What is the Clean Community Program?

The Indiana Clean Community Program is a voluntary program which recognizes Indiana's municipalities that take proactive, sustainable environmental actions. Originally established by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) in the early 2000's, the Program is being reimaged and launched in a new, easier-to-participate program in November 2023.

How does the Program work?

- The Program accepts a broad range of projects, including those with a focus on sustainability and/or municipal systems.

- An up-to-date list of pre-approved projects is available by contacting clean@idem.in.gov.

- The Program offers a streamlined approach of a 3-tiered membership, allowing communities to step through the program at their own pace.

- Community population determines the number of projects that must be implemented for membership.

Figure 1. Clean Communities can receive recognition for projects in multiple categories with an overall focus on community sustainability and resiliency.

Is there a cost to participate? Is assistance available for communities?

- There is no fee to participate.
- IDEM Clean Community staff is available to walk a community through the process.
- Two Indiana resources that could be helpful on projects such as Climate Action Plans and Greenhouse Gas Inventories include:
    o Indiana University Environmental Resilience Institute
      https://eri.iu.edu/index.html
    o Purdue University Environmental and Ecological Engineering Program
      https://engineering.purdue.edu/EEE

INDIANA CLEAN COMMUNITY PROGRAM

www.idem.**IN**.gov

How does a community join?

- The Program is open to all Indiana municipalities including cities, towns, and county levels of government. After being accepted into the program, a community can step through the levels of membership from Bronze to Gold at their own pace.

- Working with their Clean Teams (a small group of municipal staff, residents, businesses, and local interested parties), communities choose projects from at least two different categories.

- Small communities (less than 35,000) must implement at least 4 projects per level;
  Medium communities (35,000 to 599,999) must implement at least 6 projects per level;
  Large communities (600,000 or more) must implement at least 8 projects per level.

- The Clean Community Program manager will provide descriptions that include lists and details of pre-approved projects that communities may choose to implement. If communities have already implemented projects within the last three (3) years, they may submit those for review.

- As with all IDEM OPS recognition programs, successful applicants must have a positive environmental history. This will be determined through the IDEM compliance check process.

- Communities maintain membership through active attendance at annual meetings, completion of projects, advancing membership levels, and mentoring new members.

Bronze Level

- *Have a positive environmental history – as determined by an IDEM compliance check*
- *Create a Clean Team (to show dedicated resources are available to achieve sustainability goals)*
- *Attend the Clean Annual Meeting*

Silver Level

- *Meet Bronze level requirements*
- *Be recognized for implementing between 4 - 8 projects (depending on community size)*
- *Measure and report on performance metrics*

Gold Level

- *Meet Bronze and Silver level requirements*
- *Implement at their own pace an additional 4 – 8 projects (depending on community size)*
- *Measure and report on performance metrics*

What are the benefits for participating?

- **Become more sustainable and resilient** by using a pathway for continuous improvement.
- **Receive recognition when applying for competitive grants** and assistance programs.
- **Advance notice of regulatory inspections** for Gold level members.

What recognition will communities receive?

- **Peer recognition** at workshops and conferences.
- **Visibility** on the Clean Community web site and in IDEM press releases.
- **Artwork and recognition materials** (logos, window clings, flags, street, and project signs).