



# ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

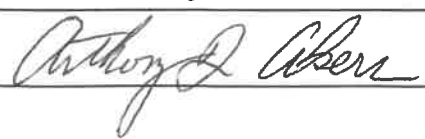
### PROGRAM INFORMATION

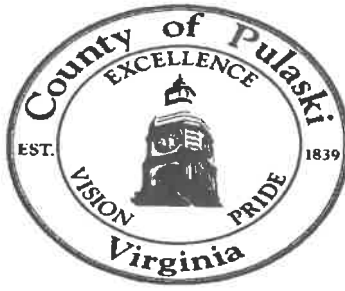
County: County of Pulaski  
Program Title: One Bag Challenge  
Program Category: Environmental

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Anthony Akers  
Title: Assistant County Administrator  
Signature: 



**Virginia Association of Counties (VACO)**

**Achievement Award submission**

**County of Pulaski, Virginia**

**Program Category:** Environmental

**Name of the Program:** *“ONE BAG CHALLENGE”*

**Problem:** Numerous citizens have expressed concerns about the roadside trash problems throughout the county. Deliberate littering by individuals as well as debris from vehicles during transport have been the main reasons of this pressing issue. Historically we have utilized inmate labor from the New River Valley Regional Jail to pick up trash alongside a majority of roadways in the county. However, since COVID-19 restrictions over the past few years and recent changes in guidelines for incarceration of inmates, Pulaski County has lost most of our access to this available resource for roadside clean up. The Board of Supervisors came up with an initiative to encourage our citizens to get involved in cleaning up our county’s roadways. Under the leadership of our Board of Supervisors Chair, Mrs. Laura Walters, our

BOS members implemented a “One Bag Challenge” to combat the concerns of roadside litter. Pulaski County staff members worked in conjunction with our elected BOS officials to implement a program to encourage citizens to get involved to help address this problem. The One Bag Challenge requirement is for any citizen that is willing to pick up at least one bag of trash in an area along the roadside or a property that has litter. For those that are willing to participate, our county provides reflective safety vests, gloves, trash pick up grabber/sticks, and trash bags. We partner with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) as they provide the orange trash bags that are utilized for collection. Trash collected in bags are left on the roadside and we coordinate locations with VDOT for pick up and discard of these bags. This is a win-win partnership between the county and VDOT as they do not have adequate staffing to designate time to regular clean-up of county roadways. Citizens that participate in the “one bag challenge” have their names entered into a drawing to be eligible for one of five \$100 gift cards that are randomly drawn at our monthly BOS meeting. Participants are asked to take a before and after photo of the area cleaned as well as picture of the number of bags. They email this information to our BOS chair and Assistant County Administrator that monitor the program. To further incentivize clean-up of our community, for every bag a citizen picks up, his/her name is entered into the drawing for each bag. Thus, most participants pick up more than one bag and this program really fosters a sense of “civic duty” in keeping our county

as clean as possible. The program also promotes a sense of “competition” as we challenge other agencies such as our local Pulaski County Public School System, Towns of Dublin and Pulaski staff and other agencies to see who can gather more bags. Program planning began in fall of 2022 due to the concerns with loss of regular inmate labor and lack consistent availability of community service workers. Our local Board Chair shared the idea with county staff and was fully supported by the remaining local officials and county administration. The challenge to citizens officially began in January of 2023 and has gained huge momentum from numerous citizens and agencies in our county. The immediate result of the cleanliness of our roadways was very evident and the number of participants increased monthly. As of our last Board of Supervisors meeting on June, 26<sup>th</sup> 2023, we had a total of 237 participants and have collected 849 bags of trash and 275 tires along our roadways. The funding for the program that provides the gift card prizes and supplies given to the participants come from our grant awards from Keep Virginia Beautiful, Inc. and our New River Valley Resource Authority (Regional Landfill). These entities have a vested interest in keeping our Commonwealth clean and the Regional Landfill understands that some roadside trash is not just a result of careless littering but debris exiting trash trucks or vehicles unintentionally on trips to the landfill. A full partnership of numerous entities has made this program a huge success. This program has gained a lot of attention from other localities such as Wythe and

Montgomery counties as each has contacted us for more information. The one bag challenge will remain throughout the year but the \$100 gift card incentives will be offered during the months of January through June of each year. These are the months that are deemed to best times to clean prior to weed and brush growth as well as animal and critter activity. However, since the program is new, we may implement the monetary incentive program in the fall/early winter as well. This creative idea of challenging other agencies, businesses and county citizens has proven to be a huge success. This innovative and creative idea of challenging or empowering our citizens to take ownership of our community concerns is a great example of what is stated on our County Seal “Pride, Vision and Excellence”

## **Executive Summary:**

In an effort to address the growing concern of roadside litter/trash along the roadways in Pulaski County, the Board of Supervisors in cooperation with county staff, Virginia Department of Transportation and other litter prevention agencies are issuing a “One Bag Challenge” to the Town of Pulaski and Dublin Councils, the Pulaski County School Board, as well as all of our citizens to help combat this issue and pick up at least one bag of trash (multiple bags are always welcome) along a littered area or roadway throughout the County.

Participants are asked to take a before and after photos along with your bag(s) and send it to Laura Walters, Chair, Pulaski County Board of Supervisors, at [lwalters@pulaskicounty.org](mailto:lwalters@pulaskicounty.org) and Anthony Akers, Assistant County Administrator at [aakers@pulaskicounty.org](mailto:aakers@pulaskicounty.org) . These photos will be posted on the County’s website and social media outlets in an effort to recognize those who are setting a great example by displaying their Pulaski County Pride in our community by helping to keep our roadsides clean. For those who are interested in participating, reflective safety vests, gloves, trash pickers and trash bags are available at the County Administration Building, or you may contact your respective Board of Supervisor member to get supplies. For every full bag of trash collected with a submission of photo proof, the participant’s name will be entered to win one of five \$100.00 VISA GIFT CARDS at each of the BOS monthly meetings through the month of June.

**Brief overview: (press release)**

In an effort to combat the growing problem of roadside trash/litter in Pulaski County, the Board of Supervisors in cooperation with county staff and other litter prevention agencies have implemented a “One Bag Challenge” program. Businesses, agencies and citizens are encouraged to pick up at least one full bag of trash along a littered roadway. Incentives are given to citizens in the form of \$100 gift card drawings at monthly Board of Supervisors meetings. Since implementation of the program, participation has increased and litter and trash along county roadways has dramatically decreased. Pulaski County has enjoyed having very clean roadways ways throughout the county and instilled the Pride, Vision and Excellence as set forth on the County Seal.