

Municipal Recycling and Waste Reduction Program

What is the Recycling and Waste Reduction (RWR) Program?

This is a competitive grant program to assist Georgia's local governments with their efforts to reduce solid waste through recycling and waste reduction activities. GEFA administers the RWR program with funding from the Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund, which is managed by the Environmental Protection Division and financed by a \$1 fee on replacement tires purchased in the State. The goal of the grants is to help local governments foster an integrated approach to waste reduction through waste minimization, recycling, composting and other innovative programs.

Projects and Activities:

Eligible activities for funding include new recycling programs or the expansion of existing recycling activities, particularly those that enhance the ability to meet market specifications or the collection and aggregation of recyclables from small generators. Past projects have included the construction of sorting and processing facilities, the purchase of necessary recycling equipment (conveyors, balers, crushers, forklifts, transport vehicles, etc.), composting programs, technical assessments of existing facilities, public education campaigns, one-time collection events of electronics and household hazardous waste and innovative or demonstration projects.

Program History:

Since 1996 there have been a total of 262 grant recipients, including local governments and regional coalitions. Over this time period, more than \$11 million has been awarded. In 2005, EPD released a study of activities funded by the Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund, including a sample of 24 RWR grant recipients. According to the study:

- All of the equipment that was purchased through the grants is still being used today.
- Equipment purchases with grant funds resulted in measurable efficiency improvements, increased capacity, and diverted waste from landfills.
- RWR grants used to purchase collection bins and drop-off areas improved access to existing recycling programs.
- Recipients of RWR grants who must pay for landfill access recorded lower tipping fees as a direct result of diverted recyclable waste.
- In some cases, RWR funded programs resulted in private-sector investments in material collection and transport to meet new community needs.
- Half of the 24 respondents cited RWR grants as a direct contributor to lower costs and/or higher revenues for recyclable products in their communities.

Success Stories:

- Decatur County, which has received \$140,000 in RWR funding since 1996, has avoided \$64,445 in tipping fees alone over the past 3.5 years and diverted 650 tons of recyclable waste from landfills annually.
- Since 1996, most of the grant recipients in the EPD study have diverted over 10% of their total waste streams annually from landfills into recycling. Three of the 24



recipients in the EPD study (Baldwin County, Claxton/Evans County, and Jesup/Wayne County) have diverted over 20% of their waste streams.

2007 RWR Program:

For the 2007 project year, GEFA will award a total of approximately \$225,000 to selected communities across the state. The request for applications will be released in late March, and prospective grant recipients will have two months to prepare and submit applications. Awards to individual local governments will not exceed \$50,000, awards to multi-jurisdictional projects will not exceed \$100,000, and awards to unique and innovative demonstration projects will not exceed \$200,000. Grantees must expend all awarded funds within one year of contract execution, unless the time is extended by written agreement between the grantee and GEFA. Cities, counties, and solid waste authorities *only* are eligible for GEFA recycling and waste reduction grant funds. State, federal and for-profit corporations are *not* eligible for direct funding, though local governments may partner with non-profits or private entities on recycling and waste reduction projects. All selected applicants for RWR grants are required to contribute a cash amount equal to 10% of the funds awarded.

For full eligibility requirements, complete program guidelines, and to download the application form, please go to www.gefa.org or contact the program manager at richard@gefa.ga.gov.

GEFA appreciates the contributions of the following individuals and organizations that helped produce this factsheet:

- Georgia Environmental Protection Division, “Georgia’s Solid Waste Trust Fund,” August, 2005, http://www.gaepd.org/Files_PDF/techguide/lpb/Ga_SWTF_1993-2005.pdf

