

## **KNOX County Soil and Water Conservation District Freedom of Information Policy**

The KNOX County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was chartered by the State of Illinois on July 27, 1944, as a public body corporate and politic in accordance with the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act (Ill. Compiled Statutes, Ch. 70, Par. 405/1 et seq.). As such, the KNOX Co. SWCD is required to implement the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (**FOIA**) (5 ILCS 140) and the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120).

The KNOX Co. SWCD believes that an open and honest government is essential to American democracy, and it can only be achieved through the free exchange of information between the government and its citizens. The Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act are critical tools in shining light on government actions and ultimately strengthening our democracy. (Adapted from “A Message from the Attorney General” Lisa Madigan, Attorney General, State of Illinois, September 2004.)

### **Description of the KNOX Co. SWCD**

**Purpose:** The General Assembly declares it to be in the public interest to provide:

- (a) for the conservation of the soil, soil resources, water and water resources of this State,
- (b) for the control and prevention of soil erosion,
- (c) for the prevention of air and water pollution, and
- (d) for the prevention of erosion, floodwater and sediment damages, and thereby to conserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, assist in maintain the navigability of rivers and harbors, conserve wildlife and forests, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the people of this State.

**Organizational chart:** - attached

**Budget:** **Funding** sources are grants, sales of conservation related materials, services, and donations.

**Location:** 233 S. Soangetaha Road, Suite 4, Galesburg, IL 61401

**Employees:** We have two full time employees; Katie Ingle, Administrative & Education Coordinator and Kara Downin, Resource Conservationist.

**SWCD Board of Directors:** The KNOX Co. Soil and Water Conservation District Board exercises control over the policies and procedures which normally meets monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month.

Its members are:

**Chairman:** George Cummings

**Treasurer:** David Asbury

**Vice-Chairman:** Brian Friedrich

**Director:** AJ Harland

**Secretary:** Christine Bewley

**Reporting:** We are required to report and be answerable for our operations to the Illinois Department of Agriculture, State Fairgrounds, Springfield, Illinois.

**Requesting Information:** You may request the information and records available to the public in the following manner:

You may use the attached request form. Oral requests will not be accepted.

Your request should be directed to the FOIA Officers, Katie Ingle, Administrative & Education Coordinator, or Kara Downin, Resource Conservationist, 233 S. Soangetaha Rd., Galesburg, IL 61401.

You must specify the records requested to be disclosed for inspection or to be copied. If you desire any information certified, you must specify which ones.

All fees shall be paid prior to delivery of any records. To reimburse us our actual costs for reproducing and certifying (if requested) the records, you will be charged the following fees:

\$0.15 per employee copied page - after the first 50 pages of black/white, 8 ½”x11”

\$1.00 certification fee

Cost of any items (large drawings, maps) which need to be sent out for reproduction will be charged at actual cost.

Voluminous Requests not in PDF

\$20 for 2 MB of data  
\$40 for > 2 - 4 MB of data  
\$100 for > 4 MB of data

Voluminous Requests in PDF format

\$20 for 80 MB of data  
\$40 for > 80 - 160 MB of data  
\$100 for > 160 MB of data

The KNOX Co. SWCD office will respond to a written request within five (5) working days except listed State and Federal holidays. An extension of an additional five (5) working days, except listed State holidays, may be necessary to properly respond.

Records may be inspected or copied. If inspected, a KNOX Co. SWCD employee must be present throughout the inspection.

Commercial Requests

Instead of 5 business days, a public body has 21 working (i.e., business, except listed State holidays) days after receipt of a request for records to be used for a commercial purpose within which to respond. A public body may charge up to \$10 for each hour spent by personnel in searching for and retrieving a requested record or examining the record for necessary redactions. No fees shall be charged for the first 8 hours spent by personnel in searching for or retrieving a requested record. A public body may charge the actual cost of retrieving and transporting public records from an off-site storage facility when the public records are maintained by a third-party storage company under contract with the public body.

You may appeal the decision of the FOIA officer by filing a Request for Review with the Illinois Attorney General’s Public Access Counselor within 60 calendar days from when the alleged violation occurred. Alternatively, the requester may file a civil action in the circuit court within two years after the alleged violation took place.

You can contact the Public Access Counselor at, "Public Access Counselor, Office of the Attorney General, 500 South 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Springfield, IL 62701". E-mail: [public.access@ilag.gov](mailto:public.access@ilag.gov)  
FOIA Hotline: 1-877-299-3642. Fax: (217) 782-1396

The place and times where the records will be available are as follows:

233 S. Soangetaha Road, Suite 4  
Galesburg, IL 61401  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for Federal holidays

The KNOX Co. SWCD office is located within the Galesburg United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service Center.

**Types of information:** Certain types of information maintained by the KNOX Co. SWCD are exempt from inspection and copying.

However, the following types or categories of records are maintained under our control:

- Monthly financial statements
- Annual receipts and disbursement reports
- Budget
- Audits
- Minutes of KNOX Co SWCD board of director open meetings.
- Policies
- Annual reports

Issued by: KNOX Co. Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors

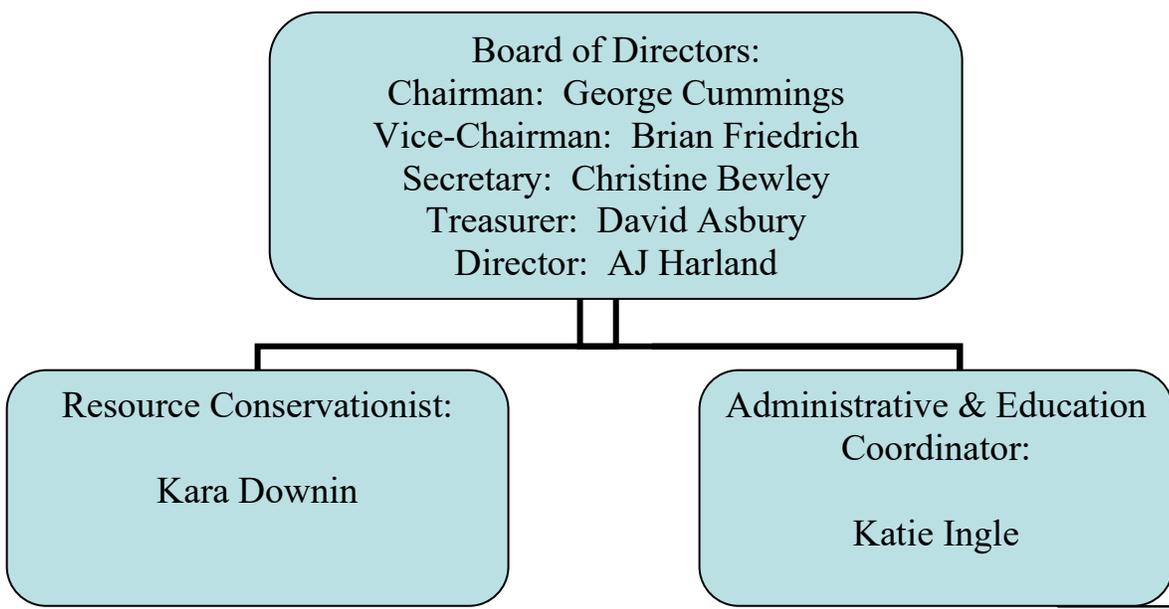
Date revised: 12/17/2025

Dates reviewed:

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Date	Signatures
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**KNOX County Soil and Water Conservation District Organizational Chart**



**Request for Information Under the  
Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

The Illinois FOIA provides for access to public information. If all or any part of the information requested is denied, the specific exemption(s) will be provided. Denial appeals to the Public Access Counselor in the Attorney Generals Office.

All fees shall be paid prior to delivery of any records. The fees for copying requested records are as follows:

\$0.15 - per employee copied page - after first 50 copies, black & white (8 1/2" x 11") \$3.00 - large drawings/maps  
\$1.00 - certification fee, if requested actual cost- for records sent out for reproduction

The KNOX Co. SWCD has five (5) working days to comply with a request for information. After notification that the requested records are available, they will be held for one week (5 business days, 8am-4:30pm). If the records are not collected or viewed within that time, a new Request for Information must be submitted. All Requests for Information under the FOIA must be submitted directly to the KNOX Co. SWCD Administrative Coordinator or Resource Conservationist. The information required by this form is MANDATORY in order to comply with 5ILCS 140/1. Failure to provide may result in this form not being processed.

Requestor's Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_ Requestor's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Day time Phone Number with area code \_\_\_\_\_ Date of request \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Information Requested (include pertinent address, dates, names):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

KNOX Co. SWCD response (requestor does not fill in below this line)

Approved

- ( ) The documents you requested are enclosed.
- ( ) The documents will be made available upon payment of copying costs of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
- ( ) You may inspect the records at the KNOX Co. SWCD offices during business hours from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

Denied

- ( ) The request creates an undue burden on the public body in accordance with Section 3(f) of the FOIA, and we are unable to negotiate a more reasonable request.
- ( ) The materials requested are exempt under Section 7 of the FOIA for the following reasons:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Individual(s) that determined request to be denied: \_\_\_\_\_

- ( ) Request delayed for the following reason(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
You will be notified by \_\_\_\_\_ as to the action taken on your request.
- ( ) The KNOX Co. SWCD does not have the records you requested.

FOIA Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Reply \_\_\_\_\_