



SHPO Archaeology Discovery Guide

If someone encounters what they suspect may be human bones or remains, they must contact the county coroner and the IDNR within 48 hours of the encounter, per the [Human Remains Protection Act](#), as amended (20 ILCS 3440.300). The coroner's office will determine if the bones or remains represent a recent death and require additional investigations. If the bones or remains are more than 100 years old, jurisdiction is transferred to the IDNR, which will initiate an investigation. The discoverer must keep the locations and details of all inadvertently discovered cultural resources confidential, except in communications with the county coroner and IDNR.

For more information please contact the IDNR: 217/785-4992, dawn.cobb@illinois.gov. For archaeological discoveries, please contact Jeff Kruchten, Principal Archaeologist, State Historic Preservation Office at 217/785-1279, jeff.kruchten@illinois.gov.

Although verification of the presence of cultural resources can be difficult, two clues are the presence of (1) artifacts on an excavated surface or in a spoil pile and (2) soil discolorations or anomalies.



Artifacts, such as those specimens illustrated in the following photographs, are the most common indicators for the presence of archaeological sites. Some of these will be familiar objects and easily recognized, while others may require special expertise to identify.

Stone tools are the most easily recognized pre-contact Native American artifacts present on archaeological sites in Illinois. These can include projectile points (arrowheads and spear tips), celts (axes), adzes, and hoes or spades.



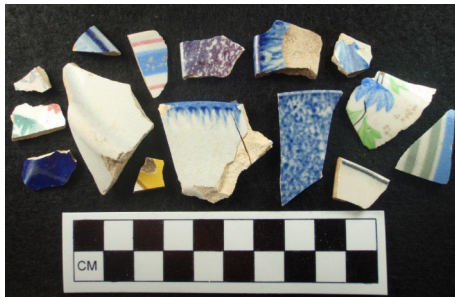
The majority of pre-contact Native American artifact assemblages are comprised of lithic “debitage” or fragments (flakes, chips) of stone (usually chert or flint), which are the byproducts of tool manufacture.



Pre-contact Native American ceramic artifacts are often broken into sherd fragments that can often look like lumps of dried dirt and require careful examination. Some will show signs of deliberate marking and/or decoration.



Artifacts related to Euro-American settlement and habitation may be encountered. These may include ceramics, glass (curved vessel and/or flat window), nails, and bricks.



Architectural features may also be encountered, including structural foundations (with or without cellars) and walls. Other features may include wells and cisterns.



Human remains are the most sensitive of what may be encountered. These, most importantly, must be treated with the utmost respect.