

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



**LITTER AND RECYCLING GRANT PROGRAM ANNUAL PERFORMANCE
AND ACCOUNTING SUMMARY REPORT**

GRANT YEAR 2024



Litter pickup and recycling events from various localities in Virginia

May 2025

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Funding for Grant Year 2024	2
Performance Details for Grant Year 2024	3
Data Tables for Grant Year 2024	7
Website and Contact Information	10

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This report summarizes the litter prevention and recycling program expenses and activities conducted in grant year (GY) 2024 by the local government recipients of the annual litter prevention and recycling non-competitive grants.

The Commonwealth of Virginia collects three “litter” taxes to support litter prevention and recycling program activities in Virginia. The three taxes are comprised of a beer and wine coolers tax, a soft drink tax, and a retail establishment fixed fee of \$20 or \$30. Collectively referred to as the “litter taxes,” the revenues collected are deposited into the Litter Control and Recycling Fund (fund). Since 1981, over \$82 million has been paid into the fund to support litter control and recycling programs. The annual uses of these funds as specified by legislation are:

- 90 percent – Non-competitive and competitive grants to localities (local government grants)
- 5 percent – Operation of public information campaigns to discourage the sale and use of expanded polystyrene products and to promote alternatives to expanded polystyrene
- 5 percent - Grant administrative costs - Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

The guidelines for these grants are overseen by the Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board (Board) and DEQ provides program and financial administration for the annual grants. The Board meets annually to track the status of the fund and the progress of the annual grant program. The Board is appointed by the Governor and consists of five members as follows:

- Three members shall represent persons paying the taxes that are deposited into the fund and shall include one member appointed from nominations submitted by recognized industry associations representing retailers; one member appointed from nominations submitted by recognized industry associations representing soft drink distributors; and one member appointed from nominations submitted by recognized industry associations representing beer distributors.
- One member shall be a local litter or recycling coordinator.
- One member shall be from the general public.

At the conclusion of each grant year, the local government grant recipients must submit performance and accounting reports to DEQ on the activities and expenses for which the grant funds were used. The data contained in this report was compiled from the information submitted by the grant recipients and certified by one of their authorized agents.

FUNDING FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

Funding for Grant Year 2024

In GY2024, \$3,704,435 was disbursed from the litter fund to 274 localities. Non-competitive litter grants are calculated by population and road miles and do not take into consideration how much money the local government receives from other sources in support of its programs. The number of local governments applying for the grants varies from year-to-year.

Many localities use other sources of funds to augment their grant award. Programs reported almost \$29 million in cash from local funds, private sources, and other revenues.

In addition to cash, a number of localities rely on in-kind services to carry out their program activities. Local programs valued their in-kind donations at \$3,803,251, including volunteer work.

In GY2024, local governments matched the \$3,704,435 awarded in grant funds with \$33,614,144 from other sources of money and in-kind services. This represented a funding match of 907%.

The local litter prevention and recycling programs may be managed or operated by a single locality (city, county, or town), or by a group of localities (referred to as a "cooperative program").

Single local government applications:
140

Co-op applications: 35

Total grants disbursed: 175

Total localities served: 274

PERFORMANCE DETAILS FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

Performance Details for Grant Year 2024

STAFFING AND VOLUNTEER SUPPORT LEVEL

Most programs have at least one full-time or part-time employee who is typically assisted by volunteers. Volunteers play a critical role in each program's success. At a standard rate of \$24.49 per hour, the value of the service provided by volunteers during GY2024 was **\$3,024,774**.

CLEANUPS

Each year, local programs sponsor a variety of cleanup programs where volunteers donate their time to clean up areas where litter is present or where illegal dumping of solid waste has occurred. A total of **5,750** cleanup events, utilizing a total of **41,665** volunteers, removed **32,253** cubic yards of litter in GY2024.



ASEZ Harbour North Park Cleanup in May 2024

PERFORMANCE DETAILS FOR GRANT YEAR 2024



Town of Dumfries Spring Cleanup on April 6, 2024



Gloucester County Annual Spring Clean Event in March 2024

PERFORMANCE DETAILS FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

YOUTH EDUCATION

The majority of local programs included a youth education component. These activities included presentations and workshops in schools, involvement in "ecology clubs" and other educational events such as Earth Day celebrations. Last year, local government grant recipients reported that **634** presentations, workshops, or other educational events for young people were conducted. The total number of youth attending these activities was **79,546**. The total number of ecology clubs reported for GY2024 was **53** with **790** members.



BSA Cub Scout Pack 876 Litter Pickup in Chesterfield County on April 28, 2024

PUBLIC EDUCATION (NOT REPORTED AS YOUTH EDUCATION)

Community outreach is a major component of many of the local litter and recycling programs. Community outreach activities may include booths, presentations, and unstaffed displays, such as bulletin boards and posters. Litter and recycling program managers reported that they conducted **667** workshops with an estimated **65,435** people in attendance. There were **503** staffed displays or events that were attended and viewed by approximately **358,906** people. Program managers reported that in GY2024 there were **109** unstaffed displays in Virginia.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

ASSIGN-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM

The Assign-A-Highway program continues as a litter prevention/cleanup initiative in the Commonwealth. Under this program, area judges offer probationers the opportunity to work with the locality's litter program to clean up assigned sections of roads and highways during their probationary period. For GY2024, grantees reported **14,293** cubic yards of litter were collected by **4,262** probationers along **12,655** miles of roads.

PROGRAM GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Local governments that received grants for GY2024 were asked to estimate the percentage of their grant funds used specifically for the litter prevention program activities and the percentage of their grant funds used specifically for recycling program activities. Approximately **58 percent** was reported as being used for litter prevention while **42 percent** was reported as having been spent to support recycling.

ESTIMATED PERCENT GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT LITTER PREVENTION AND RECYCLING

DESCRIPTION	PERCENTAGE
Grant funds used for litter prevention program activities	58%
Grant funds used for recycling program activities	42%

Note: The percentage of funding utilized for litter and recycling is subjectively based upon estimates provided by the grant recipients. These percentages are based only on the grant funds awarded to localities by DEQ. This percentage of funding does not take into account any other monies that the local governments may have received from other sources or had budgeted for these programs from their general operation funds.

DATA TABLES FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

Data Tables for Grant Year 2024

SUMMARY OF HIGHLIGHTED DATA COMPARING GY2024 TO GY2023

DESCRIPTION	GY2024	GY2023
Funds Distributed from Litter Tax	\$3,704,435	\$2,855,283
Total Localities Funded	274	294
Total Cash Match	\$29,810,893	\$21,995,967
Total In-Kind Match	\$778,477	\$1,169,810
Value of Volunteer Service Hours	\$3,024,774	\$3,225,168
Total Match (Cash, In-Kind, and Volunteer Hours)	\$33,614,144	\$26,390,945
Funding Match	907%	924%
Number of Volunteer Hours Worked	123,511	131,693
Cleanup Events	5,750	5,952
Volunteers	41,665	37,358
Cubic Yards of Litter Collected	32,253	20,995
Youth Presentations, Workshops, or other Educational Events	634	566
Youth Attending	79,546	27,362
Ecology Clubs	53	56
Ecology Club Members	790	916
Number of Probationers	4,262	3,849
Number of Road Miles Cleaned	12,655	8,121
Cubic Yards of Litter Collected	14,293	8,901

CASH MATCH FUND BREAKDOWN

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Locality Cash	\$ 29,682,806
Private Sector Cash	\$ 39,692
Other Cash	\$ 88,395
Total	\$ 29,810,893

DATA TABLES FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

IN-KIND (ALL OTHER FUND SOURCES) MATCH FUND BREAKDOWN

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Locality In-Kind	\$ 690,582
Private In-Kind	\$ 49,348
Other In-Kind	\$ 38,547
Total	\$ 778,477

EXPENSES

Litter Prevention and Recycling programs used their grant funds for expenses in the following categories:

GY2024 EXPENSES

USE OF GRANT FUNDS	GY2024 EXPENSES	USAGE PERCENT
Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits	\$ 1,469,372	39.1%
Essential Supplies	\$ 1,208,237	32.1%
Contractual Services	\$ 869,027	23.1%
Other	\$ 192,713*	5.1%
Travel	\$ 20,162	0.6%
Total Grant Funds	\$ 3,759,511	100%

*Includes funds spent towards localities' expanded polystyrene (EPS) public information campaigns

STAFFING

GY2024 EMPLOYED STAFF

DESCRIPTION	NUMBER
Number of Full-Time and Part-Time Employees	954
Number of Hours Worked	1,029,448

DATA TABLES FOR GRANT YEAR 2024

PROGRAM PROMOTION

The fund guidelines require reporting on the kinds of materials the litter program managers distribute; however, the quantity does not need to be reported. In addition, litter program managers cannot use their grant funds for advertising though it may be donated and is included in this report as an in-kind match.

GY2024 MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

TYPES OF MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED	NUMBER OF LOCALITIES**
Litter Bags	73
Pencils	50
Stickers	49
Coloring Books	47
Other*	75

**Other materials distributed include bookmarks, buttons, certificates, cups, gloves, hand sanitizer, key chains, litter grabbers, magnets, memo pads, pocket ash trays, recycling bins, rulers, tote bags, water bottles, wrist bands, etc.*

GY2024 COMMUNICATION TYPES

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION	NUMBER OF LOCALITIES**
Brochures	61
Websites	84
Emails	72
Newspapers	48
Newsletters	47
Public Service Radio Announcements	20
Facebook	100
Public Service Television Announcements	16
Twitter	21
Other*	48

**Other communication types include banners, blogs, bumper stickers, booklets, calendars, fliers, post card mailers, presentations at public town meetings and other interest groups, school and government marquees, signage, and YouTube.*

***For this purpose, co-ops are counted as a single locality.*

WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website and Contact Information

WEBSITE

To obtain additional information about the Litter Prevention and Recycling Grant Program, visit [DEQ's website](#).

CONTACT

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