

Partnership on Waste and Energy

Increase SCORE funding to meet challenging recycling goals

The Partnership on Waste and Energy (PWE) seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of communities we serve while advancing equity and responding to the challenges of a changing climate.

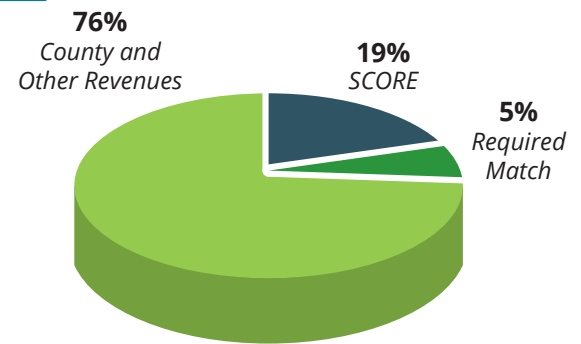
Minnesota law requires counties to implement recycling programs to achieve state recycling goals, including recycling 75% of metro waste by 2030. Counties need greater state investment in SCORE grants to meet today's more complicated solid waste challenges, achieve increasingly difficult recycling goals and keep valuable materials out of landfills.

Allocation to SCORE grants has not kept pace with state recycling goals

The state raised the metro recycling goal from 50% to 75% in 2014 without addressing the funding needed to achieve it. While revenues from the Solid Waste Management Tax (SWMT) have increased 169% over time, little of that increase has been used to fund SCORE.

A shrinking percentage of SWMT revenues is used for SCORE grants, much less than the 30% of revenues diverted to the state's general fund. At one time, 67% of SWMT revenues was used for SCORE.

County Recycling Spending and SCORE Grants, 2021



State grants cover only 1/5 of county spending for recycling.

Investments in waste prevention, reuse and recycling are needed now

Significant forward-looking investments are needed for waste prevention, reuse and recycling infrastructure to push beyond our current wins and onto new challenges. Current SCORE allocations are insufficient to make these capital- and operationally-intensive investments.

- Minnesota has spent \$500 million on landfill cleanup, projected to rise another \$400-700 million. We must prioritize prevention, reuse and recycling to keep waste out of landfills.
- Even with currently high recycling rates, the market value of materials lost to the waste stream in the PWE counties is estimated to be more than \$50 million per year. Strategic investments in recycling infrastructure and programs can put these materials to work for Minnesota's economy and jobs.
- Organics recycling is the biggest opportunity to avoid landfilling. It will not happen without significant expansion of collection and processing infrastructure and extensive educational efforts.
- Waste reduction and reuse offer the best environmental payoffs. County successes with current efforts such as Fix-It Clinics are only a start—bigger impacts will take more resources.

Contact for More Information

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