



## Charleston County News Release

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# Charleston County Solid Waste and Recycling Department Wins “Most Outstanding” State Award

*Award was presented at the 14th annual Recycle Guys Awards Program on Tuesday, March 3, in Columbia*

[Charleston County Government's Solid Waste and Recycling Department](#) received 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.

The award was presented by the [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control \(SCDHEC\)](#) for the County's wide variety of recycling and waste reduction programs targeted to widespread audiences, from residents to businesses and schools.

“This award goes to all our hardworking men and women on the sorting line, driving our recycling trucks, and working at the convenience centers and the landfill, and our employees in our offices who answer questions from the public every day about our programs,” said Gregg Varner, director of Charleston County's Solid Waste and Recycling Department. “Charleston County's recycling program is a team effort, and everyone in our field is proud of what they do. Without their passion, this award would not be possible. I thank everyone in the recycling business for always staying focused on the goal, which is to reduce, reuse and recycle.”

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 establishment along its routes.
- Charleston County operates seven drop-off sites where traditional 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.

This is the third time that Charleston County has won the award as the most Outstanding County Waste Reduction/Recycling Program. Charleston County won the first year the award program was initiated in 1995, and won again in 1999 and 2009.

The Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) also took home an award for most Outstanding College or University Waste Reduction/Recycling Program. During 2008, MUSC recycled more than 1,300 tons of paper, aluminum cans, plastic bottles, cardboard, books, batteries, scrap metal

and cell phones with the Charleston County Solid Waste and Recycling Department. MUSC expanded its shredding service in 2008 and saw a \$200,000 savings by shredding paper on its own. MUSC's efforts are widespread, targeting the more than 15,000 faculty, staff and students at the university.

The annual Recycle Guys Awards Program ceremony began in 1995 and is held to recognize the top recycling people, programs and projects in South Carolina.

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.