

Best Local Government Recycling Program Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency

The Iowa Recycling Association's Best Local Government Recycling Program award honors local government programs who lead by example. The mantra *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* is one we often hear in word, but the winner of this award is chosen by deed - an organization that goes above and beyond regulations and traditional recycling practices to facilitate overall diversion in new and innovative ways. Through their bicycle reuse program, which allows residents to set aside bicycles in working condition as opposed to placing them in the scrap metal pile for recycling, this year's deserving award winner is the Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency.

Pedaling Towards Global Sustainability

By acting locally in addressing the prevalent order of principles outlined in the waste management hierarchy the Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency is having a significant impact both locally and globally. By partnering with Working Bikes, Inc. they provide a more sustainable waste handling option for local residents, encourage all-important community service and volunteer opportunities and assist countries overseas in becoming more self-sufficient.

Five percent of the bicycles collected from the Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency are given away locally by Working Bikes, Inc. Five percent of the bicycles are sold by this non-profit to fund shipment of the remaining bikes. Remaining bicycles are distributed overseas to assist people in becoming more productive. By providing affordable transportation to this demographic through Working Bikes, Inc. the Cedar Rapids Linn County Solid Waste Agency enables people to get to work, school and to their health care providers, thereby assisting them to earn more, learn more and live healthier lives.

Tangible Results

By following the priority of principles outlined in the waste management hierarchy this program has redirected 326 bicycles (10,060 pounds) from recycling to reuse – a more sustainable option, has provided working bicycles to people in need and has demonstrated a visible example of responsible resource management while educating the public on the value and positive impact of reuse.

“Through their positive example of reuse and innovative leadership, the Cedar Rapids Linn County Solid Waste Agency has earned the Iowa Recycling Association's Best Local Government Recycling program award. Through continued sharing of the lessons they have learned they will - without question – impact sustainable practices within the state of Iowa and beyond,” commented Erin Novak, Iowa Recycling Association President.