

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS:

County Reports on Hate Incidents in Illinois (2020 - 2024)

Springfield, IL, April 9, 2025 - The Midwest Regional office of the Anti-Defamation League compiled a detailed breakdown of hate incidents across Illinois – providing county-level snapshots - from 2020 through 2024. They cover a wide range of incidents, from hate crimes to extremist activities to intimidation through hate leafletting aimed at immigrant, Black, Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQ+, and other vulnerable communities. The goal is to highlight the increase in these incidents and offer recommendations for how Illinoisans can address and prevent them moving forward.

Key Findings:

- **Statewide Trends:** Hate incidents have increased significantly in recent years, whether looking at ADL’s data or the annual FBI Hate Crimes report.
- **County-Specific Data:** The reports break down incidents by county, highlighting regional differences in the frequency and nature of hate crimes. The findings include examples of extremist groups distributing propaganda and engaging in hate speech throughout the state. Not only does the granular data demonstrate the value of tracking and reporting hate crimes and incidents, the complete lack of reporting in dozens of counties across Illinois displays a glaring gap in data, limiting the full picture of extremism in Illinois.
 - **2020 – 2024 ADL County-Level reporting:**
 - ADL reported 6+ incidents in 26 counties
 - ADL reported 1-5 incidents in 28 counties
 - ADL reported zero incidents in 48 counties
 - **2020 – 2024 High Level:**
 - ADL reported 1,054 incidents of Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, Terrorism
 - White Supremacist Propaganda: 588 (56%)
 - Anti-LGBTQ+: 19
 - White Supremacist Event: 9
 - Terrorist Attack: 3
 - **One County Snapshot: Cook County**
 - Total Incidents: 428
 - White Supremacist Propaganda: 106
 - Anti-LGBTQ Incidents: 11
 - White Supremacist Event: 6

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- **Extremist Groups:** The reports spotlight extremist groups operating in Illinois, shedding light on their activities and the white nationalist and anti-government rhetoric they promote.

Key Recommendations:

- Create a statewide strategy to address the rise of hate and extremism.
- Strengthen legal protections against harassment by extremists through the Neighborhood Freedom from Intimidation Act.
- Ensure all law enforcement agencies receive proper training on hate crimes to improve response and prevention.
- Improve coordination among law enforcement agencies to better track and respond to extremist threats.

These reports aim to shed light on the current state of hate incidents and extremism in Illinois and offer practical solutions for how the state can better protect its residents from these rising threats.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: All Counties (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

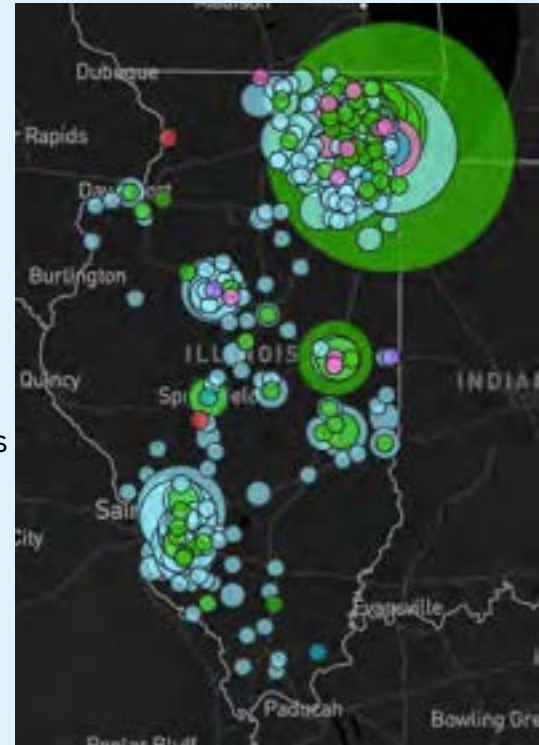
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- **Goyim Defense League (GDL)**, an antisemitic and white nationalist group, distributed thousands of hateful fliers in northern and central Illinois.

FBI HATE CRIMES

- Increased from **98** in 2021 to **347** in 2023.
- Majority of reported incidents were based on race/ethnicity (**54.5%**), then religion (**21.6%**) and sexual orientation (**19.6%**).
- Post 10/7, notable rise in antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate.

ADL ANTISEMITISM AUDIT

- Antisemitic incidents increased from **46** in 2020 to **209** in 2023, a **354%** increase.
- In 2023, incidents included **155** cases of harassment, **54** of vandalism and **two** assaults.
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ADL H.E.A.T. Map™ (Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, Terrorism) - IL 2020-2023

Reporting Shortcomings

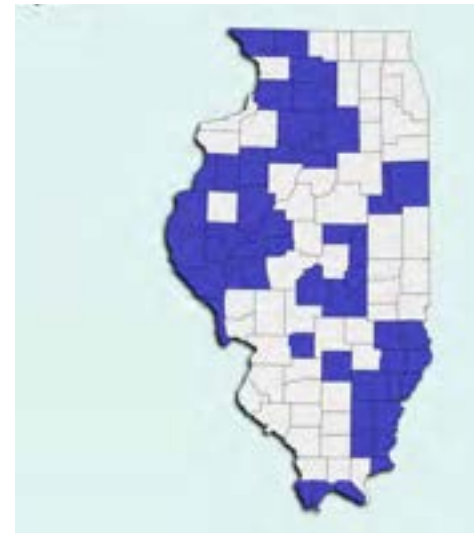


Counties with 5 or fewer incidents

28

“Data about hate crimes, however, do not draw an accurate picture of the problem of hate in Illinois or in the country. Many victims do not report incidents. When victims do report, law enforcement officers may or may not record or investigate those incidents as hate crimes. Additionally, federal law does not require local and state law enforcement agencies to collect or report hate crimes, leading many municipalities, even those who have highly publicized hate incidents within them, to be on record with zero hate crimes.” - Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes

2023 Annual Report



Counties with no reported incidents

48

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Boone County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

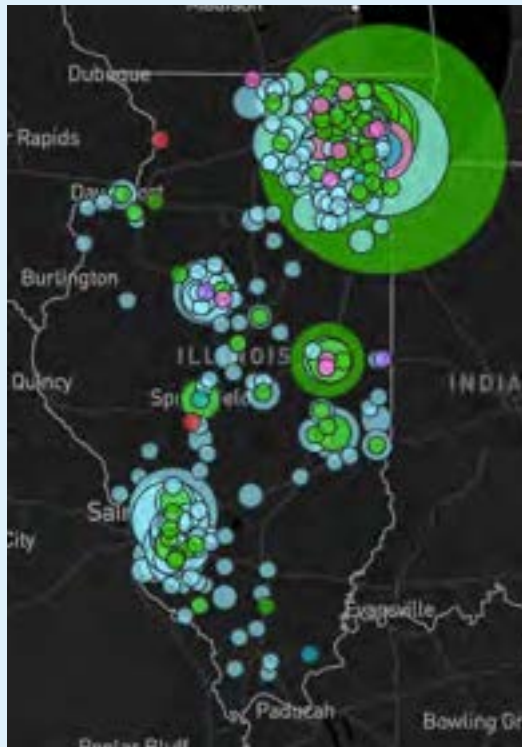
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- Ensure law enforcement shares data on extremist incidents for better threat assessment.

Boone County Snapshot

Home to approximately 53,202 residents with Belvidere township as the largest municipality.

90%

Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda from the **Patriot Front** and **White Lives Matters**, using phrases like "America first," "For the nation against the state," and "White Lives Matter".



In 2023 in Belvidere, protesters chanted, "Long Live the Intifada!"

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Champaign County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

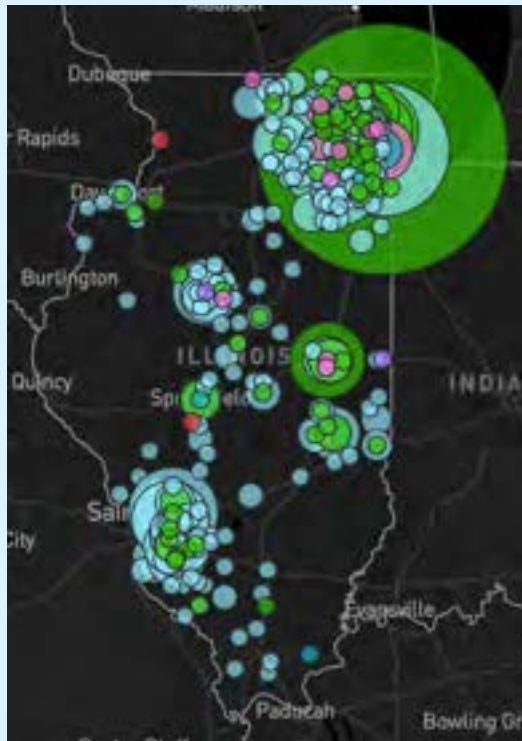
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Champaign County Snapshot

Home to approximately 210,275 residents with Champaign and Urbana as the largest municipalities in the county.



Source: <https://www.wcia.com/news/champaign-teen-charged-with-hate-crimes-after-cemetery-vandalized-swastikas-displayed-in-park/>

In 2023, a teenager spray painted a swastika at Mattis Park and defaced headstones at St. Mary’s Cemetery with swastikas and racial slurs directed at the Jewish and African-American communities.

Additionally, there have been reports of white supremacist hate leaflets targeting the immigrant community.

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

37 incidents*

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Clinton County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

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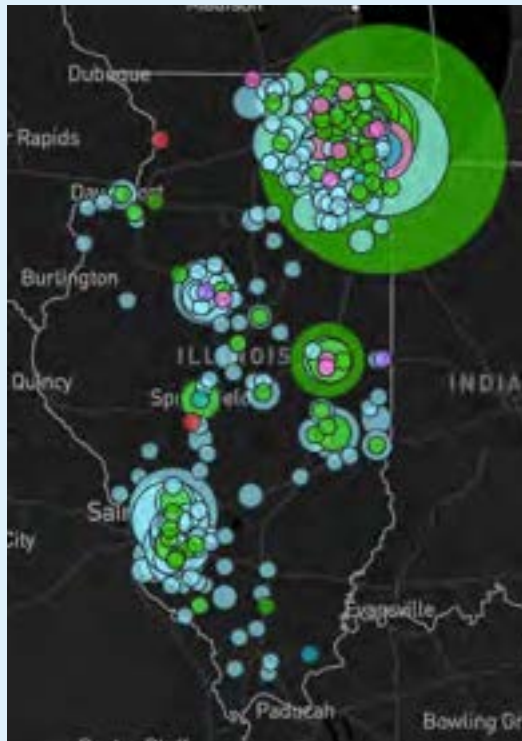
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Clinton County Snapshot

Home to approximately 36,899 residents with Breese and Carlyle as the largest municipalities in the county.



Pictured: Language from a Patriot Front leaflet.

Patriot Front, a white supremacist group, distributed propaganda that read: "For the nation, against the state," "Reject poison," "America is not for sale" and "For a new American nation state."

Elsewhere, the **National Justice Party**, also a white supremacist organization, posted hate messages.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Coles County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

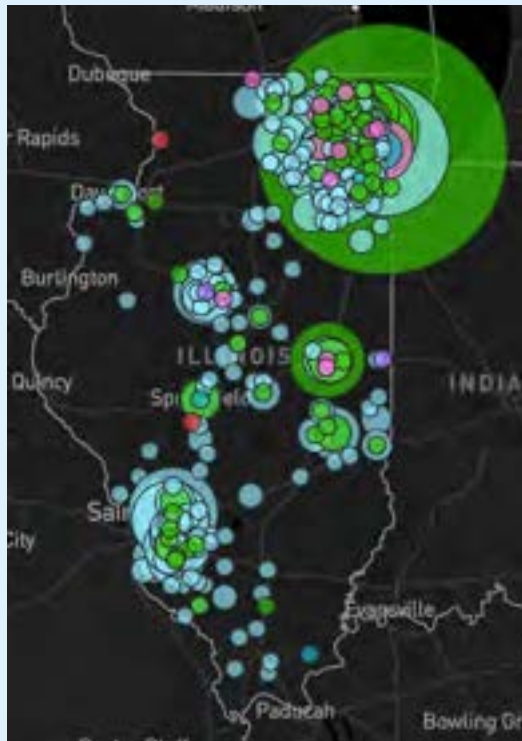
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Coles County Snapshot

Home to approximately 46,060 residents with Charleston as the largest municipality in the county.

100%

Of the **14** reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda from the **Goyim Defense League (GDL)**, the **New Jersey European Heritage Association (NJEHA)**, a small white supremacist group whose members see themselves as defenders of white European people and white culture), and the **Old Glory Knights (KKK group)**.



Image by Coryn Brock via Daily Eastern News

Eastern Illinois University, who has a student population of over 8,600 students with about 32% identifying as minorities or students of color, saw multiple incidents.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Cook County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

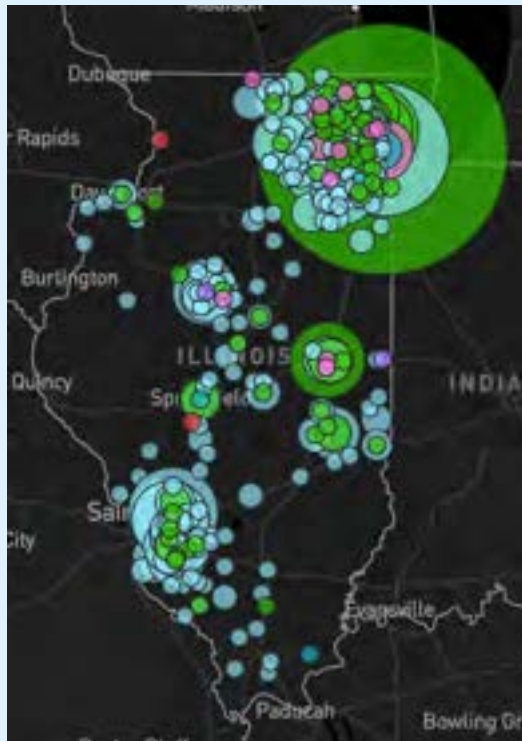
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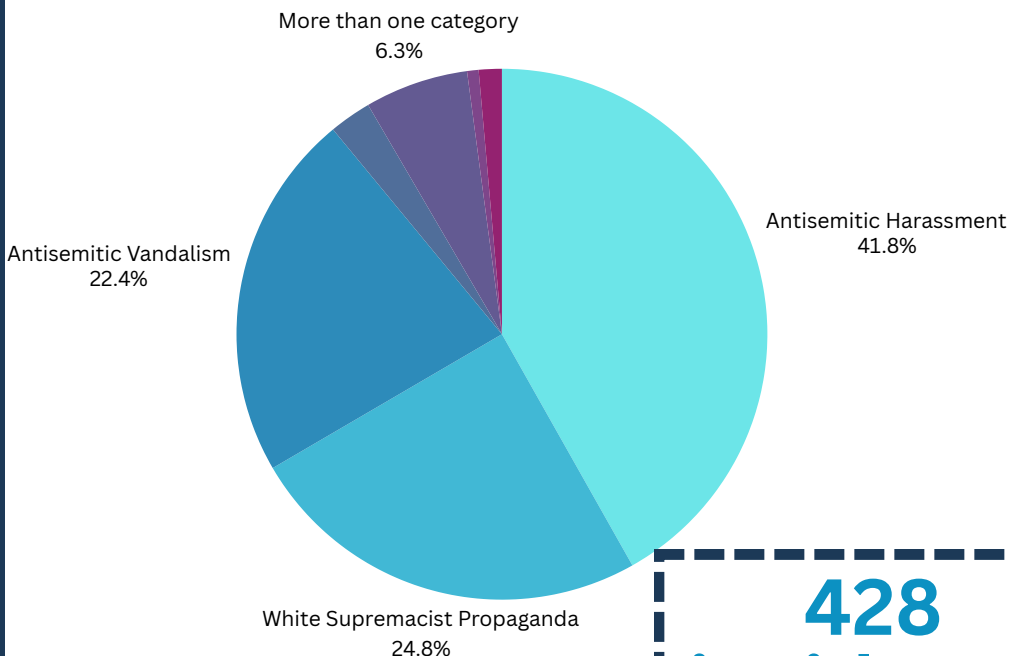
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Cook County Snapshot

Home to approximately 5,087,072 residents and contains the city of Chicago and the metropolitan municipalities.



428 incidents*

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: DeKalb County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

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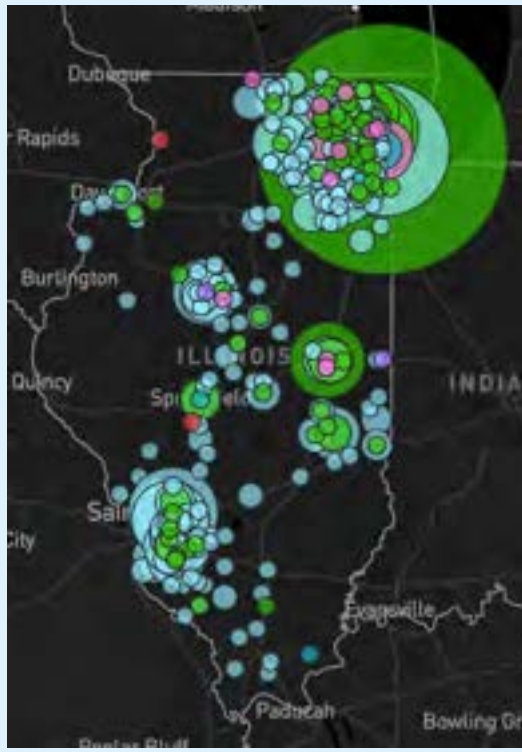
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DeKalb County Snapshot

Home to approximately 101,335 residents with DeKalb as the largest municipality in the county.

95%

Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda, mainly from the **Patriot Front**.



In DeKalb, a swastika, the n-word, “Patriot Front,” and 1488 – a symbol documented by the ADL as tied to white supremacist movements – were found spraypainted in multiple places at a public park.

21*

incidents

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: DuPage County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

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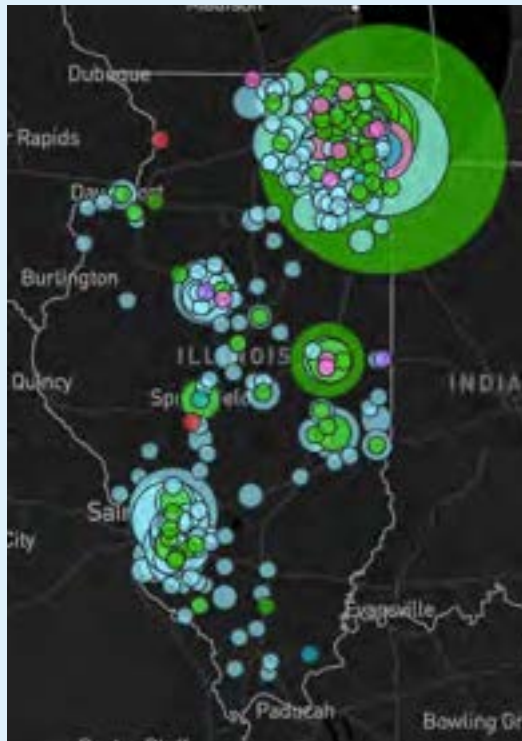
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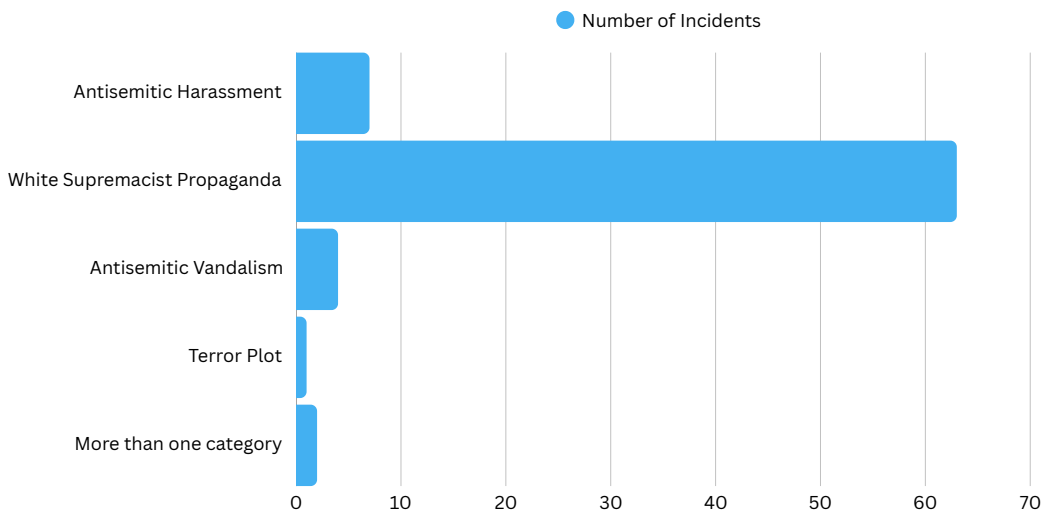
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DuPage County Snapshot

Home to approximately 937,142 residents and is one of the “collar counties” to the Chicago metropolitan area.



77 incidents*

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Grundy County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

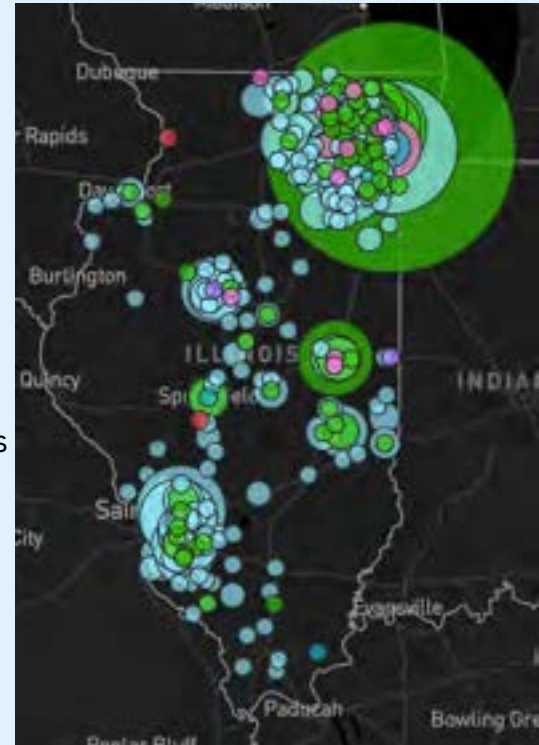
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Grundy County Snapshot

Home to approximately 52,533 residents with Morris and Coal City as the largest municipalities in the county.



Patriot Front propaganda.

Patriot Front and the **National Justice Party**, both white supremacist organizations, are active. Their slogans and literature have appeared in towns across the county, especially Morris.

Slogans include: “The Way to Victory: White Solidarity” and “White Unity.”

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Kane County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

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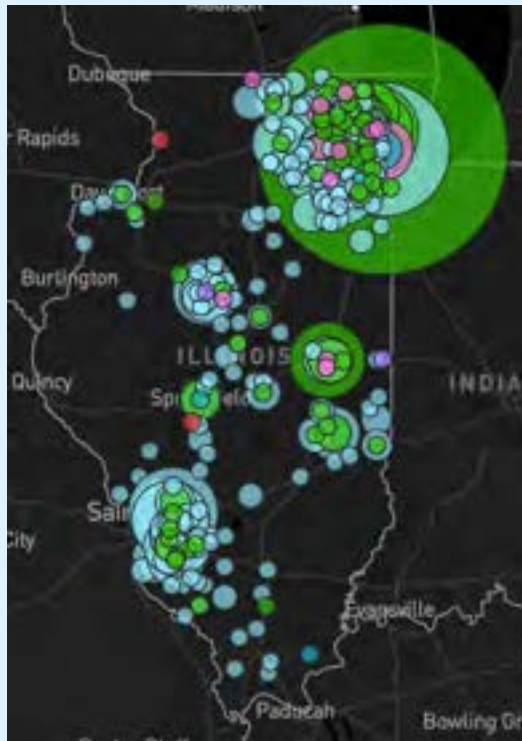
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Kane County Snapshot

Home to approximately 514,982 residents with Aurora, Elgin, and Geneve as the largest municipalities in the county.

86%

Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda from the **Patriot Front** and **National Justice Party (NJP)**, whose “unofficial” party platform includes calls for whites to be protected by the Civil Rights Act; an end to all immigration; promotion of traditional family values, and restrictions on Jews in the media, government and other institutions.



Other Incidents include:

- A package w/ swastika objects and decal was mailed to a home
- A swastika spray-painted on a fire hydrant.

28

incidents

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Kendall County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

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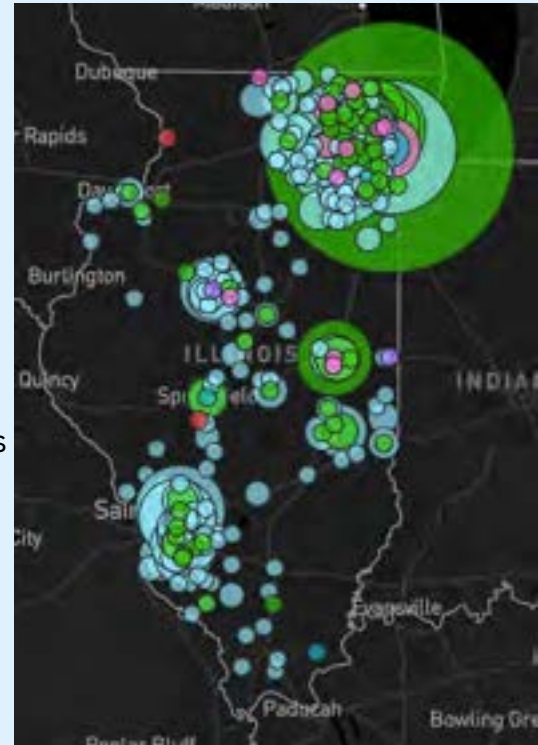
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Kendall County Snapshot

Home to approximately 143,171 residents with Oswego as the largest municipality in the county.

92%

Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda from the **Patriot Front**.



In 2020, the Oswego Ledger published a Letter to the Editor using the term “globalist,” an antisemitic euphemism for Jews. The stated that there was a “war” between “patriots” and “globalists.”

NOTE: According to the FBI Hate Crimes database, the Oswego Police Department reported zero hate crimes to the FBI during this time period.

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Illinois Big Picture

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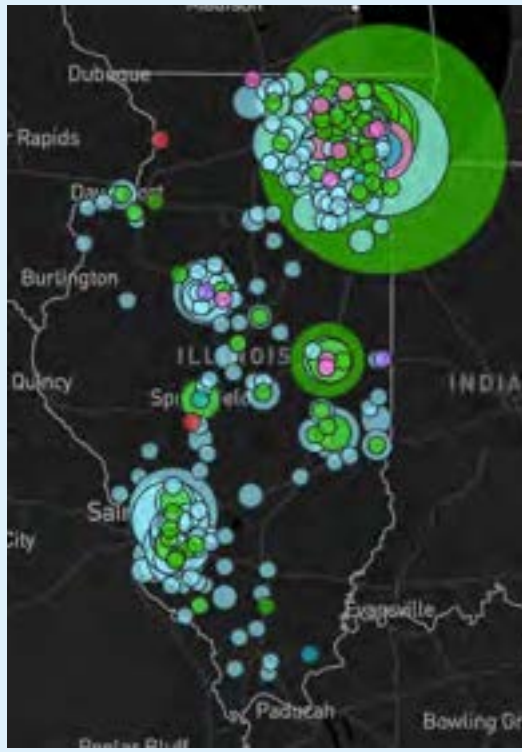
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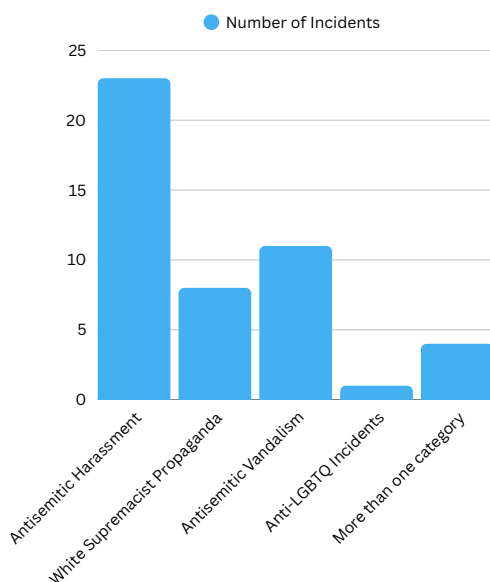
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CALL TO ACTION

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Lake County Snapshot

Home to approximately 718,604 residents with Waukegan as the largest municipality in the county.



Reported Incidents Include:

- A synagogue received an email from an individual who threatened to attack the synagogue and shoot congregants.
- Antisemitic and racist graffiti was discovered on the wall of a synagogue.
- Headstones at a Jewish cemetery were vandalized with swastikas and the words "Kanye was rite [sic]."

47 incidents*

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: LaSalle County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

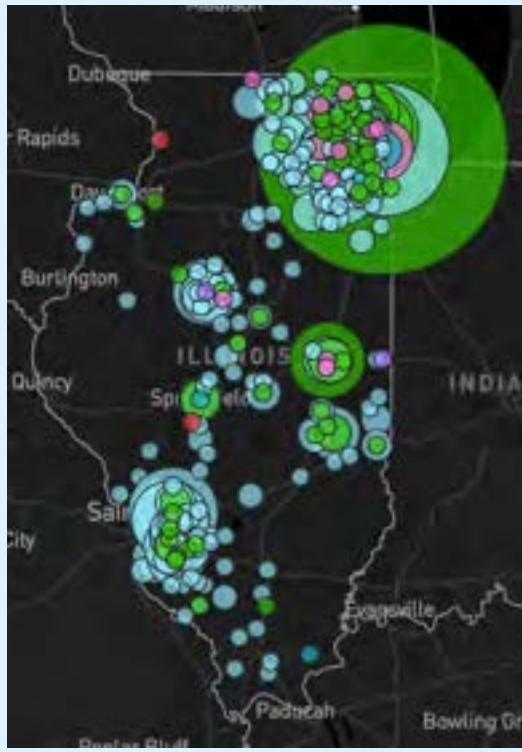
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- **Goyim Defense League (GDL)**, an antisemitic and white nationalist group, distributed thousands of hateful fliers in northern and central Illinois.

FBI HATE CRIMES

- Increased from **98** in 2021 to **347** in 2023.
- Majority of reported incidents were based on race/ethnicity (**54.5%**), then religion (**21.6%**) and sexual orientation (**19.6%**).
- Post 10/7, notable rise in antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate.

ADL ANTISEMITISM AUDIT

- Antisemitic incidents increased from **46** in 2020 to **209** in 2023, a **354%** increase.
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LaSalle County Snapshot

Home to approximately 108,309 residents with Ottawa and LaSalle as the largest municipalities in the county.



100%*



Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda from the **Patriot Front** and **National Justice Party (NJP)**, whose “unofficial” party platform includes calls for whites to be protected by the Civil Rights Act; an end to all

immigration; promotion of traditional family values, and restrictions on Jews in the media, government and other institutions.

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Macon County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

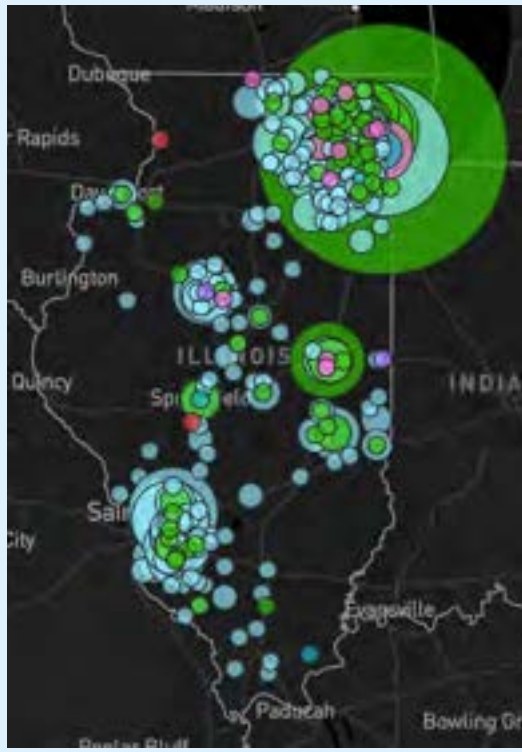
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Macon County Snapshot

Home to approximately 103,998 residents with Decatur and Mount Zion as the largest municipalities in the county.



The materials from the American Nazi Party.

In Decatur, a Jewish man was targeted with mailed pamphlets from the **American Nazi Party** and **White Alliance**. The propaganda was sent from the Chicago area and bore a crudely written address.

The white supremacist National Justice Party distributed hate-based literature in several towns across the county.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Cook County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

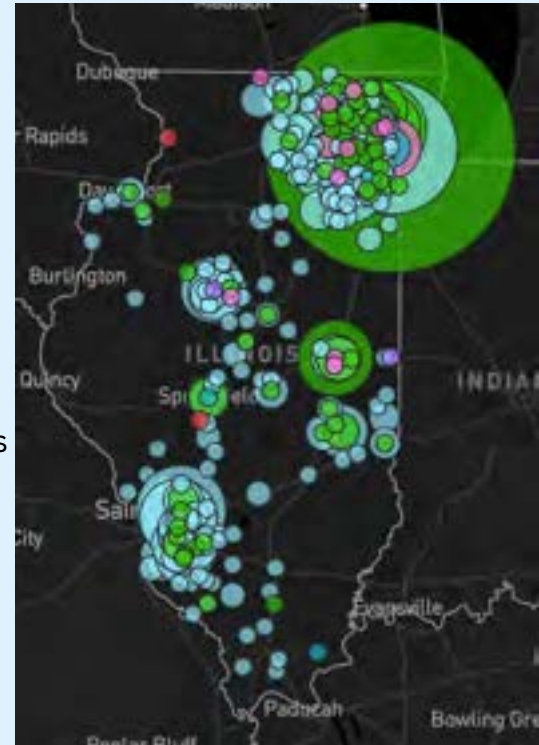
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Madison County Snapshot

Home to approximately 264,776 residents with Edwardsville and Alton as the largest municipalities.

92%*

Of the **89** reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda from the **Patriot Front, White Lives Matters,** and the **Bullion State Nationalists (BSN)**, which is a small white supremacist group mainly active in St. Louis, Missouri.



* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

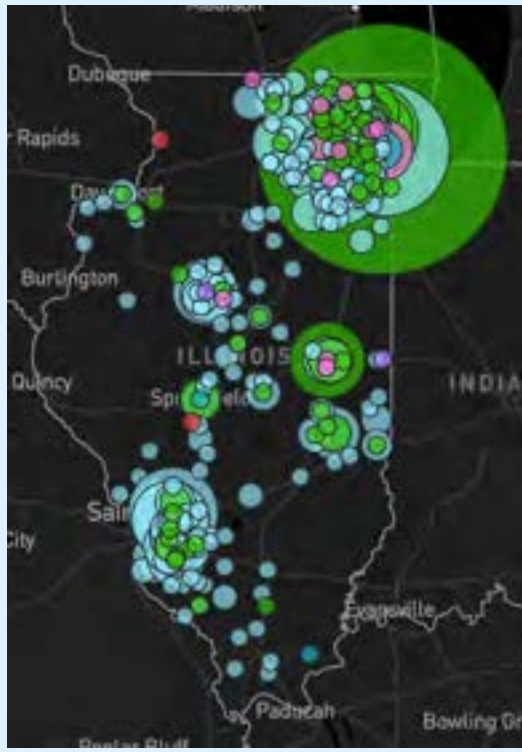
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McLean County Snapshot

Home to approximately 170,954 residents with Bloomington and Normal as the largest municipalities in the county.



Pictured: A Loyal White Knights recruitment document.

In Leroy, an unknown person or group distributed propaganda that read "White Lives Matter" at the top and condemned "queer sex" and "race mixing." In several towns, the Loyal White Knights, a Klan group, distributed propaganda.

Elsewhere, an African-American family received promotional material from an unknown Klan group.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Peoria County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

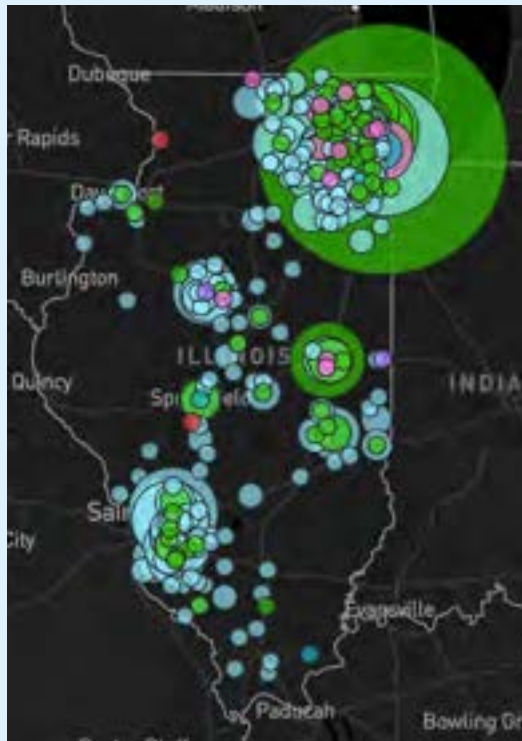
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Peoria County Snapshot

Home to approximately 181,830 residents with Peoria as the largest municipality in the county.

91%

Of the reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda, mostly from the **National Justice Party (NJP)**, an antisemitic white supremacist group that claims to be “an organization that will advocate for White civil rights.”



Source: Central Illinois Proud

Additionally, in 2023, the Peoria Planned Parenthood was firebombed.

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

23* incidents

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Randolph County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

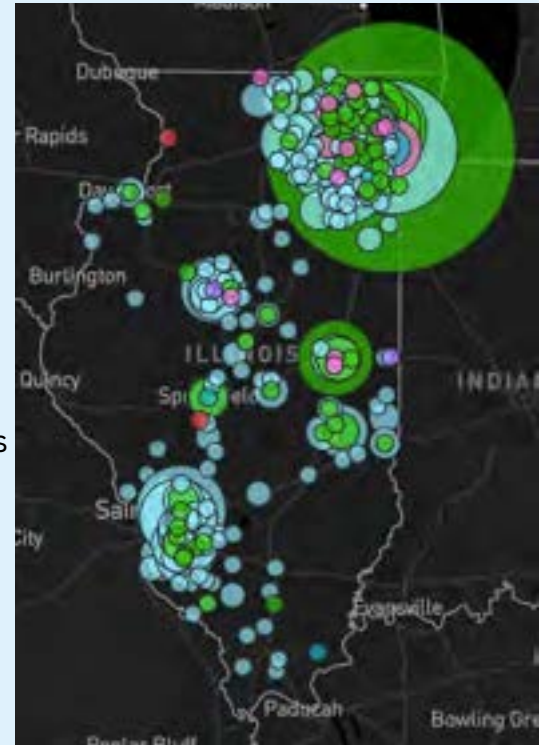
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Randolph County Snapshot

Home to approximately 30,163 residents with Chester and Sparta as the largest municipalities in the county.



Pictured: Propaganda from Patriot Front.

In Coulterville, Chester, Redbud, Tilden, and in towns around the county, the white supremacist **Patriot Front** distributed hate-based literature.

Messages included "American Spirit, European Blood" and "Free Occupied America."

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Rock Island County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

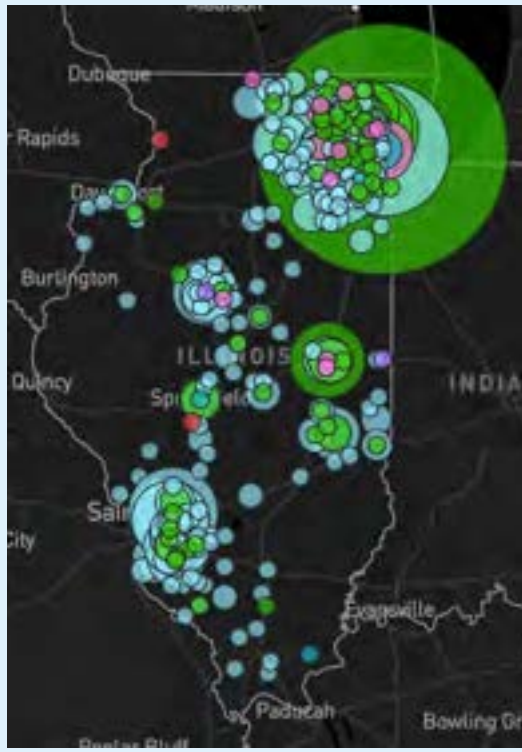
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Rock Island County Snapshot

Home to approximately 144,672 residents with Moline and Rock Island as the largest municipalities in the county.



National Alliance material received in nearby Davenport. Via Little Village magazine.

Among other incidents in Moline, the **National Alliance**, a neo-Nazi group, distributed propaganda in a residential neighborhood that called for, "Racial Distancing."

Hate flyers from other groups, including **Patriot Front** and the **Goyim Defense League**, appeared across the county.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: St. Clair County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

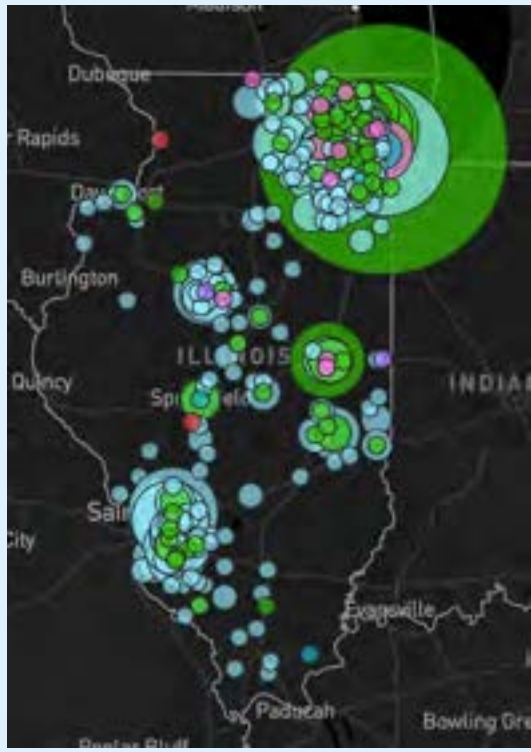
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St. Clair County Snapshot

Home to approximately 251,149 residents with Belleville and O’Fallon as the largest municipalities in the county.

98%

Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda, mostly from the **Patriot Front**, but also including **White Lives Matter** (a network of anonymous white supremacists).



Source: <https://www.bnd.com/news/local/article262551802.html>

Additionally, At an anti-Israel rally, protesters held signs with messages such as: "Intifada until victory" and "Resistance against occupation is a human right."

53

incidents

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Tazewell County (2020 - 2023)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

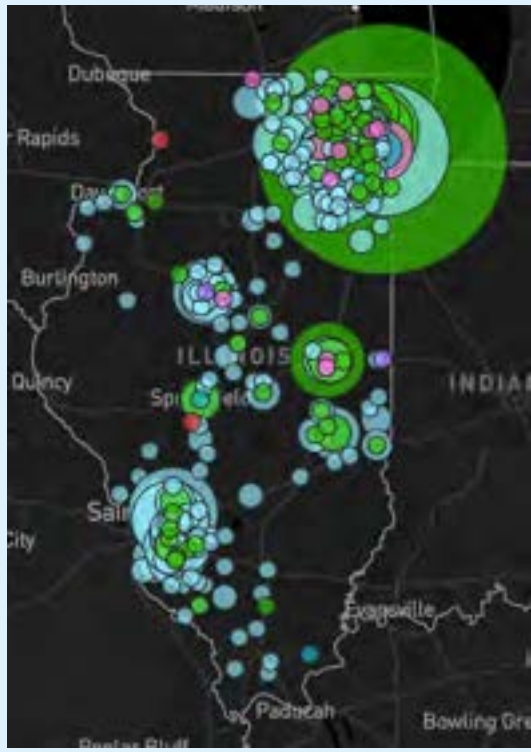
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Ensure law enforcement shares data on extremist incidents for better threat assessment.

Tazewell County Snapshot

Home to approximately 135,394 residents with Pekin as the largest municipality in the county.

93%*

Of the **14** reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda, mostly from the **National Justice Party (NJP)**, whose “unofficial” party platform includes calls for whites to be protected by the Civil Rights Act; an end to all immigration; promotion of traditional family values, and restrictions on Jews in the media and government.



* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Will County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

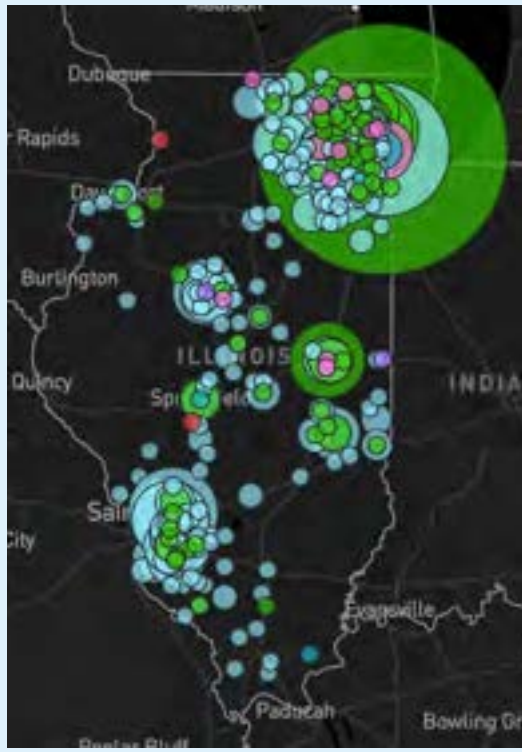
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Will County Snapshot

Home to approximately 285,350 residents with Joliet and Bolingbrook as the largest municipalities in the county.

94%

Of reported incidents are white supremacist propaganda, mostly from the **Patriot Front**, but also including the **Nationalist Social Club** (a neo-Nazi group) and the **National Justice Party (NJP)**.



Additionally, a resident displayed a flag depicting SS bolts in view of their neighbors.

* 2024 antisemitic incidents to be updated with release of 2024 ADL Audit.

52 incidents*

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Winnebago County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMIST GROUPS

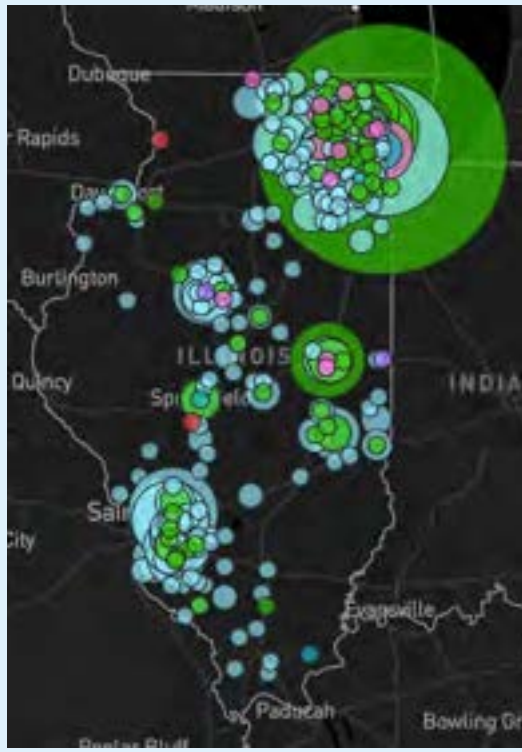
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Winnebago County Snapshot

Home to approximately 285,350 residents with Rockford and Machesney Park as the largest municipalities in the county.



Patriot Front flier distributed in Winnebago County. Image via WTVO.

In Rockford, a white man is charged with a hate crime for a racist stabbing spree that killed an 18-year-old Black Walmart employee. It is alleged that he used a racial slur prior and gave Black employees a “dirty look” prior to the incident.

Additionally, the white supremacist **Patriot Front** spread hate-based propaganda in several towns.

TRACKING EXTREMISM IN ILLINOIS: Woodford County (2020 - 2024)



Illinois Big Picture

EXTREMISIST GROUPS

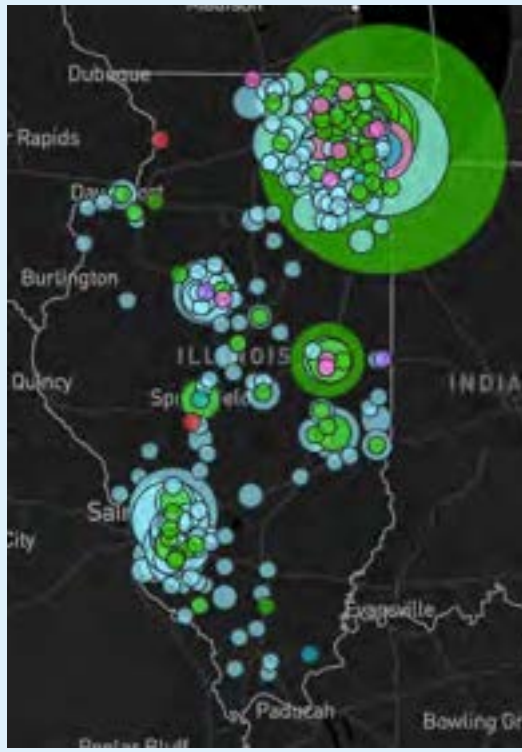
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Woodford County Snapshot

Home to approximately 38,467 residents with Eureka and Metamora as the largest municipalities in the county.



Pictured: Language from a National Justice Party leaflet.

Since 2023, the white supremacist **National Justice Party** has been active across the county, posting hate messages in several towns, including Bay View Gardens, El Paso, Germantown Hills, Metamora.

Language included: "Confronting the anti-White system" and "A Future for White Children."