

## ANALYSIS

### Department of Environmental Quality Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling

---

**Analyst:** April McDonald

**Request:** Approve the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant program for a formula grant ranging from \$300,000 to \$500,000 to prevent food waste at the household level.

**Analysis:** The SWIFR grant program, made possible by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, provides states and territories with formula grants to support improvements to post-consumer materials management. Each state or territory is eligible to receive base grants of \$300,000 to \$500,000 in 2023, with specific amounts allocated by formula. There is potential for larger awards based on certain programmatic factors, as determined by the EPA. These grants are non-competitive, with no match requirement, and fall under the Justice40 Initiative, which aims to deliver 40% of the overall benefits to disadvantaged communities.

On January 11, 2023, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) provided their notice of intent to apply for this federal funding opportunity more than 10 days before the January 27, 2023 application deadline. The Department seeks SWIFR funding to support implementation of existing plans to prevent food waste at the household level. DEQ plans to implement the next phase of its “Bad Apple: Don’t Let Good Food Go Bad” consumer food waste prevention campaign. Because this grant application is seeking funds for work already in progress, no additional staff are needed.

The Department estimates food waste costs Oregon households an average of \$1,800 per year. DEQ intends to use grant funds to expand campaign channels to reach 30-50% of Oregon households with information and strategies to help save money through food waste reduction. This expanded campaign seeks to reach Spanish-speaking populations more effectively, engage local governments, and implement materials targeted at schools. Additionally, food waste reduction prevents significant carbon emissions. A 2022 Climate Action report published by the United Nations titled “Food and Climate Change: Healthy diets for a healthier planet” asserts “If food waste were a country, it would be the third-largest emitting country in the world.”

**Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation:** The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends approval of the request.

## Department of Environmental Quality Filimoehala

---

**Request:** Authorization to apply for a grant ranging from \$300,000 to \$500,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the Solid Waste Infrastructure Recycling grant program.

**Recommendation:** Approve the request.

**Discussion:** The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is preparing an application for a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from the Solid Waste Infrastructure Recycling grant program. These grants were authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) to provide states and territories with resources to support long-term planning and data collection for national recycling and food loss/waste reduction goals.

Each state and territory is eligible to receive base grants of \$300,000 to \$500,000, with specific amounts determined by an EPA formula. The department plans to use Oregon's grant funds to expand the existing "Bad Apple: Don't Let Good Food Go Bad" food waste prevention campaign. With the added resources, DEQ plans to reach 30 to 50 percent of Oregon households with information and strategies to help them save money by reducing food waste. The grant is non-competitive and requires no match.



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Environmental Quality  
Agency Headquarters  
700 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 600  
Portland, OR 97232  
(503) 229-5696  
FAX (503) 229-6124  
TTY 711

January 20, 2023

Senator Elizabeth Steiner, Co-Chair  
Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
900 Court Street NE  
H-178 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs:

## **Nature of the Request**

This letter serves as notification to the Legislative Fiscal Office and the Chief Financial Officer that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) respectfully requests approval to submit an application to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2023 Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program (EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-NC23-04). DEQ plans to submit a workplan to EPA, per application instructions, on January 27, 2023 with a final workplan and application due May 2023.

SWIFR provides states and territories with grants to support their long-term planning and data collection needs to demonstrate progress toward the National Recycling Goal and Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal and advance a Circular Economy for materials. Each state and territory are eligible to receive base grants of \$300,000 to \$500,000 (specific amount to be determined by an EPA formula), with potential for larger awards based on certain "programmatic factors." These grants are non-competitive, and no matching funds are required.

## **Agency Action**

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), provided appropriations to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to fund the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program authorized by section 302(a) of Save Our Seas Act 2.0 (P.L.116-224) as codified in 33 U.S.C. 4282(a). EPA also received appropriations for SWIFR in its Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriation Act (P.L. 117-103) and anticipates awarding a total of \$30 million to states and territories through this program by spring 2023.

The SWIFR funds support local improvements to “post-consumer materials management.” SWIFR funding may be used to:

1. **Develop or update plans to advance post-consumer materials management.** Plans can be for Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 256 solid waste management plans or other planning documents (e.g., circular economy plans).
2. **Develop, strengthen, and/or implement comprehensive data collection efforts that demonstrate progress toward the National Recycling Goal and Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal.** Data collection and measurement efforts should be designed to improve the state’s ability to track progress towards national and state recycling and/or circular economy goals. Data collection efforts could include state-wide or other targeted waste characterization studies.
3. **Support the state-led implementation of plans to advance post-consumer materials management.**

DEQ is developing an application for SWIFR funds for activity related to area 3, specifically to support implementation of existing plans to prevent food waste at the household level. This work aligns with DEQ’s *Materials Management in Oregon: 2050 Vision and Framework for Action*, adopted by the Environmental Quality Commission in 2012, which emphasizes the sustainable use of materials across all stages of their life cycle and includes strategies for waste prevention.

## Proposal

DEQ plans to use EPA SWIFR funding to implement the next phase of its successful “Bad Apple: Don’t Let Good Food Go Bad” consumer food waste prevention campaign plan. In its first phase, the campaign reached more than half a million people in Oregon via social media and earned a national “Telly” ad industry award for social media, as well as a Sustainable Oregon award from the Association of Oregon Recyclers.

DEQ estimates wasted food costs Oregon households an average of \$1800 per year. With EPA SWIFR funding, the expanded campaign work will allow DEQ to reach 30 to 50 percent of Oregon households with information and strategies to help them save money by reducing food waste. Food waste reduction also prevents significant carbon emissions – it is estimated that food waste prevention has 6-7 times the greenhouse gas reduction potential of diverting food waste from landfills.

Building on successful work conducted in 2022, the next phase of the campaign’s implementation will:

- Expand campaign channels beyond the broadcast and social media channels used in 2022. Potential additional channels include radio, billboards and transit ads.

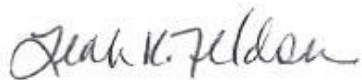
- Support amplified local government engagement in the campaign to increase its reach through development and supply of outreach materials for local government use.
- Specifically develop and implement approaches to reach Spanish-speaking populations more effectively across Oregon.
- Expand broadcast and social media ad placements to reach larger populations.
- Refresh and expand material on the existing campaign website ([www.dontletgoodfoodgobad.org](http://www.dontletgoodfoodgobad.org)).
- Develop and implement materials targeted at schools.

The development of enhanced outreach materials for local governments will aid those jurisdictions in their work to reduce food waste locally, which also reduces burdens of organic waste management.

Because this grant application seeks funding for already planned work, DEQ does not anticipate the award will require any additional program staff support beyond assignments already allocated.

DEQ is very excited for this opportunity to expand an existing and proven effort to reduce food waste and its impacts in Oregon. Thank you for your review of this request letter. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Leah K. Feldon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leah" being more prominent.

Leah K. Feldon  
Interim Director