

Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District's Residential Recycling Incentive Program (RRI)

Overview: The Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District's Residential Recycling Incentive (RRI) program is an incentive based program that provides funding to communities based on how much their residents recycle. The program is designed to incentivize communities to increase their recycling rates.

Target Audience	Communities and Community Leaders
Social Marketing Strategy	Incentive
Goal/Objective:	To improve the recycling infrastructure throughout Hamilton County and increase residential recycling rates by providing monetary incentives to communities.
State Plan Goal:	Goal 1, 2, and 6
Summary:	<p>The Hamilton County Solid Waste District's Residential Recycling Incentive (RRI) program is an incentive based program that awards communities based on a community's recycling rate and how much residents recycle. The program is designed to reward communities that increase their recycling rates. Rewards are based on recycling rate tiers. The tiers start at 0-4.99% and continue to increase in increments of 5% until the 30% or greater tier is reached. At each tier, the dollars given per ton recycled increase. The higher the recycling rate and tonnage, the more funding a community receives.</p> <p>The correlation between recycling rates and the amount of RRI funding awarded is a new aspect that was introduced in 2007. Before 2007, communities participating in the program received a flat rate per ton of residential material recycled. This led to recycling rates plateauing and communities feeling less of an incentive to bolster their recycling programs. The new system provides an incentive for communities to increase their recycling rates and strengthen their programs (<i>see attached Creating Economic Incentives: Issue Paper 4 for further information</i>).</p>
Barriers to Desired Behavior:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of incentive to recycle • Under-performing recycling programs • Residential recycling rates leveling off • Some communities believed that the previous funding system was unfair, so a tiered system was created
Barriers with Implementation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting and data collection (for both recycling and trash collection) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need support from haulers to provide recycling and waste tonnages • Establishing an initial budget

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- Communicating with communities on how haulers estimate recycling tonnages
- Communities and haulers need to commit to participating in the program
 - Talk and get commitment from haulers first

Consideration:

- Entitlement (Prior to 2007)
 - Once you start an incentive-based program, it is hard to discontinue the program
 - Communities may expect a certain amount of funding each year
 - Communities may have a sense of entitlement to the incentive
- Rules of the incentive program need to be clear and consistent before implementing
 - Be specific about what materials count versus those that do not (just materials typically collected through curbside and drop offs or also yard waste, electronics, etc.)
 - Be clear about how communities can spend RRI money (*see attached Creating Economic Incentives: Issue Paper 4*)
- Include communities in the planning process through focus groups and meetings
- District must adhere to the committed budget
- The finite amount of funding limits the dollar amount given at each tier
- Certain materials not included (such as yard waste)
- Consistently monitor the recycling rates, and adjust the tiers when necessary in order to continue to provide an incentive to increase recycling
 - Originally the program's highest tier was 25% and higher, but due to success the tiers had to be changed to 30% and higher
- Time and effort reviewing application can be reduced through online reporting
- Data analysis
 - Only natural for communities to count as much material as possible
 - Someone needs to monitor what materials are counted to ensure consistency and fairness

Measurement Methods:

Comparing the recycling rates and tonnage before and after the revamp of the program. Also, looking at the number of local government driven initiatives that were created since the start of

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the program.

Overall Results and Metrics

Recycling Rates were compared from the revamp of the program in 2007 to 2011. The introduction of the tiered system was announced in January 2007. The reported numbers in 2007 do not reflect the new tiered system.

- 2005:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 9%
- 2006:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 10.37%
- 2007:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 9.8%
- 2008:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 10.78%
- 2009:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 11.6%
- 2010:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 13.04%
- 2011:
 - Total Residential Recycling Rate (not including yard trimmings): 14.41%

From 2007-2010, several local governments have implemented or upgraded existing programs.

- Twelve communities have introduced larger recycling carts to their programs.
- Three communities have switched from subscription recycling to contract recycling for all residents.
- Twelve communities have added at least one new drop-off recycling location.

Wrap Up: The Hamilton County Solid Waste District plans to continue this program as long as they can maintain the necessary funds to run the program. The program's highest tier is a recycling rate of 30% or greater. Some communities have reached a recycling rate of 30%. The tiers will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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