

For Immediate Release:

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River City Recycling Rewards Program Seeks to Increase Recycling Through Education and Community-Based Rewards

The City of St. Louis has received funding through St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District and is launching a community recycling rewards program. The City's Refuse Division will partner with EcoUrban on a waste reduction effort. This new city-wide, recycling education and outreach program seeks to activate 20-30 neighborhood-based recycling programs. Participating neighborhood groups will be eligible for incentives from local businesses, as well as cash prizes each month from the program.

In 2013, the City of St. Louis landfilled approximately 134,000 tons of waste, costing about \$4.5 million in landfill tipping fees. In 2010, city-wide single stream recycling was implemented with the goal of diverting up to 42,127 tons of household waste from the current waste stream. Citizen participation has increased already to about 11% and this initiative should help the City move towards its goal of achieving 20% waste diversion by 2018. This program will work within the framework established through the City's Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative.

How to Help Increase Recycling in Your Neighborhood

The program starts with neighborhood based recycling education and community outreach. Our team will partner with neighborhood associations, interested block groups and neighbors to promote the River City Recycle Rewards Program and educate citizens about the benefits of recycling. Program staff will work with Neighborhood Stabilization Officers (NSOs) to connect with neighborhood groups to track increased recycling efforts and rewards will be offered to neighborhoods and/or block groups for improvement. Through cooperation with the NSOs, volunteer "Recycling Captain" positions will be created to support the City with door to door initiatives and presentations at neighborhood meetings.

What is Expected of Participants?

Beginning in February 2015, Recycling Captains will be trained by River City Recycling Rewards project team members to answer common recycling questions and help neighbors resolve issues with hard to recycle items. They will also assist with the distribution of educational and marketing material as well as data collection for the program and program staff.

The program is incentive-based and best performing groups will be rewarded for participation. Neighborhood groups and River City Recycling Rewards Program staff will work with neighborhood businesses to provide discounts and gift certificates to communities that show improvement. Visa cash gift cards will also be awarded each month to the neighborhood that excels and shows the most improvement and dedication to the program. Each neighborhood will have an equal opportunity to receive program incentives and all neighborhoods are eligible to apply.

The success of this program is contingent upon the hard work and cooperation of the entire community. We are calling on community leaders to step up and get involved and we need your help to identify and nominate wards, neighborhoods or block units for the program. To express interest in program participation, visit the web address below to complete and submit the form.

Sincerely,

Ron Morlen, Program Manager

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