

2026 Community Recycling Awareness Grant
For Cities, Villages, and Townships in Cuyahoga County

Purpose of the Grant: The District's Community Recycling Awareness Grant (CRAG) is primarily an education and awareness grant. The grant funds communities to inform, instruct, or remind residents about waste reduction, recycling right, composting, and proper disposal.

Application Deadline: January 30, 2026

ABOUT THE DISTRICT

The Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District is the public agency helping the people of Cuyahoga County reduce, reuse, and recycle, at home, at work, and in their communities. We provide information, expertise, and programs that support sustainable materials management and reduce the environmental impact of waste. Learn more at CuyahogaRecycles.org

ABOUT THE GRANT

The Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District offers the Community Recycling Awareness Grant (CRAG) to help communities educate residents about waste reduction and proper recycling. The District created the grant to keep recycling messages consistent from community to community using custom templates, designed by the District, for communities to use. Funding is also available to help communities conduct recycling collection events; shredding events; purchase permanent signage for recycling programs and events; purchase public space recycling containers; purchase drop-off recycling containers; and purchase public space composting containers. Applications for events and equipment must contain an associated educational component.

Regular education and reminders for residents about proper recycling help reduce confusion about recycling. They also lower contamination in recycling carts or bins while encouraging best practices for waste reduction and recycling right.

Any community (city, village, or township) located in Cuyahoga County may apply for a grant of up to \$6,000. Grants will be awarded competitively according to the evaluation criteria listed below and are subject to final approval by the District's Board of Directors.



ELIGIBLE PROJECTS / COSTS

The types of eligible projects are listed below. A local match is not required for this grant unless a project's cost exceeds the grant amount awarded by the District. In this case, the community must fund the excess cost.

1. Recycling Awareness and Education Materials

Allowable costs include the design, printing, production, and mailing of brochures, calendars, cart tags, fliers, info cards, mailers, newsletters, postcards, recycling signs, cart stickers, banners, and refrigerator magnets.

Communities are encouraged to use custom templates or the design tools and services offered by the District to produce any grant-funded education pieces. Templates and graphics are available for refrigerator magnets, banners, info cards, cart tags, and signs. Graphics and text that can be incorporated into other items, such as calendars and brochures, are available. Additionally, our staff will assist any community in creating a custom piece.

Make sure your recycling information or message is correct. All printed material (signs, posters, calendars, cart stickers, booklets, labels, etc.) must be approved by District staff before production or printing. This is a requirement for reimbursement of funds.

Brand guidelines, logos, icons, and customizable pieces can be accessed at:

- <http://toolkit.cuyahogarecycles.org/>
- Login: CCSWDToolKit ('K' must be capitalized)
- Password: WelOverecycling! ("0" is a zero, not a letter)
- Hard click on your community's name to highlight it in blue, then submit. The login will take you to your customizable products.

2. Recycling or Composting Containers

Allowable costs include purchasing public space recycling containers; connected, integrated, or modular recycling/compost/landfill containers; or event recycling containers. Appropriate signage is required and must indicate what should be placed in the containers.

Make sure your recycling information or message is correct. All printed material (signs, posters, calendars, cart stickers, booklets, labels, etc.) must be approved by District staff before production or printing. This is a requirement for reimbursement of funds.

3. Paper Shredding Events and Special Waste Collections

Allowable costs include hiring a paper shredding company, creating permanent signage, and event promotions such as print ads. Communities must include two quotes for paper shredding services in their application.

No more than two shredding events per applicant will be funded. The community and the contractor should plan accordingly for volume capacity and staffing during the event. The District requires records of weight collected and car counts from the events.

The District will not fund shredding event(s) that do not include an educational component.

4. Other Education or Awareness Project

If your community would like to propose another type of education or awareness project that is in keeping with the goals of this grant, please contact the District before applying.

SPECIAL PROJECT GRANT

The District also offers a Special Project Grant for unique projects such as cart tagging programs and equipment purchases. For details, see www.cuyahogarecycles.org/district_grants/

UNALLOWABLE COSTS

- NO promotional giveaways like yard waste bags, t-shirts, mugs, pens, pencils, bags, balloons, seed packets, etc.
- NO city calendars, newsletters, or brochures not exclusively devoted to recycling and waste reduction.
- NO labor or auxiliary police for recycling events.
- NO stand-alone trash containers.
 - *Note: All connected, integrated, or modular recycling/compost/landfill stations must be reviewed and approved by the District.*
- NO shipping and handling or delivery costs for recycling or composting containers or stations.
- NO reimbursements for purchases, projects, events, or print collateral made or invoiced before grant award approval by the Solid Waste District Board of Directors.
- NO reimbursement for printed material (signs, posters, calendars, cart stickers, booklets, labels, etc.) not receiving approval by District staff before the grantee produces or prints the item/material.

RECYCLING EDUCATION TIPS

- Consider that messaging and lists of acceptable materials have changed, and items you previously created may no longer be applicable.
- Confirm your community's list of accepted recyclables before designing your education piece. Check with District staff and your MRF or waste contractor.
- Use clear messaging plus photos and graphics whenever possible.
- Timestamp your education postcards, magnets, or flyers so residents are informed which version they have and if it's the most recent.
- Ask District staff for assistance with recycling language, best practices for signage, green tips, or calendars. We can help you create the messages and ensure they are correct.
- Create reusable signs and banners without dates so they aren't obsolete after the event. For instance, if you always hold a shred event on the third Saturday of April, refer to the date this way rather than having a specific date and year.
- Support a unified recycling message in Cuyahoga County by using the material icons and graphics provided by the District.
- Consider new and different ways to reach your residents. Think about how you can incorporate waste reduction and recycling education year-round through municipal newsletters, e-blasts, phone calls, or social media.
- Involve residents to learn how they would like to receive regular reminders about waste reduction and recycling right.
- Stop by the District to see unique samples of educational pieces and projects by other communities.
- Partner with a neighboring community for a recycling, composting, or shredding event. It may help lower budget costs and improve date scheduling.
- Track the number of cars, vehicles, or residents served at a shred event. Make sure your vendor knows in advance that you need a record of the weight collected.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Degree to which the project will encourage residents to reduce waste and recycle right.
- Degree to which the application describes the grant project, including the education component and activities to be implemented.
- Degree to which the funding request is reasonable, and the costs are explained and justified.
- Degree to which applicant has managed past applications/projects and adherence to grant guidelines.

CONDITIONS OF THE GRANT

- Grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement upon notice of award.
- All grantees must implement the grant project described in its application or obtain District approval for any modifications to the approved project.
- **Pre-approval of all awareness materials**, including videos, must be obtained from the Solid Waste District before final production. **If you receive a grant, your award email does not serve as final approval of your education materials.**
- This is a **reimbursement grant**. Grantees must keep records of all grant expenses including purchase orders, invoices, receipts, and proof of payment to account for the use of all grant funds. Grants will be disbursed following the submittal of expense documentation and the *Grant Summary and Reimbursement Report*. Reimbursement of funds cannot be made without proof of payment for grant expenditures.
- **A hard copy of your *Grant Summary and Reimbursement Report* should be at the Solid Waste District office no later than 4:00 PM on November 6, 2026.**
 - *We are not responsible for delivery delays by the postal service.*
 - *If all required documents are unavailable, partial reports should be submitted by the deadline so grant dollars remain allocated for your community. Notify the Grant Contact about any delays in invoices or cleared payments.*
 - *Failure to submit the required grant close-out and reimbursement documentation by the deadline will affect future grant applications and funding levels.*

GRANT TIMELINE

Early October 2025	Announcement of grant posting.
January 30, 2026	Application deadline. A hard copy of the application is due at the Solid Waste District by 4:00 PM.
Early March 2026	Announcement of CRAG awards and forms will be e-mailed to the grant contact(s) and mayor.
Mid-Late March	Signed acceptance/CRAG award acknowledgment form due to District.
Late March-October	Implement your CRAG grant project. As soon as the project is complete, request reimbursement by submitting a hard copy of the final report and supporting documentation.
September 30, 2026	Final date to submit draft education pieces for approval.
November 6, 2026	Deadline to submit a hard copy of <i>Grant Summary and Reimbursement Report</i> by 4:00 PM.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete the application form and budget. Attach your project narrative and supporting documents. Do not use report covers.
- It is not required to include a sample education piece. You will submit your draft design after receiving notice of the award.
- Mail or deliver one complete copy of your application packet to the District contact below.
- **Applications are due at the Solid Waste District by 4:00 PM on January 30, 2026.**

GRANT CONTACT

Cristie Snyder, Communications Specialist
Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District, 4750 East 131 Street, Garfield Heights, Ohio 44105
(216) 443-3707 | csnyder@cuyahogacounty.gov



2026 COMMUNITY RECYCLING AWARENESS GRANT APPLICATION

Purpose of the Grant: The District's Community Recycling Awareness Grant is primarily an education and awareness grant. The grant funds communities to inform or remind residents about waste reduction, recycling right, composting, and proper disposal.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Community: _____

Address: _____

Grant Contact Name and Title: _____

(This is the person responsible for implementing the grant)

Grant Contact Phone: _____ Grant Contact Email: _____

Mayor's Name: _____ Mayor's Email: _____

Add'l Grant Contact: _____ Add'l Grant Contact Email: _____

City Communications Contact and Title (newsletters, social media): _____

Contact Phone: _____ Contact Email: _____

AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUEST: _____

BUDGET

Complete the following table to indicate how the grant funds will be spent. Break out the costs for each expenditure. For instance, if your community proposes to produce a recycling brochure for residents, indicate separately, the cost to design the brochure, print the brochure, and mail or distribute the brochure. Your budget details should be based on actual quotes or estimates.

Your grant request should not exceed \$6,000. If your total project cost is more than \$6,000, your community is expected to pay the difference.

ITEM OR SERVICE	QUANTITY (if applicable)	UNIT COST	EXTENDED COST
TOTAL PROJECT COST			



PROPOSED GRANT ACTIVITY(S)

Proposed Grant Activity (check all applicable)	A Recycling Awareness and Education (REQUIRED)	B Recycling and/or Composting Containers	C Shredding Event or Special Waste Collection	E Other Education or Awareness Project (up to \$6,000)

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Include these items in your application packet:

- Applicant information and budget.
- Narrative explaining your project, quotes or estimates, and supporting documents.
- Specifications and photos of containers that you'd like to purchase.

Including a sample education piece is NOT required at application time. All printed material (signs, posters, calendars, cart stickers, booklets, labels, etc.) must be approved by District staff before the grantee produces or prints the item/material. This is a requirement for reimbursement of funds.

GRANT NARRATIVE

Please provide the following information for each applicable grant activity and attach it to your application.

A. Recycling Awareness and Education Projects

- Describe your recycling education awareness project and how it will be implemented.
- Describe the graphics, information, or templates you will use.
- Who will be responsible for completing this project?
- When will the project be initiated and completed? How many residents or households will this impact/serve?
- Explain budget details based on actual quotes or estimates.

B. Recycling and Composting Container Purchase

- Indicate the number and type of containers to be purchased. Include specifications and a picture.
- Where will the containers be located, and what recyclables will be collected?
- Describe the signage that will be placed on or near containers.
- How will the containers be serviced? Will you collect any data from the materials recycled?
- Who will be responsible for completing this project?
- When will the project be initiated and completed? How many residents or households will this impact/serve?
- Explain budget details based on actual quotes or estimates.

C. Paper Shredding or Special Waste Collections

- Indicate which type of event you plan to host and the date, location, and hours. If you are hosting a shredding event, what company will you hire? Explain how the event will be implemented.
- How will you obtain a vehicle count or attendance record during the event? How will you record the weight collected?
- How will this event be promoted? How will it be staffed? Will someone take photos during the event?
- Who will be responsible for implementing this project and obtaining data?
- When will the project be initiated and completed? How many residents or households will this impact/serve?
- Explain budget details based on actual quotes or estimates.

D. Other Education or Awareness Project

- If you are proposing an education or awareness project not described here, please describe your project in detail and justify your budget request.
- Who will be responsible for completing this project?
- When will the project be initiated and completed? How many residents will this impact/serve?
- Explain budget details based on actual quotes or estimates.