



## Charleston County News Release

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### **Charleston County Wins Two Recycling Awards**

*Charleston County's recycling program wins Most Successful Local Government Award and Recycling Manager John Foster wins Recycler of the Year for South Carolina*

[Charleston County Government's Environmental Management Department](#) (formerly Solid Waste and Recycling Department) received the 2009 Most Successful Local Government Award at the [Carolina Recycling Association's](#) 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Ceremony. John Foster, Charleston County's Recycling Manager, also took home the Recycler of the Year Award for the County's Neighborhood Initiative Program.

#### **2009 Most Successful Local Government Award**

- The Charleston County Environmental Management Department was awarded the 2009 Most Successful Local Government Award for having the most successful recycling/waste reduction program in the state.
- Criteria for winning the award included having a successful recycling/waste reduction program, innovation, education, professional leadership and a sustainable program.

#### **2009 Recycler of the Year Award**

- Charleston County Recycling Manager, John Foster, received the Recycler of the Year Award for his Neighborhood Initiative Program. Foster was nominated for the award by his staff at the Charleston County Recycling Center because he exemplifies passion for recycling and dedication to his job and community.
- In 2004, Foster developed the volunteer-based Neighborhood Initiative Program. The program uses volunteers to put out a "Recycling Day" sign indicating the curbside pick-up day in their neighborhood. The sign helps remind residents when to put their recycling bins out at the curb.
- The simple volunteer program has greatly increased recycling rates in Charleston County. There are a total of 234 volunteers in the Neighborhood Initiative Program, all of whom Foster has personally spoken to or recruited. A total of 95 new volunteers joined the program in 2008.
- In fiscal year 2008 (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008), Charleston County's Recycling Center achieved its highest revenue total ever at just over \$2.7 million, thus making the recycling program a sustainable benefit to the residents of Charleston County.

"We are very proud to have been named the most successful local government in the state for recycling. We continue to strive to do better in our recycling efforts, and we are happy to be recognized for what we have accomplished thus far," said Gregg Varner, director of Charleston County's Environmental Management Department. "We are also excited to announce that John Foster won Recycler of the Year for South Carolina. He is an example to all of us and a true leader in the recycling movement."

**As a result of the following staff and community efforts, Charleston County's amount of recyclable materials collected increased approximately 10 percent, from about 19,000 tons in 2007 to nearly 21,000 tons in 2008:**

- Charleston County Government provided curbside collection of recyclables to 130,000 homes in 2008, as well as any commercial establishments along its routes.
- Charleston County operates [seven drop-off sites where recyclables](#), along with household hazardous materials and electronics, are collected for recycling seven days a week. There are an additional 32 drop-off sites for cardboard collection.
- Charleston County targeted 39 new neighborhoods in 2008 and continued the effort to increase recycling rates in participating neighborhoods. Recycling bins were provided

and educational materials were distributed to the residents. As a result of these efforts, over 100 neighborhoods have been surveyed and more than 4,200 households began curbside recycling.

- Charleston County collects cardboard, paper, glass and plastic from 82 of the 87 public schools in the county as well as 33 private schools.
- Charleston County implemented a multi-family recycling program at nine apartment complexes in 2008.

The Carolina Recycling Association held its 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference & Trade Show in Spartanburg, S.C. The annual event brings together recycling professionals and companies providing recycling equipment, products and services for a week of education, networking and recognition. Each year, the [CRA presents awards](#) to individuals, municipalities, educational institutions and legislative representatives in both North and South Carolina.

[Charleston County also recently won the 2008 Most Outstanding County Waste Reduction/Recycling Program Award](#) for a county with a population greater than 150,000 at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Recycle Guys Awards Program, which honors South Carolina's top recycling programs, projects and people. Charleston County won this award the first year the award program was initiated in 1995, and won again in 1999 and 2009.

Visit the Charleston County Web site at [www.charlestoncounty.org](http://www.charlestoncounty.org) for more information on Charleston County recycling, and for news, services and up-to-date information relating to Charleston County Government.