



## Charleston County News Release

Release Number: 2967  
Date: January 27, 2009

### County Staff Available to Speak to Groups on Environmental Topics

*U.S. EPA grant funds Charleston County's pollution-reducing education programs*

Citizens who are a part of any group that meets on a regular basis and looks for new topic ideas to be presented at meetings have a new option to consider.

[Charleston County Government](#) staff with the grant-funded [Community Action for a Renewed Environment \(CARE\) program](#) are available to make presentations to groups and organizations on topics such as:

- Green landscaping techniques
- Tips for home and business energy savings
- Hazardous material reduction and disposal in schools and neighborhoods
- Air and water quality issues as they relate to human health and the environment
- Other tips and strategies for the public to improve air and water quality in the Lowcountry

"We are available to help teach citizens about ways to improve our air and water quality in order to protect the environment for future generations," said Wendy Wicke, Charleston County's CARE program coordinator.

To schedule a presentation on environmental quality and pollution issues, contact Wendy Wicke in the [Charleston County Government's Building Services Department](#) by phone at (843) 202-6940 or by e-mail at [care@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:care@charlestoncounty.org).

The County received a \$236,498 grant from the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) to carry out the CARE Program. The grant was given for Charleston County's continuing participation in its [Project Impact Partnership Program](#), which aims to reduce local air and water pollution through public education programs.

Some of the grant funding is already being used for the County's new 30-minute TV show called "Living Green," which airs on channels WTAT Fox 24 and My TV Charleston with new episodes each month.

Other educational campaigns to be developed through the CARE program will focus on:

- Reducing on-road diesel emissions through reduced idling, retrofits and the use of alternative fuel vehicles
- Controlling open burning
- Promoting mass transit and encouraging the use of public transportation
- Working with boaters to address marine pollution
- Other air and water pollution reduction strategies aimed at both the general public and specific audiences

**SIDEBAR: Background information on EPA's CARE Grant and Charleston County's Project Impact**

- The EPA's award is part of the EPA's Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program, a community-based, community-driven program that builds partnerships to help the public understand and reduce toxic risks from numerous sources.
- Since the program was established three years ago, CARE has provided a total of \$7.75 million to more than 49 communities nationwide. The Charleston County CARE program is one of only five awarded in the southeast region.
- The Charleston County's Project Impact Partnership program was formed in 1999 with the help of a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant. There are now 172 local partnership members who focus on making the Charleston County communities more disaster resistant, including undertaking environmental improvement endeavors.
- Project partners previously conducted the Charleston Region Toxics Risk Assessment and identified particulate air pollution and ground level ozone as priority air toxics risks, and fecal coliform bacteria, petroleum product releases and trace metals as priority water pollutants in the Charleston County area. Through the CARE program, project partners aim to heighten local residents' awareness of these air and water pollution sources and encourage actions that individuals can take to reduce pollution.
- Established in 2005, CARE is a competitive grant program that offers an innovative way for communities to organize and take action to reduce toxic pollution in their air, land and water. By joining forces, for-profit and non-profit organizations can work together to improve the environmental health of a community and its residents.

Visit the EPA CARE Web site at [www.epa.gov/care](http://www.epa.gov/care) or Charleston County's web site <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/Departments/BuildingServices/care.htm> to learn more about the CARE program.

See photo of EPA grant check presentation:  
<http://www.charlestoncounty.org/NewsImages/epa.htm>