

## Key Accomplishments from 2018-2038 Dakota County Solid Waste Management Plan

- **Community Waste Abatement Program:** Funding to municipalities for recycling infrastructure, residential education, multifamily recycling, event recycling, reuse activities, and community-wide problem material collections has resulted in 196 special event collections resulting in nearly 900 tons of problem materials reused or recycled just since 2020.
- **Recycling Ambassador program:** Continued bi-annual classes to educate residents on waste abatement, with graduates volunteering 30 hours of public outreach. To date, 455 Recycling Ambassadors have volunteered over 3,580 payback hours to improve recycling in the community.
- **Fix-It Clinics:** Since 2019, provided 41 clinics to help 1,773 residents get household items fixed or mended for free, resulting in 2,759 items kept out of the landfill.
- **Film plastic recycling:** Partnered to provide specialized recycling of 102 tons of agricultural and boat film plastic since 2018.
- **Residential drop sites:** Partnered with cities to expand opportunities for residents to divert food scraps by increasing the number of organics drop sites from 5 sites to 11 sites.
- **Access to county recycling resources:** Developed an online reservation platform and installed a self-use shed called “Pickup Point” making resources more accessible (e.g., extended pick up hours, improved mobility access) for residents.
- **Business Recycling Incentive Program:** Reimbursable grant funding program for recycling infrastructure improvements, technical assistance and training provided over 62,000 bin labels and educational resources to businesses, with grant participants reporting 1,400 tons of new materials diverted from the landfill program began in 2017.
- **School Waste Prevention and Recycling Program:** Have worked with 50% of the private and public schools to date to make waste management improvements through funding assistance, technical assistance and training.
- **Multifamily recycling program:** Launched the Multifamily Recycling Program to help with recycling improvements and comply with recycling requirements, in collaboration with cities for implementation. To date, 385 properties have participated, and more than 21,000 residents have improved access to recycling.
- **Business programs to prevent food from being wasted:** Partnered with food bank Second Harvest Heartland to expand recovery of edible food generated by businesses. Also partnered with a local farmers market to rescue 8 tons of unsold edible produce for donation to local food shelves in 2023.
- **Vape disposal resources for schools.** Developed a vape disposal program, providing 48 collection kits to all public secondary schools (middle and high schools) in the 10 public school districts and interested public charter and non-public schools for safe storage, handling and disposal of vape devices and electronic cigarettes confiscated at their schools.
- **Online reduce and reuse business locator map:** Developed an interactive online map to help residents find business/retail locations to sell or drop off gently-used items, rent or repair items, and to donate or buy used items.



- **Closed loop on organics recycling:** Provided 140 cubic yards of yard waste compost for earth works projects to school program participants with organics collection. Piloted use of 730 cubic yards of food waste compost in Dakota County Road 96 project as a soil amendment to inform future application opportunities.
- **Rural residential clean-up day event:** Since 2020, provided rural residents an annual drop-off event for non-traditional materials for recycling (e.g., confidential documents, waste tires, mattresses, cardboard). This has diverted 39 tons of waste to date.
- **Collection of non-traditional recyclables:** Partnered with a private vendor to increase mattress recycling and reuse. High-quality mattresses and box springs were separated and donated to Bridging for people in need. To date, 2,547 mattresses (approximately 63 tons) have been kept out of the landfill.
- **Problem materials and household hazardous waste management:** Since 2018, 902 tons of household chemicals were reused, 9,773 tons of household hazardous waste and problem materials were properly managed and 4,527 tons of materials were recycled at The Recycled Zone in Eagan. The county purchased land in 2024 for a proposed second permanent county household hazardous waste and recycling drop-off facility in Lakeville, in partnership with Scott County.
- **Amended Solid Waste Management Ordinance (Ordinance 110).** Requirements included:
  - **Designated Recycling:** A basic list that all haulers must collect and all generators must recycle. A list is also provided if organics (food scraps) are being collected.
  - **Residents:** Recycle designated materials.
  - **Businesses, Organizations, Municipalities, Residential Multi-Unit Properties, Events and Schools:** Recycle designated materials following best practices (i.e., co-locate trash and recycling bins, label bins, provide recycling education to staff). Large organics generators need to collect food scraps from back-of-house operations (i.e., pre-consumption food scraps, not food that has been served to the public) following best practices.
  - **Additional Requirements for Municipalities:** Deliver standardized educational messaging to residents and cites with more than 10,000 residents had to update codes to adopt county multi-unit residential and event recycling requirements.
  - **Haulers:** Label customer containers, itemize customer invoices, provide standardized educational messaging to customers and provide weekly recycling service to residential customers in suburban Dakota County.
  - **Landfills:** Complete waste composition studies every five years (effective 2025).



**Resources to help with compliance provided:**

- Resources for businesses and multi-unit dwellings include free container labels and educational materials (i.e., recycle right guides, staff education training templates), funding for recycling and food waste collection improvements and non-regulatory onsite consulting assistance.
- To assist municipalities with new multifamily and event requirements, provided model language mechanisms, such as for city rental license renewals and facility event permits, and funding for city staff to update mechanisms and promote county program resources that help generators with compliance.
- To assist haulers, new resources were developed, including customer education templates and label templates for haulers to use. Free cart and dumpster labels were offered to haulers from 2020-2021.

Each year, a Solid Waste Progress Report is developed that summarizes project implementation to achieve solid waste plan objectives. To see all the county does, annual reports are posted on the [Environmental Reports and Studies project page](#) or at [www.dakotacounty.us](http://www.dakotacounty.us), search *Environmental Reports*.