

Recycling Grant Success Story

The Ohio State Fair

Background

The Ohio State Fair, sponsored by the Ohio Expo Commission, draws attendance of about one million participants every year. Located on 360 acres in the heart of Columbus, the grounds are home to 175 year-round events including five of Columbus' top 10 events:

- The All-American Quarter Horse Congress,
- The Equine Affaire,
- The Goodguys Rod & Custom Car Show,
- The Ohio Beef Expo, and
- The Deer & Turkey Expo

Challenge

With multiple activities taking place at the fairground and large crowds in attendance, a significant volume of recyclable materials is generated annually.

The Solution

To promote more recycling at the State Fair and to help educate attendees about the benefits of recycling, Ohio EPA provided recycling grant funding to purchase 10 "Bigbelly" recycling containers. The containers were put in place for the 2016 State Fair, but will remain permanently on the grounds for future events. The Ohio Expo Commission purchased an additional 10 containers as a match for the project.

The Bigbelly units have several unique features that enhance recycling capacity and provide information to gauge how much material and what is being recycled:

- a built-in compactor which triples the capacity of typical collection bins,
- a solar panel that negates the need to install electrical infrastructure, and
- a cellular data collection system that provides both real-time and historical data collection that can be accessed via a cloud-based system.

Once the unit reaches its 150-pound capacity, it sends an email/text to the recycling company. Collection routes can be tracked and adjusted to maximize their logistic effectiveness. With real-time data and historical analysis reports, staff can monitor and manage the network from a computer or phone.

Recycling education and awareness messaging on the Bigbelly containers helps promote environmental stewardship. This messaging can be changed to impact the targeted audience to influence behavioral change regarding recycling habits.

Resources

If you have any questions regarding this project or would like more information about Ohio EPA's recycling grant opportunities, please contact Chet Chaney at (614) 728-0043 or by email at Chet.Chaney@epa.ohio.gov.



Ohio EPA Director Butler (bottom right) at the 2016 Ohio State Fair. Also in the picture are Heidi Griesmer, Greg Vergamini, Chet Chaney and Danielle Giannantonio (clockwise from lower left).



Bigbelly with Ohio EPA and Expo Center logos.