



NEWS RELEASE

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Illinois EPA Conducts Used Tire Removal Action for Units of Local Government in Seven Illinois Counties

60 Tons of Tires Collected in Support of Mosquito Reduction Strategy

SPRINGFIELD – Illinois EPA Acting Director Alec Messina has announced the completion of used tire removal actions that took place in seven southern Illinois counties. The used tire removal actions are part of a plan to reduce the threat of mosquito-borne diseases, like West Nile virus and Zika virus, in Illinois by removing used tires from public and abandoned properties.

“Illinois EPA is working closely with local governments to properly dispose of used tires that have been collected from roadsides, public parks and abandoned sites,” said Acting Director Messina. “The Agency looks forward to our continued work on this strategy to protect our environment and Illinois residents.”

The following Zone 1 (Southern Illinois) removal actions have been completed by the Illinois EPA, resulting in the collection and proper disposal of 60 tons of used tires:

- Alexander County, in cooperation with the Alexander County Highway Department and the City of Cairo.
- Hardin County, in cooperation with the Hardin County Highway Department.
- Johnson County in cooperation with the Johnson County Highway Department.
- Massac County in cooperation with the Massac County Highway Department.
- Pope County in cooperation with Pope County Road District #2.
- Pulaski County in cooperation with the Pulaski County Highway Department.
- Union County in cooperation with the Union County Highway Department.

The Illinois EPA and Department of Public Health announced the coordinated Mosquito Reduction Strategy last month. Under the plan, Illinois EPA will remove used tires from certain locations across Illinois. The two agencies have divided the state into three priority zones for used tire removals. The zones are based on where Illinois would more likely see Zika virus, such as the southern counties that typically have hotter weather. Zone 1 is the highest priority area and is defined by a straight east-west line going through Effingham and areas south of that line.

Illinois EPA is working with units of local government in Zone 1 to coordinate and properly dispose of waste tires collected from public properties, including roadsides, public parks and abandoned sites. Illinois EPA assists municipalities with disposal costs associated with the waste tires and partners with local officials on enforcement of new and existing waste tire dumping laws.

The Illinois EPA's Used Tire Program is funded by a \$2.50 per tire fee that consumers pay when purchasing tires at retail. The Used Tire Program helps properly dispose of tires at a registered, commercial used tire processing facility in Illinois. Some tires are retreaded and reused, and others are recycled into a variety of products and uses; but most are shredded into a high-energy fuel supplement known as tire-derived fuel and are burned in power plants, industrial boilers or cement kilns for energy recovery.

Improperly disposed used tires can and serve as habitats for disease-carrying insects, particularly mosquitoes. Illinois citizens produce more than 14 million used tires annually. Dumping tires is illegal, and dumping more than 50 is a Class 4 felony in Illinois. The Environmental Protection Act allows state and local law enforcement to issue citations of up to \$1,500 for each violation.

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