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DuPage County Stormwater Management News & Updates

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A Novel Success: SWM Uses Beetles to Beat Invasives at Gary Kehoe Reservoir



Counter-clockwise from top left: Gary Kehoe Reservoir pre-treatment, filled with purple-loosestrife. Bottom left: Loosestrife defoliating beetles used to remove the plant from the reservoir. Right: Aerial of Gary Kehoe Reservoir in 2025, showing no presence of purple-loosestrife.

Purple-loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is an invasive wetland plant native to Europe and Asia that spreads aggressively in North America—each plant can produce up to 2.7 million wind- and water-dispersed seeds annually. Once established, it crowds out native wetland species and harms wildlife habitat. Because of its impact, Illinois designated it an exotic weed in 2003, prohibiting its sale and distribution.

For years, DuPage County Stormwater Management (SWM) struggled to control a large infestation at the Gary Kehoe Reservoir using traditional chemical and mechanical methods, which proved costly and ineffective. After reviewing research on biological controls, SWM Wetland staff identified two leaf-feeding beetles—*Galerucella pusilla* and *G. californiensis*—as safe and promising natural predators of purple-loosestrife.

In May 2019, SWM released 3,360 of these "loosestrife defoliating beetles" at the reservoir. The beetles took several years to establish, but annual drone monitoring shows the effort paid off: as of July 2025, not a single purple-loosestrife plant was found on-site.

This biocontrol project is estimated to have saved the County more than \$80,000 compared to traditional management methods. SWM Wetland staff celebrate this major invasive-species management success and will continue exploring innovative approaches for future projects.

Winfield Creek Restoration Substantially Complete

Around Town

SCARCE's annual post-Halloween Pumpkin Smash



A freshly restored portion of Winfield Creek, featuring a stabilizing rock toe along the bank and new trees planted in the adjacent wetland area.

SWM contractors have substantially completed the Winfield Creek Stream Restoration Project, which began back in July. The project, funded in part through a Section 319 grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, addressed a section of creek running along the west side of DuPage County campus. This portion now features rock-stabilized streambanks, native plant buffers, and improved outfalls from nearby storm sewers that discharge into the creek. Final vegetation restoration and educational sign installation are expected in the near future.

SWM Staff Conduct Annual County-Owned Dam Inspections



SWM Committee Chair Jim Zay joined staff for their inspection of Wayne Oaks Dam this week.

This week, Department staff got out into the field to inspect all of the dam facilities owned, operated and maintained by the County. In accordance with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' dam safety program, SWM inspects these dams annually for potential safety and security risks. The dams operating in the county--including Fawell Dam, Armstrong Park, and Gary Kehoe Reservoir--are a critical part of the county's flood management program. This hands-on approach to inspections assists with the maintenance and upkeep of our Stormwater facilities that continue to help combat severe flooding throughout the county.

[Learn more about the County's flood control facilities.](#)

was, well...a smash hit! On November 1st and 8th, hundreds of residents across DuPage County participated in the pumpkin carnage at 24 locations. Although the total weights haven't been announced yet, this year's sure to be a record-breaker, with a massive amount of local and regional press coverage leading up to the event. Last year over 164 tons of pumpkins were composted! Diverting pumpkins from landfills saves all the water stored in them, reduces methane emissions from landfills, and creates a rich soil that can serve a much better purpose out of the trash heap.



Student volunteers helped collect pumpkins at schools across the County, and made sure the job was done right.

Upcoming Events

2025 Thanksgiving Cooking Oil Collection

Saturday, November 29, 2025, 9:00 A.M. - Noon

In partnership with SCARCE, select DuPage County communities will be collecting used, liquid cooking oil (no bacon grease or other solid animal fats) to be recycled into biodiesel. The goal of this one-day event is to make it easier for residents to dispose of their leftover or expired liquid cooking oil properly. In addition, DuPage County has 15 permanent collection locations for recycling cooking oil year-round. Click the link below for a full list of participating locations.

[More Info and Site List](#)



Stormwater Management Planning Committee

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