

EDDIE
MELTON
— FOR —
MAYOR
GARY 2023

Illegal Dumping Policy

PRESENTED
April 2023



ILLEGAL DUMPING POLICY

for Gary, Indiana

INTRODUCTION

Every resident of a city is intrinsically tied to the appearance of that city, particularly its urban core and primary entertainment districts. When a city's aesthetic is associated with litter and waste, blight, abandoned buildings and homes, a lack of proper landscaping and a generally unrefined cityscape, its people are emotionally burdened. In these cases, it can be difficult for a resident to mentally picture the potential of their city due to these visual barriers.

Illegal dumping is a chronic problem in Gary. More than just typical litter, illegal dumping is the disposal of all types of human and manufactured waste in any unpermitted area within the city limits. To combat illegal dumping in our city, we will reclaim these sites that have been used for illegal dumping and repurpose them for redevelopment, environmental protection and enhanced resident quality of life.

While the City of Gary can prosecute and prevent illegal dumping, our city as a collective must approach the actual individual behavior by removing any rationalization that Gary and her residents consider dumping acceptable.

As Mayor, I will address illegal dumping to eliminate the rationalization of poor human behavior among residents, landlords, business owners and contractors from Gary and surrounding communities. Our city must focus on reinforcing city-wide values, clearly communicating that the behavior is illegal and enforceable to the maximum extent while also responding to the demand for legal and proper waste disposal within city limits.

Our commitment to addressing illegal dumping will affect several aspects of our city and can be measured using a variety of indicators.

OUR COMMITTMENT

GARY DESERVES BETTER

Public Health & Safety

We will address public health and safety risks by removing general hazards posed by waste (e.g., disease-carrying mosquitoes, nails and materials contaminated with lead paint asbestos).

Environmental Justice

We will rectify environmental concerns of potential soil and water contamination.

Economic Development

We will protect local property values of residents and business owners.

Fiscal Responsibility

We will lower local government costs related to waste removal to prevent passing on costs to residents through higher service fees and taxes.

Resident Engagement

We will enhance the overall quality of life for Gary residents.

Measures of Success

- Number of citations issued
- Number of arrests made
- Amount of fines issued and collected
- Number of abandoned vehicles impoundments
- Acres of land cleaned up
- Tons of waste disposed of safely and legally
- Costs savings to the city
- Recaptured land for community redevelopment, recreation and/or public amenities

We will change the culture of illegal dumping in Gary and promote our shared values.

Educate Businesses: We will require all companies doing business with the City of Gary and a targeted list of industries and companies (e.g., construction and auto repair businesses) to be certified in illegal dumping prevention and a tax incentive education course.

Increase Signage: We will install “No Dumping” and “Under Surveillance” signs in targeted areas, including heavy foot and motor vehicle traffic areas of our city and on City-owned properties stating “violators will be prosecuted.” In doing this, we will promote a promising future for Gary and require personal accountability for keeping Gary beautiful using rhetoric and signage that discourages illegal dumping and legal action if caught illegally dumping in Gary, including fines, community service and possible imprisonment. We will be intentional about notifying residents of where they can find listings of city-approved dumping site locations.

Increase Visibility & Restrict Access: We will increase lighting throughout the city and limit vehicle access in designated areas by installing barriers, dividers and fences that only allow emergency vehicle access.

Redevelop & Repurpose: We will redevelop former illegal dumping grounds for business, residential, community gardens and/or public spaces designated for recreating and/or community-building.

Host Community Celebration & Day of Service: As Mayor, I will annually reward residents, businesses and civic leaders for cleaning up and beautifying the City of Gary on Earth Day, using the holiday as an opportunity to annually organize a city-wide day of service, share the City’s plans for targeted clear-up strategies and reinforce the City’s commitment to beautification and revitalization.

We will enforce our codes and crackdown on violators.

Commission Taskforce: We will create an Illegal Dumping Task Force staffed by Code Enforcement, GPD, Gary Health Department, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, wildlife organizations and economic and urban redevelopment agencies.

Better utilize existing resources: We will work to better utilize existing resources, including license plate readers to track illegal dumpers. We will also require contractors to provide copies of dump tickets before final inspections of permitted contracting work is performed and deputize Code Enforcement Officers to write citations and make arrests under existing laws.

Enhance Business Enforcement: We will increase the fines for businesses that illegally dispose of waste and provide local tax incentives for companies that properly remove debris from within city limits.

Enlist Resident Support: We will incentivize residents to report illegal dumping by creating a “No Dumping” hotline and a reward system for engaged residents.

We will uphold local violations: Individuals caught violating illegal dumping laws will be prosecuted in Gary’s City Code Enforcement Court. First-time offenders may be charged with a \$2,500 fine and second-time offenders with a \$7,500 fine. Mandates for community service or jail time may also be implemented.



We will build our capacity and enhance waste disposal infrastructure.

Deploy Receptacles: We will place city-marked, certified site maintenance receptacles (with sponsorship opportunities from the private sector) throughout the city, which will be managed by the Code Enforcement department to encourage safe waste disposal.



Provide Specific Waste Disposal Options: We will create accessible, low-cost public waste stations, particularly for tire, hazardous materials, construction and demolition waste, in designated locations to increase City revenue and deter residents from illegal dumping.

Enhanced City Services: We will increase the number of heavy pick-up days for the City's waste management services in targeted areas and publicize hazardous waste drop-off days at various sites.

Launch Keep Gary Beautiful: We will launch green jobs initiative and youth service corps charged with aiding the city with clean up, beautification, environmental protection and preparing the next generation for the green economy.

Build Waste Enterprises: We will launch local small business and entrepreneurial efforts to transform waste management services (disposal and/or waste hauling) into a profitable business model supported, in part, with local government contracts, tax incentives to hire ex-offender populations and charitable investments. Additionally, we will negotiate unit-based disposal contracts, also known as "Pay-as-You-Throw."

We will adhere to and enforce state law.

Indiana's open dumping rules (329 IAC 10-4) state that "No person shall cause or allow the storage, containment, processing, or disposal of solid waste in a manner which creates a threat to human health or the environment, including the creating of a fire hazard, vector attraction, air or water pollution, or other contamination." Discarding trash or unwanted items anywhere except recycling centers or state-permitted landfills or processing facilities, including transfer stations and incinerators, is considered open dumping and is illegal. Burning waste materials – including household trash, business trash, construction/demolition debris and dumped waste – is also unlawful in Indiana. Additionally, other state laws in the Indiana Code prohibit open dumping including IC 13-30-2-1 (Subsections 3, 4, and 5) and IC 36-9-30-35.

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