

Washington County School Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Guidelines

Introduction

Washington County has funding, free container labels and technical support available to help schools start, improve, or manage trash, recycling, food scraps, organics recycling, and waste reduction programs.

All public and non-public K-12 schools in Washington County are eligible for school recycling assistance funding. A complete School Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Agreement must be submitted to Washington County staff prior to the submission of a Washington County School Waste Reduction and Recycling Funds and Assistance Application.

Private and charter schools must first exhaust all BizRecycling grant funding before requesting funds through Washington County's School Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Program.

Funding Objectives

County assistance and funding helps schools achieve waste management goals described on the [Schools Waste Reduction and Recycling Best Practices Continuum](#). Provided funds may not support existing activities or operations. Funding is intended for new and innovative projects or to expand the scope of existing waste management efforts. Funds are to be used to cover project capital and startup expenses, and education/promotional costs for implementation of activities.

The [Schools Waste Reduction and Recycling Best Practices Continuum](#) is the guiding document for developing funded projects and recognizes schools/districts are at different places along the continuum. Technical assistance and resources will be made available to assist schools in improving recycling and organics management programs in line with the best practice's continuum. Schools/districts must provide status of recycling programs in regards to the school's best practices continuum.

[The continuum](#) was created in the fall of 2018 based on feedback and input from an advisory group consisting of Ramsey and Washington County school representatives and identifies four categories of best management practices for school waste reduction and recycling programs:

1. Administration
2. Recycling and Organics
3. Education and Information
4. Waste Reduction and Reuse

Advancement along Schools Continuum

The continuum breaks down the four categories of best management practices into specific initiatives. The initiatives are organized into the following stages:

1. Basic
2. Improved
3. Advanced

Advancement along the continuum in one or more of the four best management practice categories should be included in project goals.

Diversion Potential

Achievement of the largest benefit to the school's waste goals (diversion of materials from the trash stream, waste prevention, etc.) should be included in project goals. This benefit analysis for specific equipment items will be completed on a case by case basis.

Project Sustainability

Project proposals should demonstrate a strong plan to sustain the activities after grant funds have been exhausted.

Innovation

Project proposals exhibiting creative and innovative ideas and strategies to achieve improvements to recycling and organics management programs that are in line with the best practice's continuum and are readily applicable in other locations are encouraged.

Project Check-Ins and Reporting

Progress reports on project activities will be required for larger projects and may include regular check-in phone calls and written updates. Progress reports must detail progress towards project goals, adherence to timeline, and spending status. A final report may be required via a county provided form. Final project reports must include the project barriers encountered, solutions implemented, lessons learned, and the plan for program continuation.

Application Assistance and Approval

Washington County staff are available to help throughout the application process, project implementation, and report writing. Items needed to improve school recycling programs costing below \$500 may be provided without a completed project application. Additional resources needed to achieve the goals of the project outlined in an application but not explicitly listed in the project expenses section may be provided without a separate completed application. The application form must be drafted in consultation with county staff or a consultant under contract with the County. Contact Hannah Keller at Hannah.Keller@co.washington.mn.us or (651) 430-6683.

A school or district completing a School Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Application does not commit Washington County to provide assistance resources or to pay any costs incurred in preparation and submission of this application or in anticipation of awarded assistance. The county reserves the right to deny program resources or provide partial funding for project proposals. The county reserves the right to negotiate with any, all, or none of the application respondents.

Upon notification of project approval, county staff will contact the school/district to set up an initial meeting with the stakeholders involved with the project. The purpose of this initial meeting is to discuss project implementation and to review the reporting guidelines.