



DU PAGE COUNTY

Environmental Committee

Final Summary

421 N. COUNTY FARM ROAD
WHEATON, IL 60187
www.dupagecounty.gov

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

8:30 AM

Room 3500A

1. CALL TO ORDER

8:30 A.M. meeting was called to order by Chair Sheila Rutledge at 8:30 A.M.

2. ROLL CALL

Other Members Present: Paula Deacon Garcia, Yeena Yoo

PRESENT	Cronin Cahill, Evans, Haider, Honig, LaPlante, and Rutledge
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3. CHAIRWOMAN'S REMARKS - CHAIR RUTLEDGE

3.A. 2025 Sign Event Recap

The 2025 campaign sign recycle event was highly successful, with an overwhelming number of signs collected, especially from the municipal elections -so much that the dumpster overflowed. This effort helped keep a significant amount of plastic out of landfills.

3.B. International Compost Awareness Week

This week is International Compost Awareness Week, the largest educational initiative in the compost and waste industries. This year's theme, "Sustainable Communities Begin with Compost," emphasizes the impact of composting at all levels-from backyard to community efforts that help contribute to healthier soils. Sheila mentioned an article in the "Chicago Tribune" about a large-scale composting company, Green Era that accepts even packaged goods for composting.

Joy responded that Green Era's customer base is mostly commercial and not as much residential. She also stated that **Choose DuPage** had a webinar with Green Era and offered to send the webinar recording out to whomever is interested.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kay McKeen, founder and Executive Director of SCARCE - This week is International Compost Awareness Week, and two composting workshops are scheduled for Thursday. The Glen Ellyn Food Pantry is partnering with the People's Resource Center to initiate food scrap composting. Recently, a group of students successfully lobbied their school board to eliminate toxic black plastic from their district's lunch packaging. April saw eight recycling events, including a large event in Wheaton where one woman dropped off 500 campaign signs. At the Garden Market event, attendance was the highest yet. During a Wheaton event, 30,000 pounds of food were collected, filling three trucks, and there was a record collection of syringes, EpiPens, and

medicine. May brings more composting workshops and garden markets, with many items preordered. Appreciation was shared for everyone's efforts in environmental care, along with thanks for community support in projects like composting and recycling.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.A. [25-1122](#)

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RESULT: APPROVED

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.A. Showcasing the Illinois Green Business Assessment & Planning Tool - Sustainable DuPage

Cassie Carroll - Marketing & Communications Director, SEDAC

Cassandra's slideshow explained how SEDAC (Smart Energy Design Assistance Center), which is based out of the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, focuses on empowering organizations with practical solutions for climate, energy, and sustainability. One of its major initiatives is the Illinois Green Business Program, established in 2008 to help businesses go green, reduce costs, and support community sustainability.

Since 2023, SEDAC has partnered with Sustainable DuPage and Choose DuPage, working with 20 facilities to implement cost-saving and environmentally friendly measures, achieving significant energy savings and reduced carbon emissions. SEDAC also connects businesses with utility incentives and funding opportunities to support these changes.

To aid businesses in sustainability efforts, SEDAC developed a Green Business Assessment and Planning Tool. This tool helps businesses-whether new to sustainability or experienced-identify inefficiencies, create sustainability plans, track progress, and engage employees in sustainable practices. It also guides proactive maintenance and connects businesses to funding for sustainable upgrades.

The tool is structured around four steps:

1. Launch a Green Team and develop a mission.
2. Conduct a facility assessment to identify areas for improvement.
3. Identify areas for improvement and prioritize sustainability practices.
4. Develop a sustainability plan by identifying key steps, timelines, funding and communication with staff

SEDAC is committed to supporting businesses in using this tool to foster long-term sustainability and efficiency across Illinois.

Robert Schlorff, Energy Engineer at SEDAC presented a detailed, live demonstration of the Green Business Assessment and Planning Tool. He explained how the SEDAC Green Business Assessment and Planning Tool is a structured, spreadsheet-based system designed to help businesses assess sustainability opportunities, identify waste, prioritize improvements, and create

actionable sustainability plans. It is part of SEDAC's mission to empower organizations with climate, energy, and sustainability solutions.

Tool Overview:

1. How to use:

- The first tab provides information on usage, version details, contact information, and basic guidelines for input.

2. Step 1 - Launch a Green Team:

- Businesses list the departments and individuals involved in sustainability efforts.
- Mission, vision, goals, and support structures are outlined.
- Initial ideas, success measurements, alignment with company values, and budgeting considerations are captured.

3. Step 2 - Conduct a Facility Assessment:

- The tool is divided within four groups in five key areas
- Office Space, Restrooms and Kitchens, Production spaces, Loading Docks
 - **Lighting**
 - **Envelope**
 - **Waste**
 - **Equipment**
 - **HVAC**
- For each area, businesses evaluate sustainability aspects (e.g., LED lighting, water usage, equipment conditions).
- Responses are color-coded for clarity.

4. Step 3 - Identify Areas for Improvement:

- Information from facility assessments is compiled to identify and prioritize action areas.
- Green Teams can select which opportunities to pursue based on assessment results.

5. Step 4 - Sustainability Plan:

- Goals and priority strategies are developed based on assessment findings.
- Implementation steps, success measurements, timelines, responsible departments, and resource needs are outlined.
- Up to four main goals can be structured, with strategies for execution and milestones for tracking.

6. Utility Data Tracking:

- Tabs for **Electricity** and **Gas Data** allow businesses to input usage and analyze consumption patterns.
- A benchmarking tab visualizes energy use, cost intensity, and carbon impact over time.

7. Equipment Tracking:

- Includes templates for HVAC and other production equipment, helping businesses monitor condition and efficiency.

8. Illinois Green Business Checklist:

- A final tab with color-coded responses helps companies quickly assess alignment with Illinois Green Business standards.

Support and Guidance:

- The tool is accompanied by a written step-by-step guide to simplify its use.
- SEDAC offers support to help businesses implement the tool and develop their sustainability plans.

The tool is designed to make sustainability planning practical and straightforward, empowering companies to identify inefficiencies, prioritize changes, and implement long-term solutions.

Vice chair Saba Haider responded with how great the presentation was and if there are any limitations on the size of business (square footage, number of employees, etc.) and usefulness of the tool. Cassandra stated that there is no limit - organizations of all sizes can utilize the tool.

Member Cahill inquired about a fee for downloading the tool. There is no fee. All that is needed is to fill out a contact form on the Choose DuPage website.

In closing, Cassandra mentioned The **DuPage County Sustainable Business Collaborative is coming soon**. It is a networking platform for municipal staff and committee members to share ideas, successes, and strategies for engaging local businesses in sustainability. Open to all municipal representatives, the collaborative meets quarterly to explore ways communities can support business sustainability, connect with local programs, and align business efforts with community sustainability goals.

7. STAFF REPORTS**7.A. [25-1158](#)****2025 Propane Tank Recycling Partnership**

Joy Hinz announced that DuPage County is continuing its partnership with the **Forest Preserve District** to collect **1-pound propane tanks** at Blackwell Family Campground through October. Last year's program cost the county less than \$300, and this year's costs are expected to be under \$500.

7.B. [25-1157](#)**Food Waste Prevention Week Recap**

She also highlighted **Food Waste Prevention Week**, praising Myles Barnes for his effective social media efforts, which have noticeably increased traffic and awareness.

8. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

9. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was discussed.

10. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 A.M.