



Since 2005, the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) has sponsored *Document Destruction Events* (DDE) during spring, summer and fall months. Residents that live in a member community can bring paper documents with personal information, such as tax, medical or financial records, to be shredded by a company, on-site. The shredded paper is transported to a facility where it is baled, marketed and recycled to make new products.

This year, due to the COVID pandemic, events scheduled in April, May and June were canceled. As events opened-up in July with safety measures in place, there has been larger than normal participation due to a pent-up demand for this curtesy program. Due to the exceptionally high turn-out, trucks are filling up quickly. In fact, sometimes the trucks reach their capacity before the end of an event, and residents must be turned away.

SWANCC works with its member host community to establish best practices, but there are unforeseen things that can happen to interrupt the flow of an event, such bad weather, a truck breaking down, fire in the shredded paper (usually caused by a lithium battery in the mix), or by having large participation.

If you have been turned away from a SWANCC event or unable to make one, there are other options for getting paper shredded.

- 1 - Shred paper at home – put in a tied bag in your trash cart or compost if able.
- 2 – The following non-profit organizations hire adults with disabilities to run their paper shredding programs. Their fee is nominal per pound or box – call for pricing.

Clearbrook's Getz Building
746 S. Vermont Street
Palatine, IL
847-991-4100, extension 336

Opportunity Secure Data Destruction
3360 Commercial Avenue
Northbrook, IL
847-831-9400 or [osddshred.com](https://www.osddshred.com)

- 3 - Enlist a company to shred your documents – for a fee. Visit <https://www.swancc.org/green-pages-reuse-and-recycling-directory/paper-shredding> for companies in the area or retail stores, such as Staples, Office Depot, UPS/FedEx, etc. Call for pricing.

How to Prepare Paper for Shredding

Whether the paper is shredded at a SWANCC event or through a different source, the stream must be dry, clean and free of any other type of materials – known as “contamination”.

1 - What are considered “sensitive” documents?

Sensitive documents are medical forms, bank statements, retired tax records, financial planning portfolios or documents with personal information – address labels are not considered “sensitive” information.

2 - How should paper be prepared?

- √ Paper must be loose – not in binders or folders
- √ Remove all metal clips – small staples are okay
- √ Remove all plastic covers or spines
- √ Do Not bring paper in plastic bags

3 - What types of paper items are NOT ACCEPTED?

- NO – Photos or family albums
- NO - Photo negatives
- NO – Plastic credit or gift cards
- NO - Plastic covers from check books or registers
- NO - Store receipts
- NO - Books

Paper NOT WANTED for shredding but can be recycled in your curbside cart!

- NO - Magazines
- NO – Junk mail, ads or coupons
- NO - Greeting cards
- NO - Newspapers

4 - What is the danger of putting “contamination” in the paper?

Batteries, electronics, medications, sharps, etc. pose a health and safety danger to those touching the paper documents, and batteries can spark fires inside the paper truck as terminal ends come in contact with the metal shredder! Additionally, *contamination* will lower the value of the paper when sold.

Your cooperation is essential to produce a dry, clean, stream of paper to make new paper products, and is very appreciated!