

# Outagamie Recycling has Reason to Celebrate

## *Receives Award for Projects & Initiatives*

Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste has been awarded the 2017 Recycling Excellence Award from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR program promotes best practices in recycling across the state in three categories of excellence: *Projects and Initiatives*, *Overall Program*, *Special Events and Innovation*.

Outagamie County Recycling received the award category *Projects and Initiatives* in which winners are recognized for a specific project that demonstrates cost effectiveness or potential cost savings while increasing materials recycled. The Outagamie Recycling project involved converting 13 mostly rural communities from manual recycling collection bins to larger, wheeled carts through grant monies.

The grant monies were awarded to Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste by The Recycling Partnership, a nationally renowned 501(c)3 organization with the goal to improve recycling in the United States. A key barrier for more rural municipalities to purchase automated recycling carts is a lack of funding.

The Outagamie County program received a \$52,000 grant, providing \$7.00/per cart back to participating municipalities and provided grant dollars towards the necessary educational and promotional tools to help residents transition to the automated system.

To help keep cart costs as low as possible, the County requested bids from cart manufactures for a standard 95 gallon cart. Once the cart manufacturer was chosen, each municipality worked directly with the manufacturer to purchase the carts.

The Recycling Partnership provided upbeat and fun promotional and educational images that were used in direct mail postcards, billboards, banners and FAQ sheets that were attached to each cart during delivery. A media Kick-Off event and a spot on Fox 11's Good Day Wisconsin helped promote the program and sparked interest.

As a result of these combined efforts, 13 Outagamie County municipalities participated in the grant, adding nearly 7,000 recycling carts to local, mostly rural, residents. This brings the total to 25 municipalities or 91% of households now having automated cart service within the county.

Recycling tonnages in the 13 newly carted municipalities has increased more than 14% since November, 2017. With increased recycling tonnages comes reduced trash tonnages, which in turn saves not only landfill airspace, but also reduced landfill fees.

Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste continues to reach out to the few remaining non-carted municipalities in hopes to help them acquire automated recycling carts before the current collection contract ends. A new collection contract will likely offer the best pricing when all municipalities have the same standardized collection method.

An online list of all DNR award recipients and criteria can be found by searching "[responsible unit recycling](#)" at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov).