which includes commenting on applications submitted by the landfill operators. Aerial photography has been utilized at the closed landfills, to compare the site's contours to its permit. These programs are expected to continue and will be adapted as needed.

In summary, the County plans to continue established programs in the areas of solid waste planning, education, enforcement, and collection events. Programs will be evaluated as to their effectiveness, and new areas addressed on an as needed basis. This document will be used as a guideline for solid waste management in Will County during the next five years.

Dean Olson, Manager
Will County Land Use Department
Waste Services Division