



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your 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: Stafford County
Program Title: Get Rid of Litter 3-Dimensional Recycled Art Contest
Program Category: Customer Service and Community Outreach

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Donna Krauss
Title: Deputy County Administrator
Signature:

Executive Summary:**Get Rid of Litter 3-Dimensional Recycled Art Contest**

Submitted by: The Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Management Board

The Get Rid of Litter 3-Dimensional Recycled Art Contest is an innovative public engagement initiative spearheaded by the Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Management Board (R-Board) in partnership with Stafford County Public Schools. Designed to raise awareness about litter prevention and promote recycling, the program invites youth across the region to create art entirely from recycled or reused materials. The contest serves as a creative outlet for students while fostering long-term behavioral change through education and environmental responsibility.

Recognizing the growing concern of litter and illegal dumping across Stafford County and the City of Fredericksburg, the R-Board launched this initiative to combat environmental degradation while increasing community participation in recycling efforts. The program exemplifies innovation by blending arts education with environmental advocacy. It builds strong partnerships with schools, local government, environmental organizations, and families, and is easily replicable in other regions facing similar issues.

Financed through the R-Boards educational outreach budget and volunteers, the contest is promoted throughout the school year and culminates in a public exhibition and awards ceremony. The R-Board implemented this program for \$1,000, only incurring costs for promotional materials, display materials, and small awards (gift cards, certificates). The results include increased community awareness, strengthened partnerships, student pride in sustainability, and a measurable uptick in recycling rates and litter reporting.

The Get Rid of Litter 3-Dimensional Recycled Art Contest stands out as a model for other localities looking to turn waste into an opportunity to reduce litter, literally and figuratively, by fostering a cleaner, more informed, and environmentally responsible community.

Problem Statement:

Stafford County and the City of Fredericksburg, like many communities across the nation, have been challenged by the persistent problem of roadside litter, illegal dumping, and a lack of public awareness surrounding sustainable waste management. Despite existing education efforts, the R-Board identified a need for a new approach that could deeply engage youth, encourage household conversations about waste, and create a lasting cultural shift toward environmental stewardship.

Littering not only diminishes community aesthetics and lowers property values but also has costly impacts on local government budgets and ecosystems. Stormwater pollution, wildlife endangerment, and rising cleanup costs made it essential for the R-Board to initiate a program that educates and empowers younger generations while supporting existing waste reduction strategies.

Program Overview:

The Get Rid of Litter 3-Dimensional Recycled Art Contest was established as a creative and interactive program to address these environmental concerns through education, youth involvement, and community pride. The contest challenges local students in grades K through 12 to create three-dimensional works of art using only materials that would otherwise be thrown away. Each piece must reflect a theme of environmental conservation, litter prevention, or recycling awareness. This initiative blends innovation, educational outreach, and public participation to transform waste materials into symbols of hope and responsibility.

Innovation:

The 3-D Art Contest stands out for its novel approach to environmental education:

- **Art as Advocacy:** By encouraging students to repurpose discarded items into meaningful art, the program turns waste into an educational tool.
- **Multi-sensory Learning:** Students physically engage with the materials they recycle, reinforcing sustainable behavior through hands-on experience.
- **Storytelling:** Each student is required to submit an artist's statement, explaining the message behind their creation, giving voice to youth perspectives on environmental stewardship.

Partnership and Collaboration:

The contest is a product of strong community collaboration:

- **Schools and Educators:** Teachers across Stafford County integrate the contest into art, science, and environmental curricula.
- **Parents and Families:** Families support student participants, often engaging in recycling and cleanup efforts at home as a result.
- **Local Environmental Groups:** Organizations such as the Clean and Green Commission and local artists promote the contest and assist with judging and education.

- **Government Support:** The R-Board coordinates logistics, materials, and communications, and provides staff support for outreach.

This collective effort ensures the program is well-resourced and widely promoted, increasing participation and community impact.

Implementation Timeline:

- **Fall:** Program planning and outreach to schools.
- **Winter:** Promote project supply collection and environmental awareness.
- **Spring:** Public exhibition and awards ceremony, coinciding with Earth Day.

Staffing and Oversight:

The program is managed by the R-Board's Community Outreach Supervisor with support from staff volunteers and art teachers.

Financing:

The contest is funded through the R-Board's outreach and education budget. The R-Board implemented this program for \$1,000, only incurring costs for promotional materials, display materials, and small awards (gift cards, certificates). This program's In-kind support comes from local businesses and volunteers.

Submission Requirements:

- Use of recycled or reused materials
- Adherence to the litter prevention or recycling theme
- An artist's statement describing the message and materials of the piece used
- Judging criteria include creativity, originality, use of recycled materials, and thematic connection

Exhibition:

Submissions are displayed at the Stafford County Fine Arts Festival, giving participants public recognition and inspiring broader community participation.

Results:

The program has yielded significant and measurable outcomes:

- **Participation:** Over 250 student entries from more than 25 schools over two years
- **Awareness:** Increased household recycling and discussions around waste at home and in classrooms

- Behavioral Change: Teachers report students becoming more proactive about picking up litter and reusing materials creatively
- Media Engagement: Coverage in local newspapers, school newsletters, and social media has expanded the program's visibility
- Sustainability Education: Students gain firsthand experience in environmental problem-solving
- Community Impact: Art exhibits serve as public reminders of the importance of litter prevention and recycling, drawing attention from diverse audiences

Model for Other Localities

The success of the 3-D Art Contest offers a blueprint for similar communities:

- Low-cost, high impact: The program is affordable and scalable, adaptable to urban or rural settings
- Replicable Structure: A ready-made framework, including timelines, judging rubrics, promotional materials, and guidelines, makes the program easily exportable
- Cross-curricular Appeal: Combines STEM, art, and civic responsibility, making it attractive to schools and educators
- Community Building: Fosters collaboration among government, families, schools, and nonprofits

Conclusion:

The R-Board's Get Rid of Litter 3-Dimensional Recycled Art Contest demonstrates the power of creativity in addressing pressing environmental issues. By combining innovation, collaboration, and replicability, the program transforms discarded materials into educational tools and inspiring symbols of change.

It not only addresses the tangible issue of litter but sows the seeds for a future generation committed to environmental sustainability, making it a model worthy of emulation by localities across the country.