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## **Two Ohio EPA-Funded Environmental Projects Receive Awards From Environmental Education Council of Ohio**

The Ohio Hospital Association and Ohio Energy Project were recognized this month for their outstanding projects to improve Ohio's environment and educate people about environmental issues. Ohio EPA nominated the projects for the awards, which were presented by the Environmental Education Council of Ohio. These two projects demonstrated excellent outcomes using [Ohio EPA's Ohio Environmental Education Fund \(OEEF\) grants](#).

Using a \$41,400 OEEF grant, the Ohio Hospital Association conducted seven pharmaceutical take-back events at six locations around the state. The association also trained and encouraged hospitals to host similar events in their local communities. For this, the organization was awarded the Ohio Alliance for the Environment award, which is given to a business or industry that is dedicated to fostering a climate of cooperation for resolving environmental problems.

There is increasing evidence that outdated medications are showing up in wastewater treatment plants, rivers and streams because people historically were taught to flush outdated medication. Once these endocrine disruptors get into streams, they adversely affect amphibians, fish and ecosystems.

The Ohio Hospital Association is following up with additional grant-supported projects to create manuals for safe and proper pharmaceutical disposal.

With a \$49,975 OEEF grant, Ohio Energy Project has taught thousands of kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students and hundreds of teachers statewide about energy use, energy conservation and home energy savings. Students take what they have learned at school, along with energy savings kits, to teach their parents how to reduce energy use at home. Using hands-on activities, high school students have helped teach younger students at energy fairs.

Ohio Energy Project is also using an OEEF grant to teach high school students about energy-related careers. The organization has received seven other OEEF grants, four of which have received Ohio EPA's outstanding grant award.

The OEEF awards approximately \$1 million annually in grants for education projects targeting pre-school to university students and teachers, the general public and the regulated community. OEEF funds projects to enhance the public's awareness and understanding of issues affecting environmental quality in Ohio. Funds for the grants are obtained through penalties generated by violations of Ohio environmental law.

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