

SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Stafford County
Program Title: R-Board Compost Outreach Program
Program Category: Environmental

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Michael Morris
Title: Deputy County Administrator
Signature: Michael Morris

Brief Overview

Stafford County's Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Management Board (R-Board) compost outreach program educates residents on proper composting techniques and increases the number of households composting in the City of Fredericksburg and Stafford County. The compost program offers composting classes and mini Compost-a-Thon events that include education provided by a Master Gardener. Participants receive an introduction to backyard composting and ask the Master Gardener questions. Complimentary compost bins and starter kits are distributed. The compost outreach program gives participants the information and tools to begin successfully composting at their homes and diverts food and yard waste from the landfill.

The Problem or Need for the Program

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), about 40% of residential waste is food waste. Composting allows food and yard waste to be recycled and diverted from landfills. The R-Board compost outreach program encourages and educates hundreds of individuals on how to recycle their food and yard waste while diverting it from the landfill.

Description of the Program

The Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Board (R-Board), which serves the City of Fredericksburg and Stafford County, initiated the compost outreach program in 2023. Securing a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the R-Board aimed to educate residents on proper composting techniques and increase the number of households composting. Monthly composting classes were conducted at Central Rappahannock Regional libraries, with participating residents receiving a compost bin.

VACo Achievement Award Submission
Stafford County, VA – R-Board Compost Outreach Program
Environmental Category

The grant also facilitated the organization of a "Compost-a-Thon" event, designed to engage both new and existing composters. This event, held at a downtown Fredericksburg park in May 2023, featured compost demonstrations, discussions, and a panel comprising of Master Gardeners, and local environmentalists. Over 200 attendees benefited from the event, receiving free compost starter kits and backyard compost bins, thereby contributing to reducing food and yard waste sent to landfills.

The success of the inaugural Compost-a-Thon, with 200 attendees, inspired plans for future editions as an annual event. In fiscal year 2024, the R-Board secured a \$15,000 grant from the DEQ to conduct bi-annual mini Compost-a-Thons, building on the initial success. These weekend events in fall and spring included demonstrations by a Master Gardener, distribution of compost starter kits, and educational activities for children on composting. The "Backyard Composting 101" classes persisted, extending to schools and community gardens.

The compost outreach program, managed by one full-time employee, one part-time employee, and two volunteers, saw significant community engagement. Over 900 residents participated in mini Compost-a-Thons and related activities. In fiscal year 2024, a total of 179 compost bins and 420 starter kits were provided to Fredericksburg and Stafford County residents.

The compost outreach program is an innovative solution to a common community problem and can be implemented in other areas. It is adaptable for communities of various sizes that aim to encourage composting and reduce waste within their community.

The Results/Success of the Program

The City of Fredericksburg residents and Stafford County residents benefit by having less food waste sent to the landfill and the complimentary compost bin makes composting achievable for residents. The compost outreach program reduces food waste and promotes food waste recycling through composting. This program educates the community on how to compost correctly while increasing the percentage of composting households in the City of Fredericksburg and Stafford County.

The program saw significant success in 2024 through community engagement, with over 900 residents participating in mini Compost-A-Thons and related activities. In fiscal year 2024, a total of 179 compost bins and 420 starter kits were provided to Fredericksburg and Stafford County residents. The replicable nature of the Compost-A-Thon has motivated the R-Board to expand the project next year, continuing to promote composting and waste reduction efforts within the community.



Worthiness of Award

The compost outreach program found an innovative solution to encourage the diversion of food scraps and yard waste which encourages diverting waste from the landfill. The program can be implemented in other localities and encourages collaboration and community engagement. It is scalable to accommodate different-sized communities that want to promote composting and waste reduction efforts within their community.

Executive Summary

The Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Management Board (R-Board) in Stafford County has an outreach program focused on composting. This program aims to educate residents on proper composting techniques and encourage more households in Fredericksburg and Stafford County to compost. The program offers composting classes and mini Compost-a-Thon events, where participants can learn about backyard composting from a Master Gardener and receive complimentary compost bins and starter kits. By providing information and tools, the program helps residents successfully compost at home and reduces food and yard waste going to landfills.

The program, managed by one full-time employee, one part-time employee, and two volunteers, has seen significant community engagement, with over 900 residents participating in mini Compost-A-Thons and related activities. In fiscal year 2024, a total of 179 compost bins and 420 starter kits were distributed to residents of Fredericksburg and Stafford County.