



Universal Recycling Grant and Low Interest Loan Program FAQs

Q. What is the state's position on recycling?

A. The state's position on recycling, as spelled out in the Solid Waste Recycling Law (Universal Recycling Law), is that reducing solid waste disposal and recovering usable materials from solid waste are extremely important in order to minimize the environmental impact of landfilling, and that it is in the public interest to develop a statewide recycling system. The Universal Recycling Law is intended to maximize the diversion of recyclables from disposal, with specified diversion goals by specified dates. The Universal Recycling Grant and Low Interest Loan Program is designed to assist with the capital start-up costs of implementing the programs that will be necessary to achieve the identified diversion goals. By doing so the state will conserve resources and energy, extend the life of the landfills, create jobs, reduce green house gas emissions, and promote sustainability.

Q. Who is responsible for implementing universal recycling, especially related to commercial entities?

A. It is the express requirement of the Universal Recycling Law that universal recycling be adopted by the commercial sector, and that all commercial businesses actively participate in a comprehensive recycling program no later than January 1, 2014. 'Commercial Sector' is defined as any for profit or not-for profit retail or wholesale stores, offices, food service establishments, warehouses, and other manufacturing, industrial or processing activities, and institutions such as social, charitable, educational, health care, professional and government services.

The Universal Recycling Law also has residential components, but because we have passed the implementation dates for the residential components, they are not a priority in this grant cycle.

Q. What is the current commercial sector recycling rate?

A. The current recyclables diversion rate for the commercial sector is 28.6%. This rate has ranged between 23-29% since recycling measurement started in 2006, basically remaining flat. The Universal Recycling Law sets a statewide goal of 50% diversion by 2015. The residential recycling rate is already 44.6%. Commercial waste makes up nearly half of the municipal solid waste generated in Delaware. Significant improvement is needed in the commercial sector to meet the 2015 goal.

Q. Is there a maximum amount of funds an applicant can request?

A. No. There is, however, a limit to the total amount of funds available to be awarded. The program is competitive; it is possible that some applicants may not be awarded, or may be only partially funded. Grant applicants are asked to exercise frugality in their requests. Successful grant applicants who are only partially funded may have the opportunity to apply for a supplementary loan.

Please note: In order to qualify for a loan, applicants may be subject to the submittal of additional documentation within 45 days. Applicants must qualify for any loan request by demonstrating credit worthiness and meeting the required loan criteria. An invitation to apply for a loan does not guarantee an applicant will qualify for loan funding.

Q. How are grant funds dispersed?

A. The Universal Recycling Grant and Low Interest Loan Program is a reimbursement designed program. The intent is that a one-time reimbursement request will be submitted by the grantee and a one-time reimbursement will be issued by DNREC. A contract will be issued shortly following the announcement of awards to formalize the funding amounts and activities. Advances for grant money will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you are issued an advanced award and you have not implemented your program or spent the money by the end of the grant period, you will be required to return any unused award money.

Q. Can I request money for yard waste recycling activities?

A. Although you are not precluded from applying for funds for yard waste recycling activities, **the priority for this grant offering is the implementation of comprehensive recycling in the commercial sector.** The yard waste ban at Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA) landfills is a permit condition and is not related to, or a requirement of, the Universal Recycling Law.

Q. What happens if I do not reach the goals stated in the legislation?

A. The diversion goals specified in the legislation are statewide goals. There is no penalty for any public or private waste hauler not achieving the specified goals within a defined geographical boundary. If it is determined in 2015 that we are collectively falling short of the stated goals, then recommendations will be made by DNREC and the Recycling Public Advisory Council (RPAC) as to what actions may need to be taken in order to achieve those goals. In the interim, it is in the interest of all recycling stakeholders to maximize diversion of recyclables from disposal - not only for the beneficial reasons already stated, but also to avoid the need for additional requirements and intervention to see that the goals are met. While the stated goals can be fairly characterized as aggressive, they are achievable.

Q. Where is the grant money coming from?

A. The Universal Recycling Grant and Low Interest Loan Program is funded by a temporary, four cent recycling fee on each qualifying beverage container sold in Delaware between December 1, 2010 and December 1, 2014. This recycling fee replaced the previous five cent bottle deposit. The recycling fee is expected to generate about \$14 million in four years; although original estimates were significantly higher.

Q. What materials must be recycled by commercial entities?

A. The types of materials that must be recycled by commercial entities are not specified in the Universal Recycling Law. However, to have a comprehensive recycling program you need to divert as much material as possible from your waste stream. Materials commonly recycled in the commercial sector include, but are not limited to, corrugated cardboard, scrap metals, scrap lumber, office paper, aluminum, and rigid plastics. In order to determine the best materials for your business to recycle, you need to understand the waste you generate. The best way to understand the waste you generate, and therefore what can be recycled, is to conduct a waste characterization. For a more complete list of acceptable recyclables, as well as a variety of toolkits to assist with recycling program implementation, please visit: www.recycling.delaware.gov.

Q. How will DNREC determine whether my recycling program is ‘comprehensive’?

A. DNREC realizes that no two businesses are alike, and intends to work cooperatively with commercial entities to provide guidance and assistance as needed. Depending on the amount of increased diversion measured before the 2015 goal deadline, the need to enforce implementation of this recycling requirement will be evaluated by DNREC in consultation with RPAC. If the commercial recycling rate shows little or no increase, or falls well short of the established goals, DNREC will likely pursue new regulations with more strongly defined elements of commercial recycling. DNREC does have enforcement authority under 7 Del. C. § 6059.

Q. Is there a specific match requirement?

A. No. DNREC is not requiring any specific match requirements. However, it may be possible to receive a few extra points by showing any match contributions. Since this grant program is designed primarily to defray the capital start up costs of implementing Universal Recycling, any match should primarily be capital cost related as well. Costs for labor will not be considered for the simple reason that everyone will have labor costs. Match is not nearly as important as, or as valuable as, the other scoring criteria.

Q. Can additional pages be attached to the application if I want to provide more information than what will fit on the application?

A. Yes. In the event that the space provided on the application is not long enough for the information you would like to submit, you may attach up to one additional page with your application. Other additional pages are only acceptable if you run out of rows on your budget worksheet OR for attachments such as quotes that support the budget expenses.

Q. How can I receive DNREC press releases?

A. To receive DNREC press releases, send a blank email with a blank subject line to the following email address: join-dnrec_press_releases@lists.state.de.us. Press releases can always be found on the DNREC homepage: www.dnrec.delaware.gov by clicking on the “**Newsroom**” link on the left side of the page.