Hennepin County

Multifamily recycling grants



2026 guidelines

Introduction

Hennepin County has funding available for multifamily properties to expand recycling, improve recycling (reduce contamination of recycling), prevent waste, start organics recycling (composting), and educate their residents on recycling and waste prevention.

Recycling requirements

Property owners, managers, and associations are required to provide residents with the opportunity to recycle traditional mixed recyclables (paper, plastic, cartons, glass, and metal). Responsible parties must enter into an agreement with a hauler or arrange service through a city contract to provide service to collect mixed recyclables from each building.

Organics, which includes food scraps and food-soiled paper, make up about a third of residential garbage, and some multifamily properties choose to also offer organics recycling. Although organics recycling is not required at multifamily properties, the county encourages properties to offer this service to their residents and provides free resources and assistance.

For more information on recycling requirements for multifamily properties, review Hennepin County Ordinance 13.

Funding availability

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until Friday, November 20, 2026, or until the annual program budget is exhausted, whichever occurs first.

Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants include multifamily properties with shared waste collection service located in Hennepin County. Applications must have the approval of a person with the authority to enter into a legal agreement with Hennepin County, such as but not limited to, property owners, managers, and association board directors.

If you have questions about eligibility, email apartmentrecycling@hennepin.us.

Eligible funding

Bins and compostable bags

Applicants may select up to $3,000 worth of bins and BPI-certified compostable bags (organics programs require collection bins to be lined with compostable bags) from the county's product list included in the application.

Only products listed in the application may be selected. There are no exceptions or substitutions. Bins for public spaces, such as mail rooms, laundry rooms, or activity/party rooms, are encouraged. In addition, bins can also be selected to set up a floor-by-floor collection system to make recycling easier and more convenient for residents.

All bins must be properly labeled with Hennepin County labels or other approved recycling labels upon receiving the bins and prior to setting out bins for use. Free resources are available to Hennepin County residents to improve recycling in apartments and condos. See what's available and order free resources.

Compostable bags are available to applicants starting new organics recycling programs. Properties with existing organics recycling programs are only eligible for bins and bags to expand organics recycling to new units or areas.

You may request up to a six-month supply of compostable bags and countertop bins for up to 50% of the property's units. If you wish to request bins and bags for more than 50% of the property's units, you must provide supporting documentation that shows that more than 50% of units agree to participate in organics recycling.

Bin and bag options

You will select types and quantities of bins as part of your application. Be prepared to specify where you will place each bin. You may request up to a six-month supply of compostable bags and countertop bins for up to 50% of the property's units.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Blue recycling bin</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td>Size: 11.5” x 8” x 12”
Capacity: 3 gallons</td></tr>
<tr><td>Size: 14.5” x 10.5” x 15”
Capacity: 7 gallons</td></tr>
<tr><td>Size: 16.5” x 12” x 18”
Capacity: 10 gallons</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Blue recycling bin (and optional lid)</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Size: 20” x 11.5” x 30”
Capacity: 23 gallons</td></tr>
</table>

Blue recycling bin	
	Size: 22” (diameter) x 28” (height) Capacity: 32 gallons
	Size: 24” (diameter) x 31.5” (height) Capacity: 44 gallons
Outdoor recycling bin	
	Size: 42” x 20” x 20” Capacity: 50 gallons
Green organics countertop bin with lid	
	Size: 12" x 9" x 9" Capacity: 2.25 gallons
Green organics bin with lid	
	Size: 14” x 10” x 15” Capacity: 7 gallons
	Size: 16” x 11” x 21” Capacity: 10 gallons
Green organics bin (and optional lid)	
	Size: 20” x 11” x 30” Capacity: 23 gallons

Hauling costs

- New hauling service for traditional recycling (bottles, cans, paper, cardboard, etc.) or for organics recycling (composting)
    - Grant funds may cover up to 12 months of hauling. The hauling service contract must be for at least 12 months and must be new, not existing, to qualify.
    - This may include the monthly charge for the recycling and/or organics service and up to 50% of the non-tax fees.
    - This may also include additional fees to add locks to carts and dumpsters to reduce contamination.
    - If you are requesting recycling and/or organics recycling hauling grant funds, education and training are required. See "Education and Training" section below for more details on required activities and eligible education and training expenses. County staff are also available to provide free education and training.
- Other hauling for an ongoing program for non-traditional recycling opportunities, such as for textiles, furniture, etc.
    - Grant funds may cover up to 6 months of ongoing services (minimum 12-month contract). Applicant must show plans to sustain hauling beyond Hennepin County funding. Grant funds may cover the 6 costliest months during a 12-month period.
    - Examples may include, but are not limited to:
        - Recycling mattresses with Second Chance Recycling. Second Chance offers curbside mattress and box spring pick-up service. See the curbside mattress recycling flyer (PDF) for more details.
        - Donate useable items to charitable organizations. Some donation centers offer pick-up service. See the donation opportunities brochure (PDF) for details.
        - Contact Hennepin County for list of additional companies that provide services.

When applying for hauling costs, you must provide a quote or other documentation from a licensed hauler that demonstrates your intent to start service(s).

Enclosures

- Hennepin County will fund enclosure expansions that increase space for additional recycling or organics recycling service. New properties planned for construction or under construction do not qualify. Enclosure expansions already under construction do not qualify.
    - Scenarios eligible for funding: adding recycling service, adding organics recycling service, increasing recycling collection space that allows for adequate recycling service, covered enclosure to temporarily hold bulky items for reuse or recycling pickup. Bulky items include, but are not limited to, hard-to-recycle items such as furniture, mattresses, and electronics.

    - Scenarios not eligible for funding: a property is not in compliance with city enclosure codes and wants funding to build an enclosure to comply, repairing old enclosures (broken/faulty fences or gates)
    - A property must make every effort to optimize service levels (right-size dumpster sizes and frequency of pick up) before deciding to expand the enclosure.
- Hennepin County will enter into a cost-share agreement with the grantee to cover up to 75% of enclosure expenses. Expenses eligible for funding include materials and construction/labor. Enclosures must be built in compliance with property's city code. Funding is limited to $10,000/property.
    - For example:
        - If the total cost of the enclosure is $8,000, Hennepin County can fund $6,000.
        - If the total cost of the enclosure is $12,000, Hennepin County can fund $9,000.
        - If the total cost of the enclosure is $24,000, Hennepin County can fund $10,000.
- Applicant must submit quotes from two licensed contractors/builders. Applicant can indicate preferred contractor. Quotes must include drawings of enclosures and configuration of where the bins will be placed.
- Enclosures must be approved by city's zoning department to ensure compliance with city code. Written approval must be submitted with the application.

Chute retrofits

- Hennepin County will fund construction upgrades of trash and recycling chutes that facilitate the collection of recycling and improve access to recycling for residents. New properties planned for construction or under construction do not qualify.
- Hennepin County will enter into a cost-share agreement with the grantee to cover up to 75% of construction expenses. Expenses eligible for funding include materials and construction/labor. Chutes must be built in compliance with property's city code. Funding is limited to $20,000/property.
    - For example:
        - If the total cost of the chute retrofit is $16,000, Hennepin County can fund $12,000.
        - If the total cost of the chute retrofit is $20,000, Hennepin County can fund $15,000.
        - If the total cost of the chute retrofit is $40,000, Hennepin County can fund $20,000.
- Applicant must submit quotes from two licensed contractors/builders. Applicant can indicate preferred contractor. Quotes must include drawings of the existing chutes and the planned retrofit.

Education and training

Education and training funding is only available to properties starting recycling or organics recycling service.

- Hennepin County will fund an enthusiastic and engaged resident, property manager, property owner, or caretaker (must be 18 years or older) to educate and engage residents at the property on waste reduction, recycling, and organics recycling.
    - If you are requesting recycling or organics recycling hauling grant funds, education and training are required.
    - Flat-fee funding for education and training is based on number of units:
        - Fewer than 30 units: $200
        - 30-100 units: $400
        - 100+ units: $600
    - Required activities:
        - Ensure best management practices at property: make recycling easily accessible by pairing recycling and trash bins, label bins with proper signage denoting waste type
        - Survey residents on recycling/organics recycling interest
        - Watch recycling and organics how-to videos
        - Promote, organize, and attend waste reduction, recycling, and organics recycling training led by Hennepin County staff
        - Have face-to-face interactions and distribute literature at all participating units
        - Prepare and lead one to two follow-up trainings
        - Follow up with residents and provide additional education as needed

Other items not outlined in this section may be considered for funding particularly if they are innovative, prevent waste, or target hard-to-recycle items.

Guidelines

1. Maximum grant award:
    - Up to $3,000 for bins and compostable bags
    - Flat-fee funding for education and training is based on number of units:
        - Fewer than 30 units: $200
        - 30-100 units: $400
        - 100+ units: $600
    - Up to $20,000 for all other categories combined (hauling costs, enclosures, chute retrofits, and education and training). Applicants may request funding in multiple categories, not to exceed $20,000.

    Purchases made before entering into a grant agreement cannot be reimbursed.

    Allocation of grant award payments will be made in the following manner:

- 50% of funds will be released upon execution of a grant agreement.
- 50% will be released upon documentation (invoices, receipts) of actual expenses incurred and an approved final report detailing results of the grant project.

If preferred, all grant funds can be withheld and released upon submission and approval of the final report and invoices.

2. Grant recipients will be required to establish a baseline of waste being discarded or recycled prior to the start of the grant project. This information must be included in the grant application. That baseline should be based on the size of current waste and recycling containers and the frequency with which they are emptied or on actual weight data if that information is available. The grant application must also include a summary of contamination fees incurred in the previous three months prior to the grant application date.
3. Grant recipients must submit a final project report. The report must detail efforts made to achieve project goals and the results of those efforts, including quantitative data and project expenditures. A reporting template will be provided.
4. All grant recipients will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the county for 12 or 18 months, depending on the grant amount and the activities being funded. Projects may be completed early. The grant agreement process requires additional documentation after the application is submitted, including proof of authority for the person signing the contract and a certificate of insurance for the minimum insurance coverage outlined in the grant agreement. The certificate must indicate Hennepin County as an additional insured. Hennepin County reserves the right to revoke any funding award for which an agreement is not executed due to delays on the part of the applicant within two (2) months of the award. Awarded projects must be initiated within two (2) months of execution of the grant agreement, or funds may be withdrawn, unless specific approval is granted for delays due to extenuating circumstances.

Applying and evaluation criteria

The grant application will be provided by county staff after a consultation about your project idea. An in-person tour of your property may be requested by county staff. Begin the consultation process by submitting a multifamily recycling grant inquiry form.

The following information will be required when applying:

- Multifamily property name, address, and contact information
- Management company (if applicable)
- Number of residential units on the property
- Short description of your current recycling system
- Short description of education you will provide to residents
- Information on your current waste hauling (refer to a recent waste hauling invoice for this information)

- Substitute W-9 vendor form
- If requesting hauling start-up costs: documentation of pending hauling service
- If requesting enclosure and chute retrofits: at least two quotes needed

Evaluation criteria

Grant applications will be evaluated to ensure funds are used in ways that support Hennepin County's goals to increase recycling and waste prevention. The following criteria will be considered:

- Project description: Project demonstrates significant potential for recycling, organics recycling, and/or waste prevention. The project has strong support from staff and residents. Key personnel are listed in the application along with their roles as they relate to the project. Specific issues that the project seeks to address are identified.
- Outcomes: Expected results are stated, specific, realistic, and measurable. Baseline waste service data is included and accurate.
- Timeline: Project is ready to start after grant agreement is executed and applicant has demonstrated that the project will be completed within the term of the grant, which will be 12 or 18 months depending on the amount of the grant and the activities being funded.
- Budget: Expenses are laid out in detail.
- Sustainable: Most, or all, components of the project will continue after grant funding is no longer available.

The county reserves the right to refuse funding or to partially fund an application.

After your application is reviewed, county staff will contact you to discuss next steps. Upon application approval, a grant agreement will be emailed to the authorized person to enter into an agreement with Hennepin County prior to the release of any funds.

Contact information

Hennepin County
Environment and Energy
Multifamily Recycling Grants
612-543-4642
apartmentrecycling@hennepin.us
HennepinCounty.gov/apartmentrecycling