

# Attachment A

## **Hennepin County Residential Recycling Funding Policy**

**January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2016**



**Public Works  
Environment and Energy Department**

## **I. Policy Description**

The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners determined that curbside collection of recyclables from Hennepin County residents is an effective strategy to reduce reliance on landfills, prevent pollution, reduce the toxicity of waste, conserve natural resources and energy, improve public health, support the economy, and reduce greenhouse gases. Therefore, the county adopted the goals established by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) in its Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan and developed a Residential Recycling Funding Policy to help reach a 75% recycling rate by 2030.

The county will distribute all Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) funds received from the state to cities for curbside collection of residential recyclables, including organics. If cities form a joint powers organization responsible for managing a comprehensive recycling and waste education system for the residents of those cities, the county will distribute a recycling grant to that organization. Cities are expected to fulfill the conditions of the policy.

### **Length of Residential Recycling Funding Policy**

Hennepin County is committed to implement this policy and continue distributing all SCORE funds received from the state for the purpose of funding curbside residential recycling programs from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2016. The county may revise this policy if it determines changes are needed to assure compliance with state law and MPCA goals established for metropolitan counties. In the event that SCORE funds are eliminated from the state budget or significantly reduced, the county will consult with cities to develop a subsequent recommendation for the county board that will continue this policy and fund curbside recycling programs.

### **Fund Distribution**

The county will distribute to the cities one hundred percent (100%) of SCORE funds that the county receives from the state. SCORE funds are based on revenue collected by the State of Minnesota from the solid waste management (SWM) tax on garbage services. SCORE funds are subject to change based on actual SWM revenue and the funds allocated by the State Legislature. Funds distributed to cities for the current calendar year will be based on SCORE funds received by the county in the state's corresponding fiscal year.

In 2014 the State Legislature allocated additional funds to SCORE in 2015 and 2016. Beginning in fiscal year 2015 and continuing thereafter, of any money distributed that exceeds the amount the county received in fiscal year 2014, 50 percent must be expended on organics recycling.

## II. Recycling

### Allocation of Funds

The following formula will be utilized to determine each city's recycling SCORE grant each year.

$$\frac{\text{\# of households with curbside recycling in city}}{\text{Total \# of households with curbside recycling in county}} \times \text{Total SCORE funds available for recycling} = \text{Recycling grant amount available to the city}$$

Eligible households are defined as single family through eight-plex residential buildings or other residential buildings where each housing unit sets out refuse and recycling containers for curbside collection. The cities will determine the number of eligible households by counting the number of households with curbside recycling service on January 1 of each funding year. The number will be reported in the application for funding.

The total SCORE grant available for recycling will equal the 2014 base year amount plus 50 percent of additional SCORE funds. If the total SCORE funds are less than the 2014 base year, 100 percent of those funds will be available for recycling.

The grant can be used for recycling program expenses including capital and operating costs. Expenses associated with residential collection of organics are eligible recycling program expenses. However, yard waste expenses are ineligible. If organics and yard waste are commingled, the organics expenses must be tracked separately.

### Responsibilities of Cites

#### A. Grant Agreement

Each city seeking funding under the terms of the Residential Recycling Funding Policy must enter into a Residential Recycling Grant Agreement with the county for a term concurrent with the expiration of this policy, December 31, 2016. The grant agreement must be accompanied by a resolution authorizing the city to enter into such an agreement.

#### B. Application for Funding

Each city must complete an annual application by February 15 to receive funding for that year. The application consists of the Re-TRAC web-based report and a planning document submitted to the county describing the programs or activities the applicant will implement to increase recycling and make progress toward recycling goals.

#### C. Minimum Program Performance Requirements

1. Collection of Recyclables. Cities that contract for curbside recycling services will require a breakout of the following expenses when renewing or soliciting bids for new recycling services:
  - a) containers – if provided by the hauler
  - b) collection service
  - c) processing cost per ton
  - d) revenue sharing
  
2. Materials to be Collected. At a minimum, the following materials must be collected curbside:
  - a) Newspaper and inserts;
  - b) Cardboard boxes;
  - c) Glass food and beverage containers;
  - d) Metal food and beverage cans;
  - e) All plastic containers and lids, #1 – Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET, PETE), #2 High Density Polyethylene (HDPE), #3 – Vinyl Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), #4 – Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) and #5 – Polypropylene (PP) plastic bottles, except those that previously contained hazardous materials or motor oil;
  - f) Magazines and catalogs;
  - g) Cereal, cracker, pasta, cake mix, shoe, gift, and electronics boxes;
  - h) Boxes from toothpaste, medications and other toiletries;
  - i) Aseptic and gable-topped containers; and
  - j) Mail, office and school papers.

The county may add materials to this list and require cities to begin collection within one year of receiving notification from the county. Cities will notify the county if materials not found on this list will be collected.

3. Collection Methods. Cities must use one of the following systems to collect materials at the curb:
  - a) single sort system - all materials combined in one container; or
  - b) dual sort system - glass, metal and plastic together with paper separate

If one of these two systems is not in place, the city must submit a plan with its application for converting to a single or dual sort system by December 31, 2016. If the municipality is unable to meet this deadline, an alternative implementation schedule must be negotiated with the county.

4. Education and Outreach.
  - a) County Responsibilities

- 1) Coordinate meetings of the communications committee, which will be composed of county, cities, and other stakeholders.
- 2) Produce education material templates and print the template materials for cities. Materials will also be available online to download.
- 3) Provide a minimum of eight promotional resources that will include a newsletter article, a web story, social media posts, and printed promotional materials for municipalities on a variety of waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and proper disposal messages.
- 4) Develop an annual priority message campaign. The campaign will be one main message to promote throughout the year; for example “recycle magazines.” The message and the materials will be developed with the communications committee. The county will provide templates and be responsible for primary distribution of the campaign through direct mail, advertising, or public relations. The cities will be required to support the campaign through their communication channels.

b) City Requirements

- 1) Use county terminology when describing recycling guidelines (i.e. description of materials accepted and not accepted, preparation guidelines, etc.).
- 2) Use images provided by the county or the Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board, if using images of recyclables.
- 3) Use the county’s terminology, preparation guidelines and images on the city’s website.
- 4) Mail a recycling guide once a year to residents using a template developed by the communications committee and produced and printed by the county at the county’s expense. If a municipality does not want to use the template produced by the county, the municipality may develop its own guide at the municipality’s expense, with prior approval by the county. If the city relies on its hauler to provide the recycling guide, this guide would also require approval by the county.
- 5) Complete two additional education activities from a menu of options developed by the communications committee to support the priority message campaign.

Any print material that communicates residential recycling guidelines that were not provided by the county template will require county approval. This does not apply to waste reduction and reuse, articles on recycling that do not include guidelines, and social media posts. The county will respond within five business days to any communication piece submitted.

5. Use of Funds.

- a) The city must use all grant funds for waste reduction and recycling capital and operating expenses in the year granted. Cities will not be reimbursed any funds in excess of actual expenses.
- b) The city may not charge its residents through property tax, utility fees or any other method for that portion of the costs of its recycling program funded by county grant funds.
- c) The city must establish a separate accounting mechanism, such as a project number, activity number, or fund that will separate recycling revenues and expenditures from other municipal activities, including solid waste and yard waste activities.
- d) Recycling and waste reduction activities, revenues, and expenditures are subject to audit.
- e) Cities that do not contract for curbside recycling services will receive grant funds provided that at least ninety percent (90%) of the grant funds are credited back to residents and the city meets all minimum program requirements. The additional ten percent (10%) may be used for administrative and promotional expenses.

6. Reporting Requirements.

- a) Each city must submit an annual recycling report to the county electronically using the Re-TRAC web-based reporting system by February 15 of each year. If a city is unable to access Re-TRAC, the county must be contacted by February 1 to make arrangements for alternative filing of the report.
- b) Each city must calculate its participation rate in the curbside recycling program during the month of October. The participation rate will be reported in Re-TRAC. The methodology for measuring participation must be provided to the county upon request.
- c) Each city must submit an annual planning document to the county describing the programs or activities the applicant will implement to increase recycling and make progress toward county goals.

7. Recycling Performance. On an annual basis, each city must demonstrate a reasonable effort to maintain and increase the average amount of recyclables collected from its residential recycling program to at least 725 pounds per household or a minimum recovery rate of 80%, by December 31, 2015. The goal remains the same for December 31, 2016. An alternative performance option for cities with organized waste collection is to validate at least a 35% recycling rate. To ensure the accuracy of data for these metrics, cities will be required, upon request, to provide documentation on the methodology used to calculate performance. To the extent practicable, the results should rely on actual data rather than estimates.

Failure by a city to demonstrate measureable progress toward goals will result in the city being required to submit a recycling improvement plan within 90 days of being notified by the county. The recycling improvement plan must be negotiated with the county and specify the efforts that will be undertaken to yield the results necessary to achieve the goals. The plan shall focus on the following areas: type of container, sort method, materials collected,

frequency of collection, education and outreach, performance measurement, and incentives. Funding will be withheld until the city's recycling improvement plan is approved by the county.

In cooperation with the county, the city may be required to participate in waste and recycling sorts to identify recovery levels of various recyclables in their communities. Based on the results of the study, the county and city will collaborate to increase the recovery of select recyclable materials being discarded in significant quantities.

#### **D. Partnership**

The partnership between the county and cities has been highly effective in educating and motivating behavior of residents resulting in significant amounts of waste being reduced and recycled. In order to continue this partnership and increase these efforts, program activities of cities must be coordinated with county and regional efforts. Cities are responsible for cooperating with the county in an effort to reach the county's goals for recycling and organics recovery. Quarterly recycling coordinator meetings are an opportunity to share resources and facilitate the coordination of efforts.

### **Responsibilities of Hennepin County**

#### **A. Application Form**

The county will provide an application form by December that each city will use to report on its recycling program and request grant funding for the next year.

#### **B. Payments**

The county will make grant payments to each city in two equal payments. One payment will be made after the county receives the application, which will consist of the Re-TRAC report and the planning document. A second payment will be made after the report has been approved, measurable progress toward the goals has been confirmed, and, if necessary, a recycling improvement plan has been approved by the county. If the city meets the county requirements, both payments will be made during the same calendar year.

### III. Organics Recycling

#### Allocation of Funds

The following formula will be used to determine a city's organics grant each year.

$$\frac{\text{Number of households with curbside organics in city}}{\text{Total number of households with curbside organics in county}} \times \frac{\text{Total SCORE funds available for organics}}{\text{Total SCORE funds available for organics}} = \frac{\text{Organics grant amount available to the city}}{\text{Total SCORE funds available for organics}}$$

The total SCORE funds available for organics recycling will equal 50 percent of the additional SCORE revenue allocated by the State Legislature. If the total SCORE funding is less than the 2014 base year, no funds will be available for organics recycling.

#### Application for Funds

To apply for funds, a city must submit the number of eligible households that signed up for organics to the county by September 1 of each funding year.

#### Use of Funds

The grant funds may be used for organics program expenses, including the following:

- Contract cost of service (to the city or its residents)
- Discount to new customers
- Carts
- Compostable bags
- Kitchen containers
- Education and outreach

Program administration is an ineligible expense. Yard waste expenses are ineligible expenses. If organics and yard waste are collected together, the organics expenses must be tracked separately. If the city passes funds through to a hauler, 100% of those funds must be credited to households' bills.

In addition, the following requirements apply:

- All grant funds must be used during the term of the agreement. Funds not spent must be returned to the county.
- Funds must be expended on eligible activities per Minnesota State Statute 115A.557.
- A city may not charge its residents through property tax, utility fees or any other method for that portion of the costs of its organics program funded by county grant funds.
- Cities must be able to account for organics expenditures separately upon request by the county. Expenditures are subject to audit.

## **Education and Outreach**

The partnership between the county and cities has been highly effective in educating and motivating the behavior of residents, resulting in significant amounts of waste being reduced and recycled. In order to continue this partnership with organics recycling, the county encourages cities to coordinate program activities with county and regional efforts.

The county will work with cities to provide assistance with the following:

- Standard terminology and images
- Organics recycling guide (yes-no list)
- Promotional resources to increase participation

## **Reporting**

A report on the city's organics program must be submitted electronically to the county by February 15 following each funding year. The report must include, but is not limited to, the following:

Basic Program Information:

- Hauler
- Collection method
- Where organics are delivered to and processed at
- Is service opt-in or opt-out
- Cost of service to residents and contract cost to the city
- How the service is billed
- Items included in service: curbside collection, cart, compostable bags, etc.

Results

- Tons
- Number of households signed up
- Average pounds per household per year
- Participation (set-out rate on pickup day)
- How funds were used