



## **New Jersey Clean Communities Report to the Governor and Legislature March 1, 2017**

*The Report to the Governor and Legislature highlights the activities of the NJ Clean Communities Council with special attention to contracts SW15-006 and SW16-006, as required by law. The budget report for SW15-006 will be posted following the close-out of the contract, no later than June 30, 2017.*

### **Background**

New Jersey Clean Communities is a statewide, comprehensive litter abatement program that incorporates a network of 558 municipalities and 21 counties. Created by the passage of the Clean Communities Act in 1986, the program spans three decades-- from the writing and passage of the Act in the 1980s; to the struggle to maintain the program in spite of severe statewide budget cuts in the 1990s, and the sunset of the program in the year 2000; to the resolution of the struggle on December 20, 2002 with the passage of the Clean Communities Act. The 2002 Clean Communities Act provided funding for a nonprofit solely dedicated to litter abatement education to administer the educational and administrative elements of the program lost in the 1990s.

Since 2002, the nonprofit designated to administer the program has been the NJ Clean Communities Council, Inc. The Clean Communities Council also administers New Jersey's Adopt-a-Beach and Adopt-a-Highway programs. The Adopt-a-Highway program is a partnership of the NJ Department of Transportation and is not part of the Council's contract with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

## Accomplishments

### NJ Beach Bird Campaign



In 2016, the New Jersey Clean Communities Council launched the “NJ Beach Bird” media campaign, featuring the creation of a sculpture made entirely from plastic water bottles. The project, funded with the support of Coca-Cola North America Group, was sculpted by professional artist Willie Cole and was unveiled at the annual NJCCC conference on May 24 in Atlantic City.

The project, designed to educate children about the importance of keeping plastic trash out of the water, was a collaborative effort of the Clean Communities Council, the city of Atlantic City and the Atlantic City schools whose students collected over 20,000 bottles. To date, over 50,000 people have seen the NJ Beach Bird, which was also prominently displayed at the New Jersey Education Association and League of Municipalities conferences in Atlantic City in November 2016.

The project won an international award from Martin Fielder of Just Right Television, who chronicled the development of the NJ Beach Bird in a documentary. Fielder was honored by the international “Summit Emerging Media Award,” with the announcement of the award generating additional press coverage. NJCCC also created a cartoon image of the NJ Beach Bird, an interactive website with responsive design and mobile access, as well as activity sheets for children to educate them about the importance of waste reduction.





The Clean Communities Council partnered with Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education in the spring of 2015 to launch the first certification training program for Clean Communities coordinators. The purpose of coordinator training is to provide coordinators with the tools they need to effectively manage a grassroots, community-driven Clean Communities program. The Certified Clean Communities Coordinator (CCCC) program involves a three-day course and a final assignment, along with two additional hours earned by attending a Clean Communities Council state sponsored event. The course is extremely popular! In each of two years, we have offered additional sessions in the summer and fall of 2015 and 2016 to accommodate interested coordinators. To date, 274 coordinators have attended basic training.



The Clean Communities Council is proud of the Clean Communities Environmental Student Exchange (CCESE), which took place last March at Wheaton Village in Cumberland County. Now in its ninth consequent year, the event brings students together from different regions of state. Students work together to solve environmental problems, as they learn about each other and the region in which the event takes place. The 2017 CCESE will take place March 23-24 in Toms River.

To coincide with the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the state in 2014, the Clean Communities Council produced an educational video called "The History of Trash." The video is designed to educate middle and high school students about how the state dealt with trash from its early beginnings through the modern-day waste handling practices.

The video, which also focuses on the history of New Jersey Clean Communities, was posted on TeacherTube.com, reaching 300,000 teachers statewide, with over 5,600 responses to date.

## **Media & Advertising**

The passage of the 2008 Recycling Enhancement Act provided funding for a media campaign that would promote the reduction of litter and in the long-term sustain a reduction in litter.

Through the work of the Council's public relations firm, Jaffe Communications of Newark, 2016 is being considered a banner year for media relations. There were at least 133 earned news articles appearing in statewide media about the works of the Council, 53 more than 2015, and equivalent to more than \$133,500 in advertising - an increase of an estimated \$20,000 from 2015.

In addition, the firm developed the concept, marketing, public relations and digital outreach plan for the Council's "NJ Beach Bird" campaign, which was a lead initiative in 2016. The statewide, comprehensive, ongoing initiative was completed within the standard budget, with no increased costs to NJCCC.

The firm has also been charged with ensuring a steady stream of information is included on the Council's website and social media channels, as well as continually seeking opportunities to highlight the Council's work through all channels, including an e-blast monthly newsletter and PSAs. Firm representatives attend all board meetings, conferences and special events throughout the year to serve as a continual resource to publicize the work of the Council.

## **Best Practices Manual**

The most significant contribution to the state program since its inception in 1986 may be the Best Practices in Clean Communities Manual, in CD format. The CD was initially created and released in 2006 by a team of county coordinators. The CD offers a clearinghouse of information about New Jersey Clean Communities. The CD has been revised, edited and "added to" in each of nine consecutive years. The CD is used as the textbook for the Clean Communities Coordinator Certification Training Course.

## **Data Collection**

In accordance with the 2002 Clean Communities Act, the Council collects municipal and county statistical reports and maintains a database of information to be submitted to the Governor and Legislature. The Council's online reporting system provides an accurate tracking system than the previously implemented manual input of data. The online reporting system was developed by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority. The ACUA maintains the backup database and provides technical assistance to the Clean Communities Council.

From 2010 to the end of the 2015 reporting year, 420,857 volunteers participated in 399,711 cleanups, cleaning 606,304 miles and 906,612 acres of public property and picking up 1,050,708 tons of debris and recycled 511,462 tons. Approximately 163,141 citations and violations were issued. The Clean Communities Council is still collecting statistical reports for all years. Statistical reports for 2016 will be due to the Clean Communities Council on June 30, 2017. (*Addendum 1*)

### **Adopt-a-Beach**

The Clean Communities Council assumed responsibility for New Jersey's Adopt-a-Beach program in the spring of 2011. This popular program attracts thousands of volunteers every year who clean rivers, lakes, streams, rivers and beaches. Adopt-a-Beach is driven by the 1992 Adopt-a-Beach Act which requires the state (or its designee) to organize two volunteer beach cleanups every year. The Council promotes the Clean Water Challenge from March 1- April 30 each year and supports the International Coastal Cleanup during the fall of every year. The Council provides supplies for waterway cleanups or contacts local Clean Communities coordinators who provide supplies; the Council also collects data from cleanups for this report.

In 2016, 2,301 volunteers participated in International Coastal Cleanups. They cleaned 81 miles of waterways and collected approximately 3,500 bags of trash totaling about 80,000 pounds. Nearly 500 volunteers participated in the Clean Water Challenge, collecting 600 bags of trash that totaled 14,000 pounds.

### **Budget Report (SW15-006)**

The Budget Report reflects the close-out of contract SW15-006. The 2016 Budget Report will be available following the closeout of SW16-006, no later than June 30, 2017.

Consultants	72,000.00
Other	1,000.00
Rent	30,000.00
Telephone	2,000.00
Insurance	10,000.00
Postage	1,000.00
Supplies	4,000.00
Equipment	2,000.00
Printing	10,000.00
Special Events	72,000.00
Travel	6,500.00
Miscellaneous	2,000.00
Salaries & Expenses	162,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>375,000.00</b>

## **New Jersey Clean Communities Council, Inc.**

Before receiving nonprofit status in 1995, the Clean Communities Council was an advisory committee to the state Clean Communities Program. The committee was housed in the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Solid Waste Management. Jack Sworaski was a member of the original advisory committee and continues to serve on the board today.

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(Addendum 1)

**Statistical Report Data for 2012, 2013 and 2014 (to date)**

<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Reports Collected	526	490	451
Cleanups	35,195	44,804	33,877
Volunteers	72,458	68,238	67,815
Trash Picked Up Tons	47,864	47,898	35,107
Trash Recycled Tons	78,028	68,984	49,007
Road Miles Cleaned	93,958	103,400	104,720
Acres Cleaned	98,311	242,466	206,451
Citations	7,526	6,290	7,476
Violations	20,460	20,028	22,483
Programs	3,406	3,149	2,855
People Reached	476,092	793,009	444,321