



Mission: The Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition (IFSCC) is a thriving non-profit organization advancing diversion and composting of all organics in Illinois through advocacy, program implementation, market and business development, policy, and outreach.

Vision: We envision a future where all Illinoisans see organic materials as valuable resources and urgently take action to rescue edible food and divert food scraps to avoid emissions, and to restore nutrients to the soil through the creation and use of compost.

Minutes March 2, 2026

of Attendees: 67

Welcome: Amy DeLorenzo: Happy Soil Health Week in Illinois - March 2-8, 2026.

Speaker Spotlight: Doug Gotham, Senior Landscape Architect at Sustaining Member Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd, will explain why incorporating compost into large scale landscape projects is one of the greatest opportunities for improving soil systems outside of agriculture. In addition to highlighting its role in building soil health, he will “ground” attendees in the broader co-benefits of compost use and the reduction of stormwater runoff.

Presentation [HERE](#)

Slides

Dupage County Rain Garden Detail [HERE](#)

MWRD Bioretention Facility Detail [HERE](#)

Email: dgotham@cbbel.com

Q&A

Q: Can you please repeat the runoff comparisons for infiltration rate?

A: Adding 30% compost to soil mix would reduce runoff by 70% –basically, it would not ROLL ACROSS the surface– it would infiltrate.

Q: Would it help to apply compost to the top of a lawn yearly? Over time would it improve the quality/tilth of the soil? for a residence lawn?

A: YES! Definitely. I do this for my lawn.

Q: How can IFSCC advocate for stronger requirements to incorporate compost?

A: IDOT does have a definition of compost. It is up to the engineer or client to introduce into the

project. It is a “pay” item and the community/citizens need to rationalize adding it INTO their town’s bids. Compost benefits need to be built into “Phase 1” projects and budgets (compost is already accounted for, it needs to be prioritized.). We also need to pull the responsibility from the village managers and have the county enforce the use of compost in their large scale projects.

Q: Is there a warehouse or data center that has already done this? Can we point to an example that has already shown that it works?

A: I am not acquainted with any because we don’t work on those types of projects but there might be one out there. Maybe one of the compost supply companies is aware of an example. You can find more data regarding compost use in stormwater management here. [Compost and stormwater management | Minnesota Stormwater Manual](#)

Q: Re: IDOT, Tollway and gov agencies: how much pushback occurs? Is there more receptivity now?

A: It is all a matter of dollars with local governments since there is no requirement to do it. Focus has been to be as inexpensive as possible so this is the challenge.

Q: What about rooftop gardens as an added layer of stormwater management? Maybe the permit requirements need to be more innovative as a strategy.

A: We don’t work on those types of projects so I can’t speak to their stormwater capabilities. However, I am aware of the Chicago City & County building green roof and I believe that project has been documented for its capabilities in stormwater management. You can also check out this study. [Estimating the environmental effects of green roofs: A case study in Kansas City, Missouri](#)

Q: Re: the soil that gets stockpiled and reused (made into mixes). IFSCC should be advocating for the use of compost.

A: Yes, communities can buy this material back after removing clay and have blends and mixes applied to large scale projects.

In chat: There is an additional benefit by adding compost to the soil - beneficial soil microbes. Compost itself has amazing water holding capacity and the microbes that come with well made compost will aggregate the soil and increase the water holding capacity. We did a study in Southern California and found that the addition of beneficial soil microbes improved the water holding capacity by 20%. There are so many tangible benefits by including compost into the soil. Great work.

Highlights: Advocate during the permitting process for public projects. Compost can address the requirements relating to stormwater management because of the benefits already outlined. There is a strong chance for the infiltration/water absorption and soil health improvements with compost.

IFSCC Board President/Vice President update Mike DiMucci, mike@gpocompost.com and Spencer LaBelle, SLaBelle@scsengineers.com

- Mike thanked Doug for the wonderful presentation and reminded folks that 2026 Membership season is underway. The board is working on hiring a new Executive Director for IFSCC.

IFSCC Administrator update Amy Bartucci, admin@illinoiscomposts.org

On the IFSCC Blog: Illinois Needs Compost (a 2 part series)

- [From a Half-Day Forum to a Statewide Force: The IFSCC Story!](#)
- [A System Ready for Change](#)

USCC update Merleanne Rampale, IFSCC ICAW Chair, MRampale@swalco.org and Sarah Wilcox swilcox@stlcompost.com IFSCC Young Professionals Group

- Post conference survey for folks that attended in Sacramento
- CREF webinar focused on purchasing programs for market development [HERE](#)
- COTC in Georgia
 - IFSCC will be hosting our own COTC in Sept 2026 in Wauconda
- Compost and water based solutions - showing water conservation and compost benefits
- Working on a WWF grant for next 4 years –promote the finished compost (increase marketing and sale by 40%) Go from 13 - 20 M tons by 2030.

Committee Reports:

- We Compost: Mary Beth Schaye Co-Chair
 - Next Meeting, March 13, Noon
- Communications: Amy DeLorenzo and Steph Katsaros, Co-Chairs, amy.delorenzo@gmail.com, steph@brightbeat.com
 - Steph read through the offerings/requests for tabling and presenting that are coming in 😊
 - Please join this committee to help with engagement if this is your area of expertise.
- Policy: Liz Kunkle and Susannah Sun, Co-Chairs, lizkunkle@gmail.com, susannah@greenerachicago.com
 - Most substantive bill has been SB2852. Stay tuned for further action opportunities.
 - Compost Awareness Week in IL (House and Senate) are filed. Let's hope for resolutions this year too. Stay tuned for further action opportunities.
 - Facility Tours will be picking up this year –hoping for one in May around ICAW. Please reach out to suggest your facility.
- Education: Jen Dowd and Natasha Nicholes, Co-Chairs, jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org, and natasha@wesowwegrow.org
 - Continue to work on telling stories and educating throughout IL.

- Looking for new committee members as well as a new co-chair for the Education Committee.
- Compost Market Development: Mike DiMucci, Chair, mike@gpocompost.com and Jess Polansky jpolansky@midwestorganicsrecycling.com
 - Spring will be here. Remember to purchase high quality compost from IFSCC members.
 - Suns out, compost out!
- International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW), Merleanne Rampale, Chair MRampale@swalco.org
 - Merleanne is able to work with folks in communities to brainstorm.
 - Toolkit and resources with guides have grown over the years.
 - Posters and stickers for site hosts too.
- Young Professionals Group (YPG), Caroline French and Tommy Vaughan, Co-Chairs, caroline@sevengenerationsahead.org, tommy@wastenotcompost.com
 - No update this month.

Committee Meetings for 2026 (Contact admin@illinoiscomposts.org for links to join)

- Communications - 2nd Monday, 2pm
- Compost Market Development - 3rd Tuesday, 11am
- Education - 2nd Tuesday, 12pm
- Policy - 3rd Thursday 11am
- We Compost - March 13, noon
- ICAW - As needed, Next meeting is March 3rd
- YPG - Next Meeting, April 9, 4-5pm

News from attendees...

The Urban Canopy is sponsoring Evanston Environmental Association's Wild and Scenic Fest. Two showings this month: Friday March 13th and 20th. Located in Rotary International Headquarters in downtown Evanston near both Metro and CTA train lines.
<https://www.evanstonenvironment.org/filmfest>

SGA is hosting a webinar on Share Tables in K-12 schools on March 17th at 2pm. Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/22bNXuBSSLK4hu8eP_Szhg

The Urban Canopy March donation campaign is supporting Seven Generations Ahead. For every sign up for Compost Club membership, \$10 gets donated to our work!

Meeting adjourned: 1:00pm.

Next IFSCC Meeting: April 6, 2026

Please plan to join us and email admin@illinoiscomposts.org if you need a link to join.