

Hendricks County SWMD: Environmental Education for Youth

The Hendricks County Solid Waste Management District recognizes the importance of youth education in achieving long-term behavior change related to waste reduction, reuse and recycling. During the 2005-2006 school year, when the District was first formed, programs were presented to 3,618 Hendricks County students

Through assertive program promotion to all elementary school teachers in Hendricks County, as well as all middle school science and family & consumer science teachers, the District has seen steady growth in its youth education program.

- Programs are hands-on and interactive with some classes requesting multiple programs throughout the school year.
- Popular program titles include:
 - ◊ “Worms Eat My Garbage”
 - ◊ “How Do They Do That?”
 - ◊ “Garbage Pizza”
 - ◊ “Pop Bottle Science”
 - ◊ “Who Polluted White Lick Creek?”
 - ◊ “Jammin’ with Junk”
 - ◊ “Hazardous House of Horrors”



In 2008, the District hired an additional educator to help satisfy the numerous program requests being made by Hendricks County teachers. During the 2012-2013 school year programs were presented to 13,749 Hendricks County students. Most programs satisfy Indiana academic standards as set forth by the Indiana Department of Education. District staff review the academic standards annually to ensure the environmental education programs continue to be valuable to the students and teachers alike.

The District also provides all Hendricks County fourth graders a copy of Trash Talk newspaper each quarter. Trash Talk provides students with environmental education topics including local activity updates and educational games and puzzles.

Hendricks County teachers are also able to request one of the District’s environmental lending libraries. Each library is a recycling bin full of grade-appropriate books, videos, games and music that teachers are able to keep for up to a month in their classrooms.



Many Hendricks County schools also serve as hubs for the District's annual Recycle Heart & Sole shoe recycling program. Families bring shoes they no longer want or need to collection centers in the schools, and the District collects all the shoes to be recycled. Schools are then given prizes based on their per capita recycling results. Since 2009 the District, along with the participating schools, has been able to divert over 21,000 pairs of shoes from landfills and incinerators.

