

askHRgreen.org

2021-2022



ANNUAL REPORT

HAMPTON ROADS PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION



CHESAPEAKE

Steven Best
Debbie Ritter
Ella Ward
Christopher Price
Brian Solis

FRANKLIN

Frank Rabil
Amanda Jarratt

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Phillip Bazzani
Carol Steele

HAMPTON

Steve Brown
Donnie Tuck
Mary Bunting

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY

Joel Acree
Randy Keaton, Treasurer

JAMES CITY COUNTY

John McGlennon
Scott Stevens

NEWPORT NEWS

David Jenkins, Vice-Chair
McKinley Price
Cynthia Rohlf

NORFOLK

Kenneth Alexander
Courtney Doyle
Andria McClellan, Chair
Danica Royster
Larry “Chip” Filer

POQUOSON

Gordon Helsel
Randall Wheeler

PORTSMOUTH

Shannon Glover
Tonya Chapman

SMITHFIELD

Carter Williams
Michael Stallings

SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY

William Gillette
Brian Thrower

SUFFOLK

Leroy Bennett
Albert Moor

SURRY COUNTY

Robert Elliott
Melissa Rollins

VIRGINIA BEACH

Robert Dyer
Barbara Henley
John Moss
Guy Tower
Sabrina Wooten
Patrick Duhaney
Vacant

WILLIAMSBURG

Douglas Pons
Andrew Trivette

YORK COUNTY

Sheila Noll
Neil Morgan

Robert A. Crum, Jr., Executive Director / Secretary

Report Documentation

TITLE:

askHRgreen.org Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

REPORT DATE

September 2022

GRANT/SPONSORING AGENCY

Local Funds

AUTHORS:

Katie Cullipher
Rebekah Eastep

**ORGANIZATION NAME,
ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE**

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, Virginia 23320
(757) 420-8300
www.hrpdcva.gov

ABSTRACT

The Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) is one of 21 Planning District Commissions in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is a regional organization representing the 17 local governments of the Hampton Roads area. This report provides an overview of the askHRgreen.org regional public outreach program and campaign results for fiscal year 2021-2022. It also provides an overview of the individual initiatives and results from each of the four askHRgreen.org environmental education committees: Recycling and Beautification, Stormwater Education, Water Awareness, and Fats, Oils & Grease Education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by the HRPDC staff in cooperation with the member localities. Preparation of this report was included in the HRPDC Work Program for Fiscal Year 2022, approved by the Commission in May 2021.

About askHRgreen.org

Launched in 2011, askHRgreen.org is more than just a robust website; it is an award-winning comprehensive public outreach initiative. The program combines traditional and social media with grassroots outreach efforts to not only educate, but inspire residents of Hampton Roads to make changes that have a positive impact on the environment. By combining local expertise and leveraging economies of scale, the askHRgreen.org program is able to help local jurisdictions fulfill requirements of MS4 stormwater permits, groundwater withdrawal permits, and state consent orders to reduce sanitary sewer overflows. For citizens, it has become a “one-stop shop” to find answers, resources, and inspiration for a cleaner, greener Hampton Roads. From water-wise landscaping ideas and pointers for preventing water pollution to recycling tips and simple ways to prevent sewer overflows, all you have to do is askHRgreen.org.

Financial support for askHRgreen.org is made possible by the following member localities and agencies: the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg; the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, Surry and York; the town of Smithfield and HRSD. Members of locality staff and HRSD comprise four askHRgreen.org committees who meet monthly to develop and implement the regional program.

Recycling and Beautification Committee - A coalition of local government staff members from across Hampton Roads who are working together to share ideas and pool resources for various education programs tailored towards community beautification, litter prevention, waste reduction, and recycling education. This group has been working cooperatively since 1981.

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Education Committee - A coalition of local government staff members working together with HRSD to protect wastewater infrastructure, reduce sanitary sewer overflows, and improve local water quality. The committee shares both technical resources and educational strategies to prevent improper disposal of fats, oils, and grease. This cooperative effort has been underway since 2007 when 13 of the region’s localities and HRSD entered into the Regional Special Order by Consent with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Water Awareness Committee - Regional public utilities staff members working together to educate citizens about aging infrastructure, the value of tap water, and the importance of water conservation. This cooperative effort to promote the vital role water plays in the quality of life of Hampton Roads and the need to conserve it assists localities in meeting requirements of various locality goals as well as water supply and ground water permit education requirements.

Stormwater Education Committee - A cooperative partnership of the region’s 17 member jurisdictions which has served as a formal adjunct to the required public information component of the Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permits (VPDES) for Phase I and Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) since 1997. Local government staff members work together to share ideas and pool resources for various education programs and outreach initiatives -tailored to stormwater pollution prevention.

COVID-19
Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic began to ease in FY22. Community events slowly returned but have not yet reached pre-COVID levels. Electronic communications such as social media and newsletters continued to be a great way to communicate with residents in the absence of community events. Despite the ongoing challenges of public education during the rebound from a global pandemic, the askHRgreen.org team members continued to work diligently to raise awareness and encourage environmental action in the 757.

2021-2022 at a Glance

20.8 million opportunities to see or hear about askHRgreen.org



144,282 visits to askHRgreen.org



Community events with over 119,000 people in attendance



BAY STAR PROGRAMS
3,688 homes 74 businesses



11,161 students impacted by \$9,378 in environmental education mini grants



Celebrated 10 YEARS of askHRgreen.org

\$16,000 grant funding for special projects





@askHRgreen
2,989



@askHRgreen
563



eNews Subscribers
6,772

Celebrating a Decade

For 10 years, askHRgreen.org has been a strong and reliable environmental resource. We’ve worked to help beautify our communities and improve and protect our waterways, infrastructure, and recycling activities through programs, tools, information, and inspiration.

Coastal Virginia Magazine

To mark our 10th anniversary, we reached out to a familiar community partner: CoVa Magazine. Not only did the magazine staff collaborate with askHRgreen.org from 2015 to 2018 in publishing a special insert called Green Living, they believe in our mission, and are in front of the many residents and visitors in all of Coastal Virginia. We ran three anniversary ads from September 2021 through February 2022, and had two editorials, as well as exposure in the September CoVa Home & Garden e-newsletter. Each of the three ads had four compelling questions that served as headlines, with each question serving one of our four committees. They were deliberately in the form of questions so we could position the answer: “Just askHRgreen.org.”

Anniversary Video

We also marked this milestone by producing a commemorative video, recapping our successful outreach initiatives over the past ten years. The video was shared via social media. Here’s a glimpse at some of the impact we’ve had:

- Coordinated 382 cleanups with the support of 5,084 volunteers clearing 229,900 pounds of litter
- Installed 2,000 storm drain medallions, reminding residents that only rain should go down the drain
- Installed 403 pet waste stations in 293 communities
- Awarded \$95,879 in environmental education grants, impacting 57,128 students
- Distributed 52,000 Green Learning Guides to the region’s 3rd and 6th grade students
- Attendance at 275 community events (with exposure to over 675,000 people) to talk to citizens about living greener
- Received \$83,471 in grant funding to amplify our existing public outreach efforts

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT CAN AND CAN'T BE FLUSHED?
WHERE CAN I GET MY GARDEN SOIL TESTED?
DO RECYCLABLES HAVE TO BE EMPTY, CLEAN & DRY?
IS BEER REALLY 95-99% WATER?

Just askHRgreen.org

FOR TEN YEARS,
askHRgreen.org has been providing answers to our community's questions about all things green in Hampton Roads. Through a robust website, community engagement and groundbreaking initiatives, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, powered by municipal partners from all 17 cities and counties and HRSD, continue to serve as a reliable and enthusiastic environmental resource.

Thank you, Hampton Roads, for allowing us to help you improve and protect our waterways, infrastructure and recycling activities through information and inspiration.

Here's to a cleaner, greener Hampton Roads!

TEN YEARS
askHRgreen.org
TOGETHER

Chesapeake • Franklin • Hampton • Newport News • Norfolk • Poquoson
Portsmouth • Suffolk • Virginia Beach • Williamsburg • Gloucester County
Isle of Wight County • James City County • Southampton County
Surry County • York County • Town of Smithfield • HRSD

TEN YEARS TOGETHER askHRgreen.org

10-for-10 Tree Giveaway

In October, we celebrated by giving away 10 free Virginia native eastern redbud trees through an online drawing. Hampton Roads residents could enter by simply subscribing to the askHRgreen.org e-newsletter. This promotion was incredibly popular as the 7-gallon trees would make a lovely addition to anyone’s yard or garden area. Not only were the trees beautiful, as native trees they’re good for the environment. We’re thrilled to have been able to add 10 native trees to the Hampton Roads landscape through this special promotion – one to commemorate every year of the askHRgreen.org program!

askhrgreen.org
Published by Rebekah Eastep • October 29, 2021 •

Don't forget to enter our drawing for a FREE eastern redbud tree! Our winners will be selected on Monday!

Enter here: <https://askhrgreen.org/tree-giveaway/>
#PlantNativePlants #FallTreePlanting #PlantATree

Celebrating 10 Years!

10-FOR-10
VIRGINIA NATIVE TREE GIVEAWAY



ENTER TO WIN ONE OF 10 TREES!

Level Up Challenge

In January, we invited folks to take their “green” game to a higher level by adopting some new best practices in the new year. From January until April, we challenged people to “Level Up” by reducing their waste, reusing whenever possible, and recycling more. We also suggested they consider adopting a storm drain, picking up litter or organizing a community cleanup, planting native plants, etc. Those who accepted the challenge were entered into a special grand prize drawing to win a Hampton Roads staycation package. One lucky winner scored big for the environment and for herself by receiving a gift card for \$100 to Taste Unlimited and four tickets to each of these local attractions: Virginia Aquarium, Virginia Zoo, Ocean Breeze Waterpark, and Busch Gardens Williamsburg.



Congratulations to
Sybil M.!

LEVEL UP 2022 challenge winner

See how they are making a difference:

Green Star Teachers

Finally, we decided to cap off our anniversary year by celebrating local educators with our Green Star Teachers Awards. Nominations were collected in the fall and with the support of HRSD, 10 finalists were chosen in March and awarded \$1,000 to use for future green-themed classroom projects.

The winning submissions included teachers from across the region who involved their students in planting community gardens, organizing school recycling programs, conducting field trips to the landfill, and planting trees on school grounds. One educator had students convert a stormwater pond into an outdoor classroom, while another worked with high school students in project-based engineering and conservation studies on a nearby urban farm. Here's a look at our Green Star Teachers and how they plan to put their grants to good use:

askHRgreen.org

Green Star Teacher Awards

Nominate a "star" environmental educator at askHRgreen.org/GreenStar

TEN LOCAL EDUCATORS WILL RECEIVE A \$1,000 GRANT!

Green Star Teacher Awards

Celebrating 10 years together with \$10,000 in funding for Hampton Roads environmental educators.

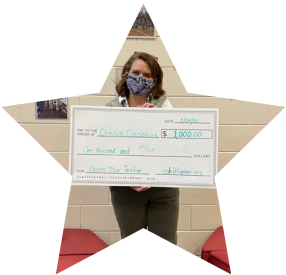
Tonya Bangley
Kings Fork High School
Suffolk

With her award funds, Ms. Bangley plans to build a greenhouse to grow native plants from seeds for the outdoor learning lab and educate the community about the importance of planting natives.



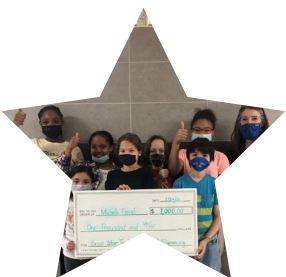
Crissie Crusemire
Academy for Discovery at
Lakewood
Norfolk

Ms. Crusemire plans to use her funding to expand outdoor learning spaces and the community garden at Academy for Discovery at Lakewood.



Michele Ferrel
Kilgore Gifted Center
Hampton

With the grant award, Ms. Ferrel plans to host an environmental fair for her young learners who are investigating pollinators, gardens, the schoolyard pond, and much more.



Pamela Hall
Carrollton Elementary School
Isle of Wight County

Ms. Hall has taught her students about renewable energy and plans to use her award funds to help students incorporate wind and solar energy into their engineering projects.



Angela McElroy
Nansemond River High School
Suffolk

Ms. McElroy will use her grant funds to support her Oceanography students at their upcoming fair. Students will educate their peers through posters and games and distribute eco-friendly prizes like reusable shopping bags and straws.



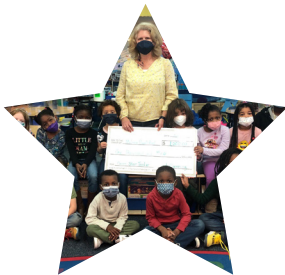
Charlie Morse
Williamsburg Community
Growers
Williamsburg-James City
County

Mr. Morse plans to use the funds to work with high school students on either a vermicomposting project for food waste from the school cafeteria or a solar power system for the teaching farm.



Melissa Powell-Riedl
Paul Burbank Elementary
School
Hampton

Ms. Powell-Riedl plans to use the Green Star Award funds to increase the growing area of the school garden with more raised beds for vegetables in an outdoor classroom setting that is accessible to more students.



Jeannette Reynolds
Rosemont Elementary School
Virginia Beach

Ms. Reynolds will use her funds for "Fleury's Garden" – an authentic learning experience for over 400 kindergarten through fifth grade students at Rosemont Elementary School.



Adrienne Sawyer
Chesapeake Public Schools

Ms. Sawyer will use the funding for sensors to conduct temperature audits and identify heat islands in one section of Chesapeake. Volunteers will then plant trees in identified areas to increase the tree canopy.

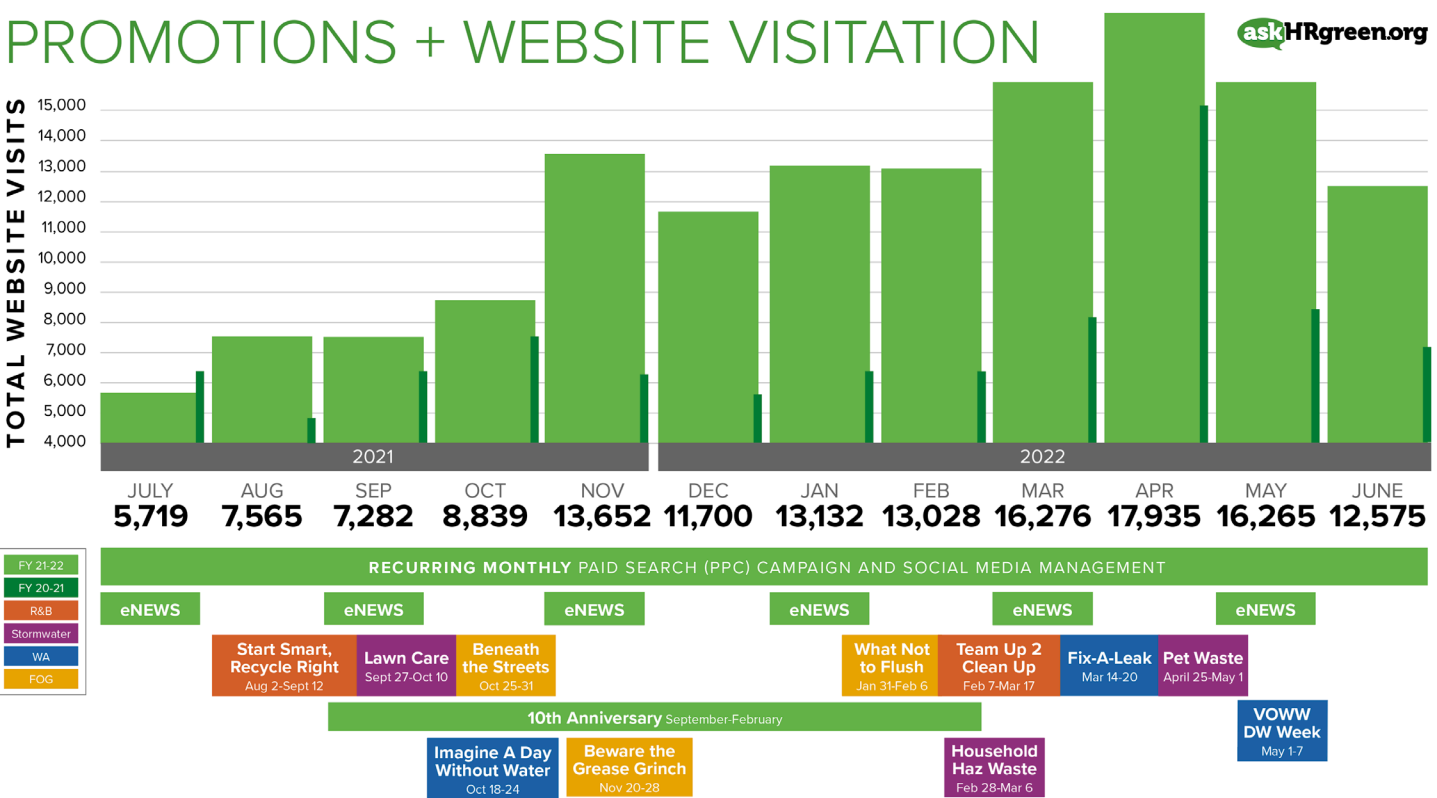
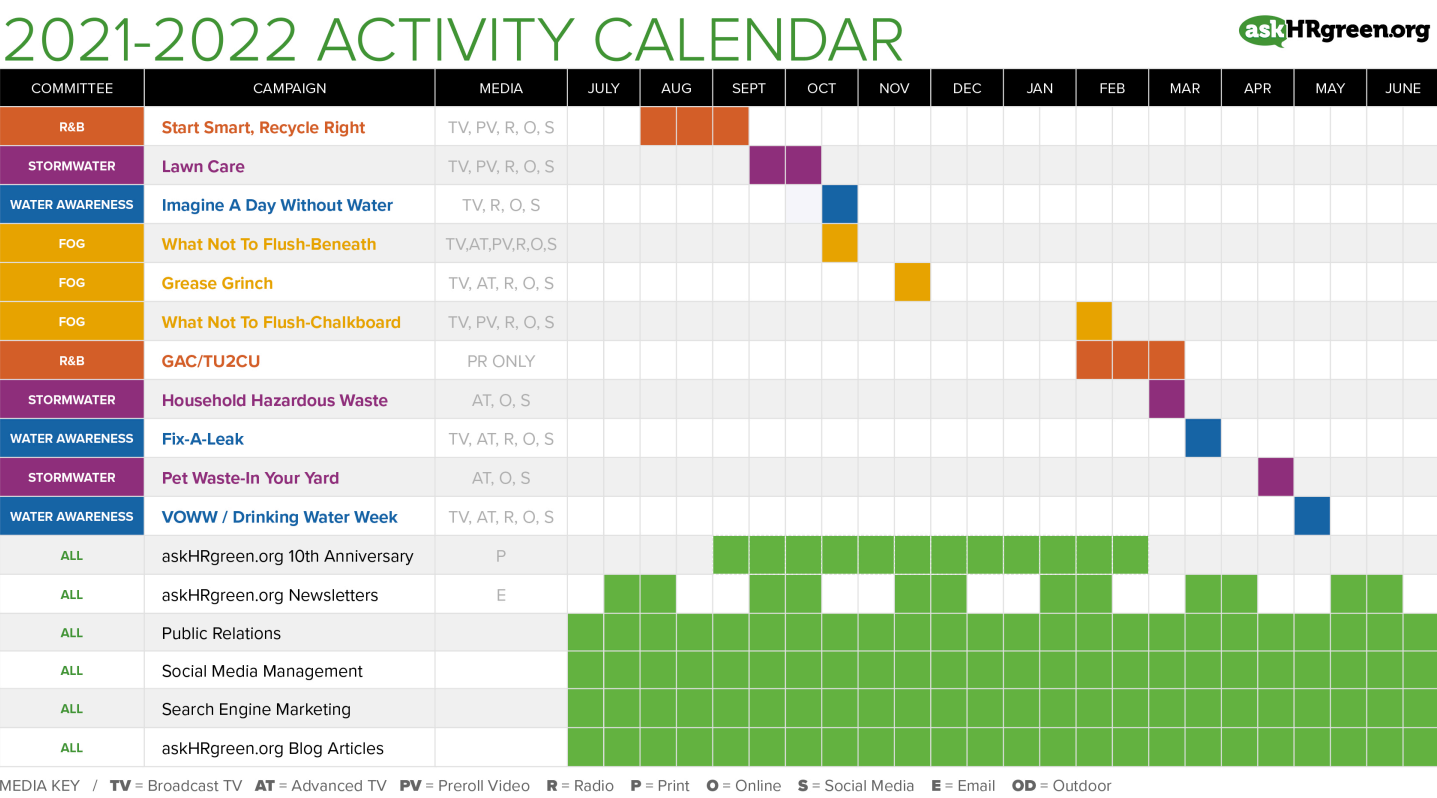


Kathleen (Kathy) Shambo
Southside STEM Academy at
Campostella
Norfolk

Ms. Shambo plans to use grant funds to help jump-start the eco-club with native plantings, rain barrels, composting, and recycling bins for the school.



2021-2022 Media Campaign & Promotion Schedule



Website Analytics

The askHRgreen.org website continues to be the cornerstone of our outreach efforts where campaign news and events are featured prominently and content is delivered seamlessly to users on all types of devices. In FY22, we saw a 62% increase in website traffic over FY21 and a 50% increase

	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Visits	144,282	88,544	73,379	58,893	55,735	58,113
Unique Visitors	130,929	77,212	63,146	49,816	45,661	46,282
Pageviews	188,867	125,529	117,463	86,538	93,589	92,681
Pages per Visit	1.31	1.42	1.60	1.47	1.68	1.59
Average Visit Duration	0:38	0:55	1:02	1:03	1:27	1:12
Bounce Rate	87%	83%	79%	81%	77%	79%
% New Visits	90%	87%	86%	84%	81%	80%
Mobile Devices	57%	57%	58%	57%	54%	53%
Desktop Devices	43%	43%	42%	43%	46%	47%

in webpage views. The majority of web traffic continues to be new visitors, demonstrating the growing awareness and effectiveness of our outreach efforts.

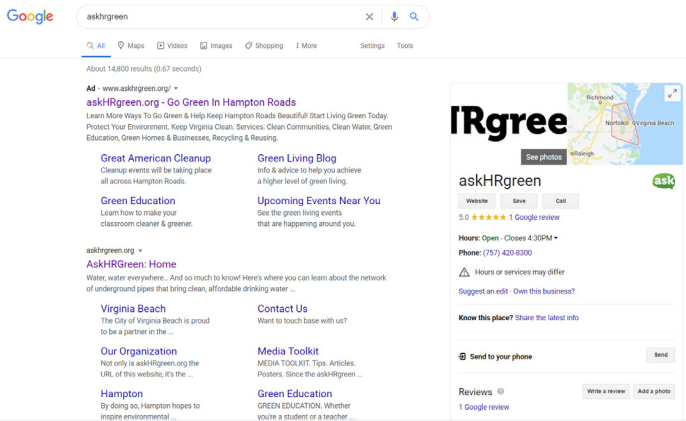
Top Website Traffic Sources & Pages Visited

- 41.40% Direct
- 33.48% Organic Search
- 18.96% Other (Paid Search)
- 3.28% Referral
- 2.83% Social
- 0.02% Email

TOP TWENTY VISITED PAGES	
3,442	Good to Know/Do: Recycling Lookup - Virginia Beach
2,317	Good to Know/Do: Illegal Dumping
1,923	Blog Article: Disposable/Flushable diaper liners
1,734	Blog Article: The One Thing You Can't Live Without
1,715	Blog Article: Algae: Let's Get Rid of the Scum
1,685	Good to Know/Do: Single-Use Plastic
1,483	Blog Article: 50 Ways to Celebrate Earth Day During Social Distancing
1,367	Blog Article: Easy Lesson Plans: Wastewater Treatment
1,270	Good to Know/Do: Recycling Lookup - Chesapeake
1,122	Home
1,006	Good to Know/Do: Recycling Lookup - Newport News
953	Good to Know/Do: Recycling Lookup - Hampton
854	Blog Article: You Can Prevent Street Flooding
803	Campaign: Choose to Refuse Singe-Use Plastic
730	Good to Know/Do: Conserving Water Outdoors
634	Events
587	Blog Article: How to Add Compost to Your Lawn
580	Blog Article: Keep Chemicals Out of the Waterway
559	Good to Know/Do: Recycling Lookup - Suffolk

Search Engine Marketing

The askHRgreen.org Search Engine Marketing (SEM) program employs Google pay-per-click advertising to increase traffic to the website. By bidding on select keywords and phrases, our ads direct search traffic to relevant content on the askHRgreen.org website. In FY22, we had more than 274,000 Google search impressions. Those searches drove over 21,000 clicks to relevant content on the askHRgreen.org website – an increase of 35% compared to last year. This increase shows an improvement in the relevancy and efficiency of our search ad campaign. In August of 2020, Google introduced dynamic ads which use our own website content to generate targeted ads to relevant searches. This new feature has been highly successful in driving search traffic to the askHRgreen.org website with a phenomenal click thru rate of 16.8%. Dynamic ads help fill in the gaps of our keyword groups and deliver the most relevant askHRgreen.org information to audiences searching online.



Search Engine Marketing Results

	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	
Impressions	274,428	376,459	342,690	210,695	169,140	107,920	
Clicks	21,771	16,103	12,449	11,087	7,330	4,226	+35%
Click Thru Rate (CTR)	7.93%	4.28%	3.63%	5.26%	4.33%	3.92%	+85%

Top 10 Keyword Ad Groups

	Impressions	Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Dynamic Ads	36,463	6,123	87%	16.79%
Electronics Disposal	29,721	4,261	71%	14.34%
Recycling at Home	50,415	3,067	65%	6.08%
Native Plants	54,192	2,268	35%	4.19%
Lawn Care	41,207	1,761	66%	4.27%
Battery Disposal	10,374	1,256	80%	12.11%
Medication Disposal	7,452	1,201	84%	16.12%
askHRgreen General	1,978	463	71%	23.41%
Tap Water	13,920	387	64%	2.78%
Soil Testing	4,167	206	60%	4.94%

Community Outreach

Events

Events are an important part of public outreach and engagement for askHRgreen.org. The brand has become a sought-after addition to many community events and a recognizable participant for many event guests. These events are a primary source of signups for the Bay Star Homes program and the askHRgreen.org newsletter. In FY22, there was an increase in the number of events held as COVID-19 restrictions continued to ease. Only six events were held in FY21 while we ended FY22 with attendance at a total of 21 events. In total, 119,072 people had the opportunity to see askHRgreen.org at an event in their community. Just over half of these events utilized the askHRgreen.org trailer which is filled with a variety of resources from informational brochures to eco-themed promotional items such as reusable shopping bags, stainless steel straws, sink strainers, shower timers, dog waste bag holders, and more.



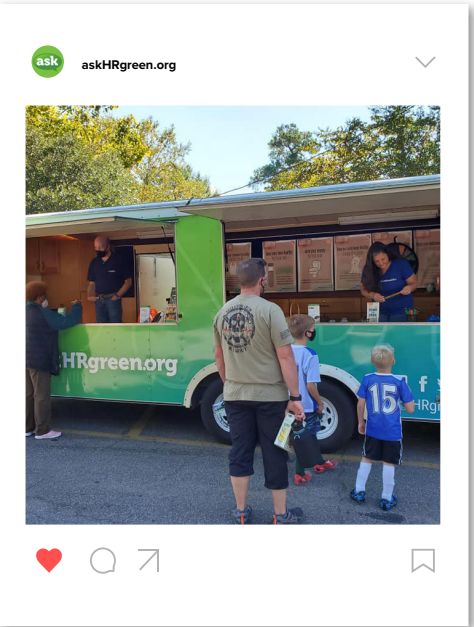
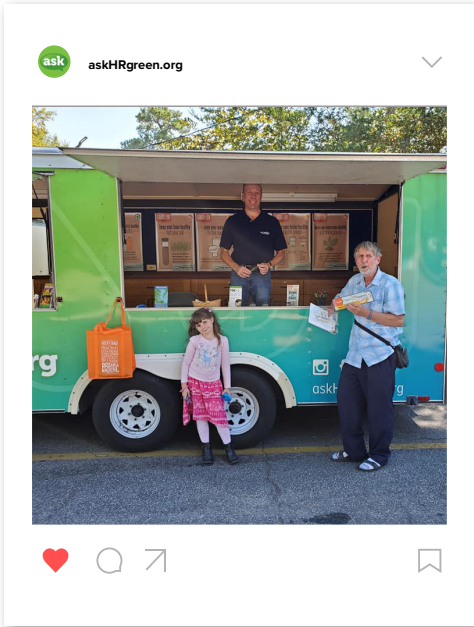
2021-2022 Community Events			Estimated Attendance
7/16	TGIF	Suffolk	300
7/21	YNot WINDsday	Virginia Beach	1,669
9/11 - 9/12	Mid-Atlantic Home & Outdoor Living Show	Virginia Beach	3,500
9/16 - 9/19	Isle of Wight County Fair	Windsor	25,000
10/2	Arbor Day	Norfolk	150
10/2	VB Master Gardeners Fall Gardening Festival	Virginia Beach	1,200
10/6-10/11	Suffolk Peanut Festival	Suffolk	60,000
10/30	Girl Scout Gold Star Project Event	James City County	50
2/12 - 2/13	Mid-Atlantic Home & Outdoor Living Show	Virginia Beach	1,500
3/5 - 3/6	Hampton Roads Home Show	Hampton	4,500
4/9	Go Green Market	York County	1,300
4/10	Earth Day Pop-up Market at Pembroke Mall	Virginia Beach	350
4/22	Norfolk Premium Outlets Earth Day Fair	Norfolk	25
4/23	Earth Day at Mt Trashmore	Virginia Beach	2,500
4/23	HCCC Earth Day	Hampton	253
4/23	Traditions Brewing Earth Day	Newport News	400
4/28	Anheuser Busch ES Fest	James City County	275
5/4	VB Public Utilities Employee Picnic	Virginia Beach	200
5/13-5/14	Tidewater Comicon	Virginia Beach	15,000
6/4	Love Liz Fest	Chesapeake	600
6/18	Pride in the Peake	Chesapeake	300
			119,072

Bay Star Homes

The Bay Star Homes program grew by 153 participants in FY22 bringing the total number of participants to 3,688. Residents participating in the Bay Star Homes program pledge to use at least eight environmentally-friendly practices in their homes. This includes changing environmentally-harmful behaviors and proactively implementing stormwater management practices such as rain barrels, rain gardens, and downspout disconnects on their private property. Other pledges address issues like waste reduction, water conservation, and conserving energy. Participants in the program get early access to special askHRgreen.org programs (including the very popular rain barrel workshops) and targeted seasonal communications. There was one special Bay Star Homes enewsletter distributed in fall 2021 to encourage lawn care practices, tree planting, proper FOG disposal, and America Recycles Day.

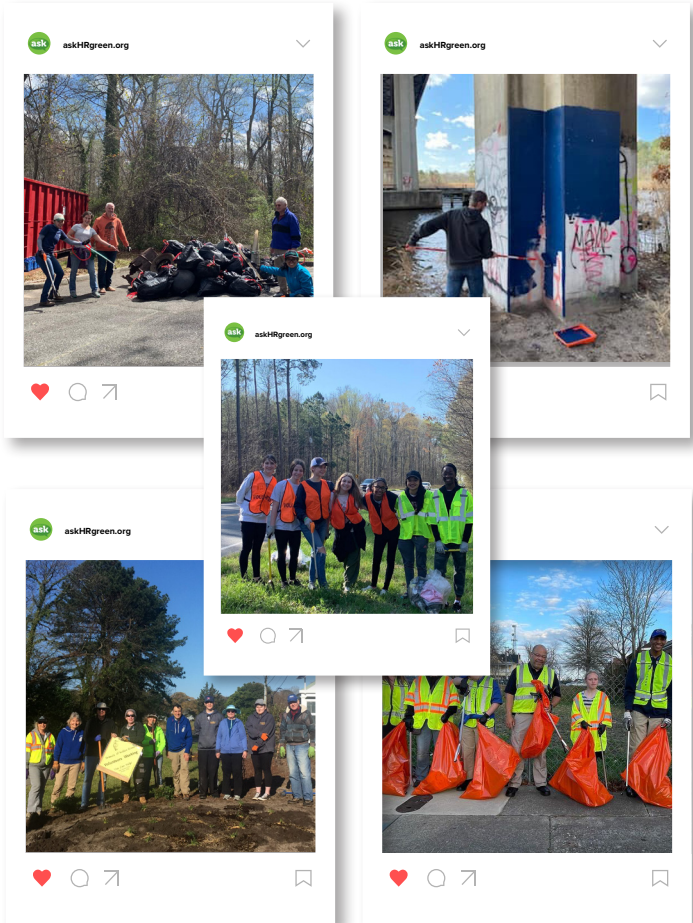
FY22 Bay Star Homes Registrants	
City/County	Number
Chesapeake	10
Hampton	7
Isle of Wight	1
James City	1
Newport News	46
Norfolk	55
Portsmouth	2
Suffolk	6
Virginia Beach	20
Williamsburg	2
York	3
Total	153

Total Bay Star Homes Registrants	
City/County	Number
Chesapeake	165
Franklin	13
Gloucester	18
Hampton	129
Isle of Wight	12
James City	17
Newport News	282
Norfolk	2478
Poquoson	17
Portsmouth	43
Smithfield	12
Southampton	4
Suffolk	150
Surry	3
Virginia Beach	258
Williamsburg	5
York	82
Total	3,688



Great American Cleanup

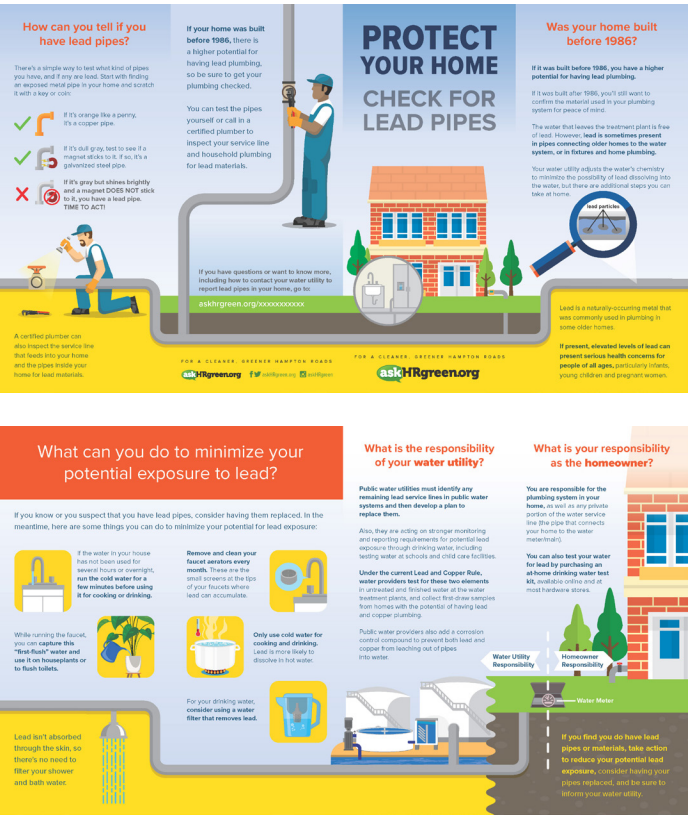
The askHRgreen.org Recycling & Beautification Committee once again collaborated to clean up and beautify Hampton Roads through the national Great American Cleanup (GAC) program. A part of the committee’s “Team Up 2 Clean Up” initiative, GAC engages the public and business community to get involved in litter cleanup and beautification projects throughout the region. Held March 25-26, 2022, these community cleanups resulted in the removal of 63,600 pounds of litter from the Hampton Roads landscape. That’s about 32 tons of litter no longer causing a nuisance in the community and prevented from becoming marine debris. There were also 264 trees or shrubs planted as part of GAC in addition to plenty of mulching, weeding, and general TLC in local parks and shared spaces. These successful results would not have been possible without the partnership of over 1,418 volunteers across Hampton Roads. Volunteers included small groups of family and friends, youth groups, civic leagues, municipal departments, community groups, small businesses, and large corporations.



Drinking Water Regulations

In December 2021, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced plans to take additional steps to address the potential for lead to enter drinking water through household plumbing. Drinking water that leaves the water treatment plant is free of lead; however, lead is sometimes present in the pipes of homes built prior to 1988 and can introduce lead into a home’s water supply. While the EPA had not yet released new guidelines during FY22, the Water Awareness Committee was proactive in creating a new brochure to help residents understand their home’s potential for lead plumbing, how to check for lead pipes, and strategies for minimizing potential exposure to lead.

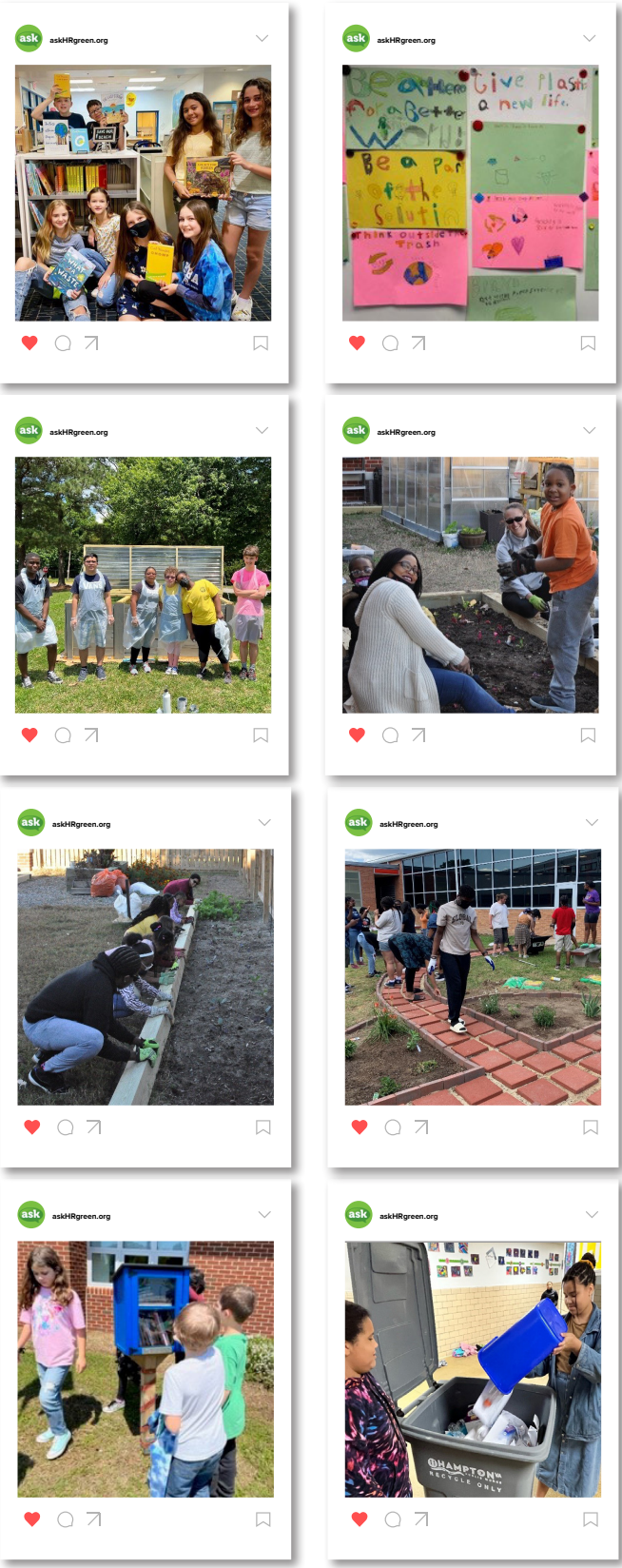
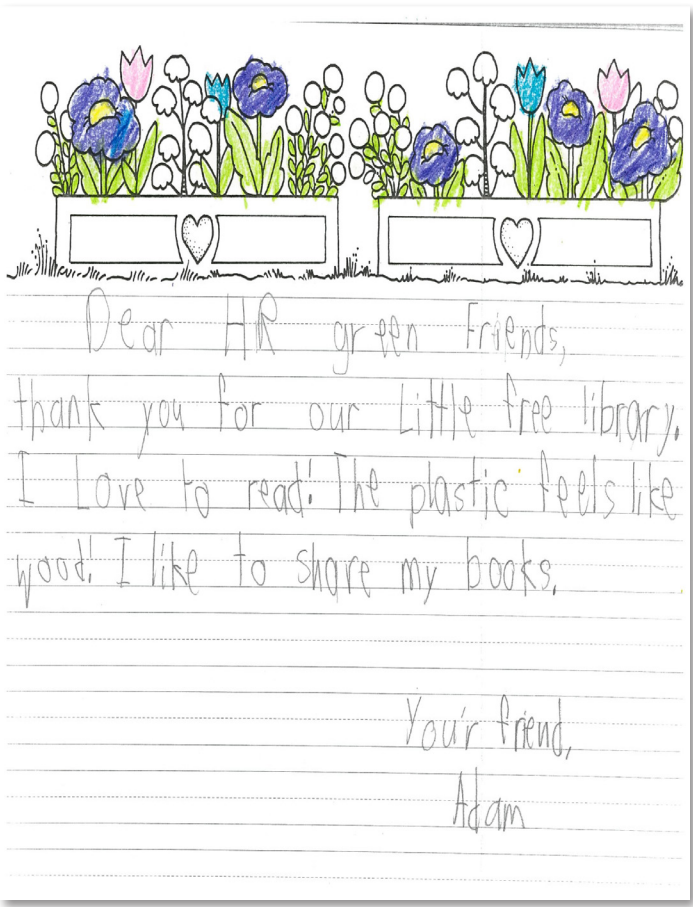
As additional guidelines are released, the committee hopes to develop additional resources including an informational video and dedicated webpage to help citizens understand and address the potential for lead in drinking water.



Environmental Education Mini Grant Program

Supporting environmental education in the classroom continues to be a priority of askHRgreen.org. The Environmental Education Mini Grant Program offers all Hampton Roads teachers (K-12), youth leaders, or organizations working with youth grants of up to \$500 to fund environmentally-themed projects.

In FY 2021-2022, askHRgreen.org was able to fund 20 mini grant projects for a total of \$9,378.34. Through these initiatives, young learners started recycling programs, established a little free library for reusing and sharing books, cultivated community gardens, built compost bins for food waste recycling, learned about native plants and habitat creation, captured rain water for reuse, and beautified spaces. These meaningful experiences are sure to foster a sense of connection between our environment and tomorrow’s leaders.



FY22 Environmental Education Mini Grant Projects

Project	Students	School/Organization	City/County	Grant
Northampton Little League Recycles	106	Northampton Little League	Hampton	500.00
Saving Trees – One Book at a Time	529	Pembroke Elementary School	Virginia Beach	440.11
The Fourth Element: Adding Sustainable Water Sources to Complete	600	York County Beautification Committee	York County	500.00
St. Helena Recycling Project	315	St. Helena Elementary School	Norfolk	482.72
Food for the Tummy, Food for the Soul: The Sequel	200	Newtown Elementary School	Virginia Beach	500.00
Native Garden for Pollinators	60	Crittenden Middle School	Newport News	500.00
Growing the Best SPS	6,000	Suffolk Public Schools	Suffolk	500.00
Machen Mustangs Community Mural Project	350+	Machen Elementary School	Hampton	500.00
Compost Recycling Project	16	Salem High School	Virginia Beach	500.00
Recycling in the Classroom	90	Phoebus High School	Hampton	500.00
Classroom Paper Recycling Program	500	Mary Peake Elementary School	Hampton	241.71
Gardening Across the Curriculum	170	Norfolk Academy	Norfolk	500.00
Recycling in the Classroom	420	Catholic High School	Virginia Beach	500.00
Paper and Plastic Recycling	487	Alfred S. Forrest Elementary School	Hampton	213.80
Bin Brigade	15	Kecoughtan High School Ecology Club	Hampton	500.00
Meditation Garden	93	Hampton High School, IB Academy	Hampton	500.00
Rain Garden and Bee Hives	40	The Hague School	Norfolk	500.00
Caterpillars in Classrooms	720	Hoffler Creek Wildlife Foundation, Inc.	Portsmouth	500.00
How Single Use Plastics are Ruining Our Beaches and Oceans	420	Hermitage Elementary School Ecology Club	Virginia Beach	500.00
Sweets for Students	30	Williamsburg Community Growers	Lightfoot	500.00
11,161				\$9,378.34

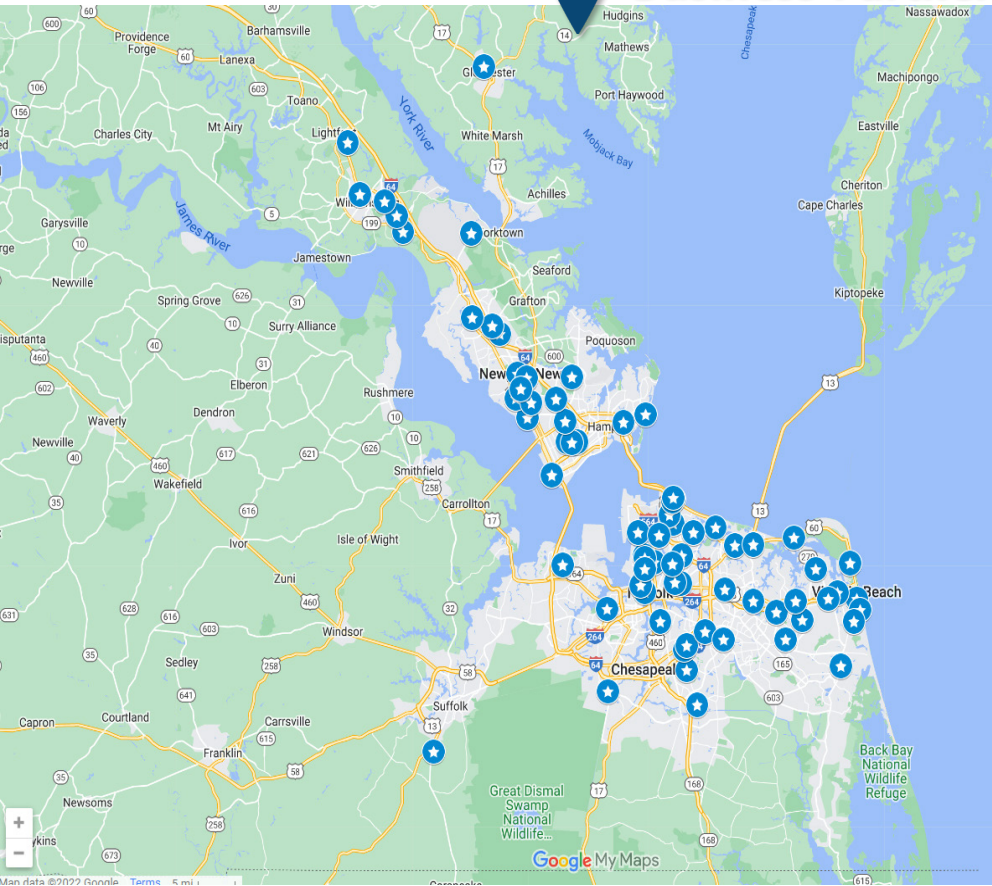
Business Outreach

Bay Star Business Program

Launched in 2018 by the Stormwater Education Committee, the Bay Star Business program engages the Hampton Roads business community in protecting local water quality and other environmental stewardship activities. Businesses can sign up online by pledging to implement environmental practices such as conserving water, recycling, cleaning up and preventing litter, properly maintaining company vehicles, and more. There is no cost to join and most program pledges are no- or low-cost changes that make business more efficient. Participating businesses receive a welcome packet filled with relevant environmental information and Bay Star Business window clings to display in their business or on company vehicles. Participating businesses are also recognized through the askHRgreen.org website and social media accounts. This community recognition is an incentive for local businesses and an easy way for consumers in the region to identify eco-friendly businesses.

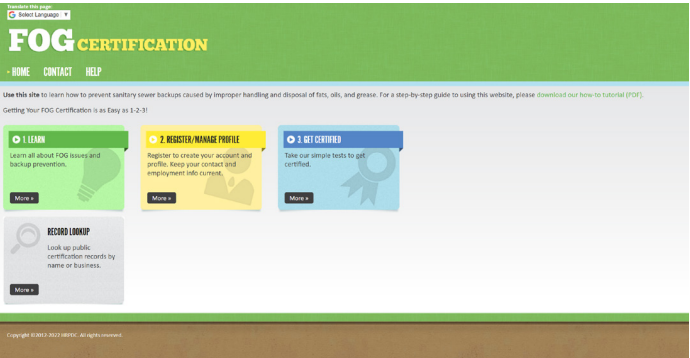
In FY22, the Bay Star Business program added 12 new partners for a total of 74 participants. The program attracts a large variety of businesses including multi-family housing communities, contractors, retail establishments, restaurants, and salons.

Bay Star Business Partners	
City/County	Number
Chesapeake	6
Gloucester	1
Hampton	8
James City County	2
Newport News	13
Norfolk	18
Portsmouth	1
Suffolk	2
Virginia Beach	19
Williamsburg	1
York	3
Total	74



Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Commercial Training and Certification Program

The regional FOG Training and Certification program is designed to educate local food service workers and grease haulers on how to prevent sanitary sewer backups caused by improper handling and disposal of fats, oils, and grease. FOG certification requirements vary by locality, but the free training and certification programs are available to the public at HRFOG.com.



After spending much of FY21 modernizing regional guidance documents to reflect current research, the FOG Education Committee turned its eye toward modernizing a vital asset – the HRFOG.com website. The website serves as a hub for food service employees and grease haulers to review training documents and complete certification exams to comply with local FOG ordinances. It also hosts helpful educational resources like signs and brochures and additional guidance documents for local FOG ordinances. The website was developed in 2012 as a custom build but more robust and user-friendly testing platforms now exist as “out of the box” products. The committee worked much of the year to document the technical requirements for the website and testing process as well as administrative functions. These technical requirements were used to rank several possible new testing systems which the committee will continue to explore in FY23.

The committee also reached out to the Virginia Building Code Officials Association (VBCOA) to engage municipal professionals who participate in the building inspection process. These professionals are critical in ensuring

proper sizing and installation of grease control devices, especially for new construction. The FOG Committee was able to submit an article for the VBCOA quarterly members newsletter. The article stressed the importance of FOG programs in protecting sanitary sewer infrastructure and encouraged partnerships between inspections professionals and local FOG programs.

VIRGINIA BUILDING AND CODE OFFICIALS

Page 15

Working Together to Fight the Fat

Since 2007, Hampton Roads municipal sewer authorities have been working together to keep fats, oils, and grease (FOG) from harming the sanitary sewer system. To date, the region's 17 local jurisdictions have collaborated to develop a regional model FOG ordinance, technical standards for the installation and maintenance of grease control devices, and educational programs targeted at both residents and commercial employees handling grease-laden waste. In addition to regional collaboration among wastewater professionals, managing a successful FOG Program requires effective and continuous dialogue between the local wastewater officials, the public health authority, and building code officials, who all have a stake in protecting public health.

When FOG is discharged to the sanitary sewerage system, it accumulates and leads to sanitary sewer overflows posing a threat to public health and the environment. Each overflow costs a municipality thousands in cleanup costs and potential fines. Stopping FOG at the source is key. Local building code officials are the first line of defense against FOG by ensuring food service establishments (FSEs) have the proper pretreatment equipment in place. Sources of FOG are varied and can include fatty foods, cooking oils, food scraps, utensils, dinnerware, salad dressings, deep fried foods, batters, icing, dairy products, ice cream/smoothies, frozen yogurt, and more. Working together with local FOG program coordinators ensures appropriately-sized grease control devices are installed when an FSE is built, renovated, or has a change of use.

If you haven't met the FOG program coordinator in your jurisdiction, you're missing out on a valuable ally. Talk to your local counterparts who join you on the front lines in the fight against FOG. By opening the lines of communication between officials in wastewater, public health, and building codes, we can more effectively protect sanitary sewer infrastructure, save money, expand resources, and improve the overall health and well-being of our communities.

Katie Cullipher

Principal Environmental Education Planner

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

723 Woodlake Drive | Chesapeake, VA 23320 | (757) 420-8300

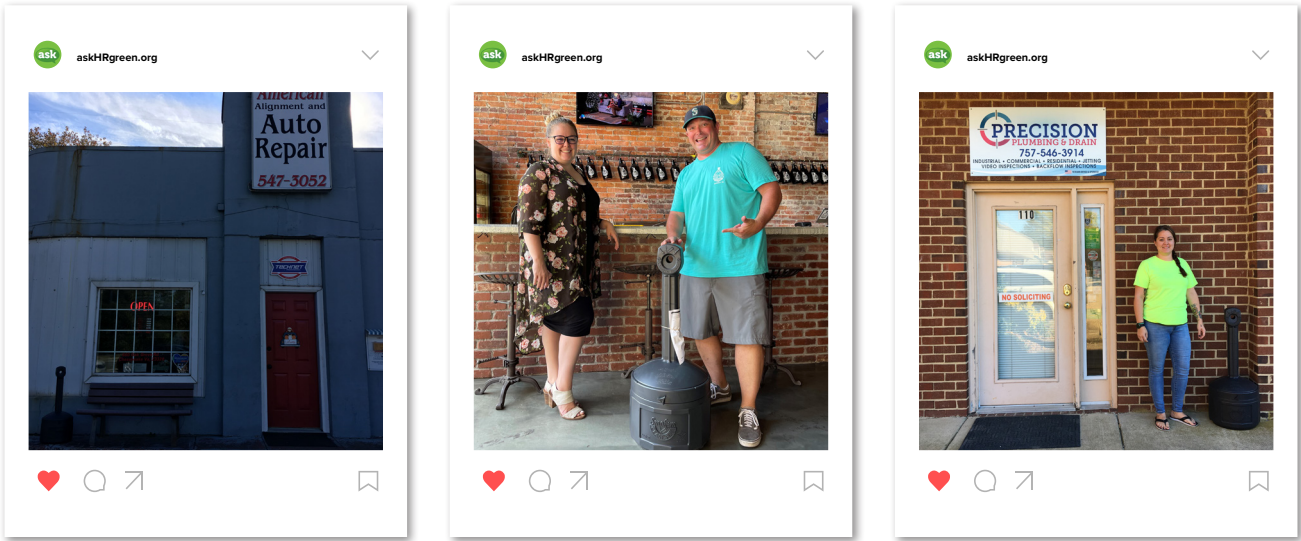
Cigarette Waste Receptacle Grant Program

The Cigarette Waste Receptacle Grant Program was launched in May 2021 as a partnership between the Recycling & Beautification Committee and the Stormwater Education Committee. This new community grant program offers free cigarette waste receptacles to businesses and other public facilities experiencing a cigarette litter problem. Based on research from Keep America Beautiful, the proper placement of a cigarette waste receptacle at transition points in the community (i.e. walking from a car into a business location) is

strongly correlated with a decrease in cigarette litter. It seems that when made easy and convenient, smokers often make the right choice to dispose of their cigarette butts properly.

Administration of the Cigarette Waste Receptacle Grant was modeled after the existing Pet Waste Station Grant and requires the awardee to install and maintain the cigarette waste receptacle. In just over one year of operation, the program has successfully distributed 62 cigarette waste receptacles to the community. Of those, 36 were awarded in FY22.

Cigarette Waste Receptacles Awarded	
City/County	Number
Chesapeake	4
Gloucester	4
Hampton	7
James City	3
Newport News	25
Norfolk	1
Portsmouth	5
Southampton County	1
Suffolk	6
Virginia Beach	2
Williamsburg	2
York	2
Total	62



CIGARETTES ARE...

- the most littered item in America.
- made of plastics that do not biodegrade.
- responsible for 32% of litter in storm drains.

#NoButtsAboutIt

HELP US FIGHT CIGARETTE LITTER. APPLY FOR A FREE CIGARETTE WASTE RECEPTACLE TO INSTALL AT YOUR BUSINESS.

While supplies last, askHRgreen.org is offering FREE cigarette waste receptacles through a new grant program. The grant is open to any business or community organization in Hampton Roads experiencing a cigarette litter problem. Applicants must take on the task of maintaining the cigarette waste receptacle which includes securing the receptacle and emptying it regularly to prevent overfilling.

One leading cause of cigarette litter is the lack of access to a conveniently located cigarette waste receptacle when smokers are extinguishing their cigarettes. Giving smokers a safe, convenient disposal option at these transition points in the community keeps cigarette butts off the ground and out of local waterways. Your business can help make a difference!

Supplies are limited, so apply today!

Submit your grant application online at

www.askHRgreen.org/CigaretteWaste

Apply now at www.askHRgreen.org/CigaretteWaste

2021-22 Promotional Campaigns

Waste Reduction & Recycling

Waste reduction and improving the quality of the recycling stream continue to be top priorities for the Recycling & Beautification Committee. “Start Smart, Recycle Right” is a campaign that captures both of these important priorities by encouraging consumers to “start smart” with their consumer choices and recycle only the items accepted by their local recycling program. The campaign includes a dedicated webpage, online recycling and disposal lookup tool, a series of four videos, and an interactive recycling quiz. While the campaign was launched in January 2021, the first full media campaign occurred in August 2021.

Paid Media. The committee had a six-week paid media campaign for the Start Smart, Recycle Right campaign from August 2 to September 12. The campaign included radio, traditional television, digital display ads with retargeting, an appearance on The Hampton Roads Show, video pre-roll, native content ads, and social media. Throughout the year, specific messages about recycling and waste reduction were included in the Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. New for FY22, the committee developed two retractable banners. One banner features the back to basics recycling message of paper, bottles, cans, while the other highlights common contaminants that should never be in the recycling cart. The committee also took action to make resources more accessible by having the Start Smart, Recycle Right rack card translated into Spanish and printed for use in local outreach.

Public Relations. Public relations efforts supported recycling and waste reduction through news releases for America Recycles Day and Christmas tree recycling, and articles in Coastal Virginia Magazine and the askHRgreen.org e-newsletter.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram. Outreach included sharing

organic and branded posts on recycling contamination, waste free living, composting, recycling facts, and more.



Litter Prevention

Through the Team Up 2 Clean Up program, the Recycling & Beautification Committee engages residents, businesses, and community organizations in neighborhood cleanups to address community beautification and litter prevention. Team Up 2 Clean Up matches interested volunteers with the resources needed to lead a community cleanup including lendable litter kits available at libraries or recreation centers in most localities across Hampton Roads. The largest volunteer drive of the year occurs



the last weekend in March for the annual Hampton Roads Great American Cleanup. Held March 25-26, 2022, 1,418 volunteers removed 63,600 pounds of litter from Hampton Roads during this year’s event. Volunteers also helped tend to public spaces including planting 264 trees or shrubs. These results would not have been possible without the partnership of the committee with volunteers across the region. New in FY22, the committee held a formal partnership meeting for the Great American Cleanup in January 2022. More than 85 community partners were invited to learn more about the initiative and encouraged to get involved.

Paid Media. A five-week paid social media campaign was used to recruit volunteers to sign up for the Great American Cleanup. Throughout the year, specific messages about litter prevention were included in the Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. Local litter control coordinators made lendable litter kits available in easily accessible locations to help distribute litter clean up supplies. The kits include trash bags, gloves, litter grabbers, safety vests, and buckets.

Public Relations. Public relations outreach about litter prevention and cleanups was conducted via news releases and articles in the askHRgreen.org newsletter. An op-ed celebrating the successes of the Great American Cleanup was featured in The Virginian-Pilot and Daily Press. In total there were more than 13 press references to the Hampton Roads Great American Cleanup including a feature on the “Reck on the Road” segment of the Hampton Roads Show.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram. Organic and branded outreach topics included volunteer recruitment for Clean the Bay Day/International Coastal Cleanup, cleanup results, securing truck loads, and harmfulness of marine debris.

Cigarette Litter Prevention

Cigarette butts are the most commonly littered item worldwide. As a coastal community, cigarette litter prevention is a priority since cigarette butts are easily carried out to local waterways in stormwater runoff. To shed light on this little form of litter causing big environmental impacts, the Recycling & Beautification Committee continued to use the #NoButtsAboutIt campaign. The #NoButtsAboutIt campaign includes larger-than-life model cigarette butts displayed at local public spaces and attractions in Hampton Roads. At about two-feet in length, the displays are powerful conversation starters and are requested for use by other community organizations.



Paid Media. Throughout the year, specific messages about cigarette litter were included in our Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. The committee partnered with the Stormwater Education Committee to launch the cigarette waste receptacle grant program, offering free receptacles for local businesses and community organizations. Pocket ashtrays are also available for distribution at local events.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram to communicate the harm of cigarette litter and encourage proper disposal.

Cigarette Waste Receptacle Grant Program. In partnership with the Stormwater Education Committee, 62 free cigarette waste receptacles have been distributed to regional businesses in an attempt to combat cigarette litter. Of those, 36 receptacles were awarded in FY22.

Fats, Oils & Grease (FOG) Disposal

The FOG Committee focuses each year on helping residents and local restaurants understand the sources of FOG (fats, oils, and grease) and best management practices to prevent sewer blockages and backups from FOG. While this message is relevant year-round, FOG prevention is heavily promoted during the holiday season from November to December. This focal area was addressed with the following strategies:

Paid Media. There was a one-week “Grease Grinch” campaign from November 20 to November 28 to coincide with the Thanksgiving holiday. The campaign included traditional television, radio, digital display ads with retargeting, an appearance on the Hampton Roads Show,



and social media. Throughout the year, specific FOG messages were included in the Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. The committee continued to distribute relevant promotional items including sink strainers, grease can lids, and brochures.

Public Relations. Public relations supported FOG education topics through a news release, Coastal Virginia Magazine, and the askHRgreen.org newsletter.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram. Outreach topics included organic and branded posts on the negative impacts of improper grease disposal, canning the grease, ditching garbage disposals, and the importance of maintaining infrastructure.



What Not to Flush

The FOG Committee continues to educate the public about proper flushing etiquette and the unintended harm of flushing personal hygiene products, wipes, dental floss, cotton swabs, and more.

Paid Media. There were two “What Not To Flush” media campaigns in FY22. The Beneath the Streets campaign ran for one-week, October 25 to October 31. The campaign draws from classic horror movies to warn against what comes up from beneath the streets during a sanitary sewer overflow. The campaign included traditional television, radio, digital display ads and retargeting, social media, and native content ads. A second campaign featuring a chalkboard-style animation ran January 31 to February 6 on traditional and digital television, radio, digital display ads with retargeting, and social media.

Throughout the year, specific what not to flush messages were included in the Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. The committee continued to distribute toilet stress squeezers, “what not to flush” stickers, and brochures in support of this message.

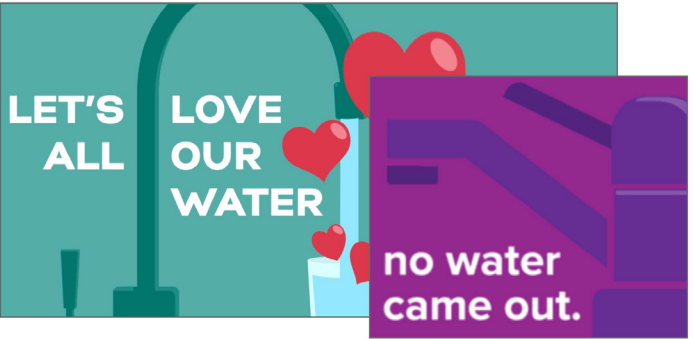
Public Relations. Public relations supported the what not to flush topic with news releases, an appearance on Coast Live, and the askHRgreen.org newsletter.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram. Outreach topics included organic and branded posts on the damaging side effects of flushing trash, the Super Bowl flush, National Drug Takeback Day, water quality impacts of sanitary sewer overflows, and the myth of flushable wipes.

Communicating the Value of Water

It’s not “just” water. It’s business, healthcare, fire protection, sanitation, and quality of life. Water is a hot shower, clean clothes, and dinner on the table. Without water, our quality of life in Hampton Roads would suffer. The Water Awareness Committee communicates this value of water by helping residents connect their vital daily activities with the water that makes it all possible. The committee communicated the importance of water in the following ways:

Paid Media. The committee ran a one-week media campaign from October 18 to October 24 to coincide



with the national Imagine a Day Without Water campaign on October 21. The ad creative uses a catchy poem and vibrant graphics to describe everything we’d miss on a “waterless” day. The campaign ran on traditional television, radio, digital display ads with retargeting, native content ads, an appearance on the Hampton Roads Show, and social media. Throughout the year, specific messages about tap water were included in our Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. The committee continued to distribute a variety of promotional items including reusable water bottles, mood pencils, toothbrushes, koozies, and more.

Public Relations. Public relations supported the value of water message through news releases, Coastal Virginia Magazine, and the askHRgreen.org newsletter.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram. Outreach topics included organic and branded posts about gratitude for water, drinking tap over bottled water, and the importance of investing in water infrastructure.



Careers in the Water Industry

Public water utilities in the era of COVID-19 have dealt with chronic hiring difficulties amid a nationwide staffing shortage. Vacancies for essential roles were difficult to fill in fields such as customer service, administrative support, construction, and equipment operators. The committee collaborated to develop a “Work for Water”

outreach campaign to encourage prospective job seekers in Hampton Roads to consider a career with a local water utility. The campaign included real-life interviews with current utility employees discussing why they love working for water. Employees shared the benefits of working in the water industry: having a rewarding career that makes a difference in the community, job security, great benefits, career growth opportunities, and diverse responsibilities. The final product was one long form video and six shorter videos, each highlighting the perks of working for water. Local water utilities can use and share these assets as recruitment tools.

Paid Media. The committee ran a one-week media campaign from May 1 to May 7 as part of the national Drinking Water Week promotion. The campaign utilized the Work for Water videos and drove people to a landing page featuring links to open positions with local water utilities. The campaign included traditional and digital television, radio, digital display ads with retargeting, and social media.

Public Relations. Public relations support included articles in the askHRgreen.org e-newsletter.

Social Media. Relevant messages were shared via Facebook and Instagram both organically and through the askHRgreen branding campaign. Posts included thanking essential employees and highlighting the benefits of working for water.

Water Conservation

The Water Awareness Committee continues to encourage residents to conserve water. According to the EPA, household leaks can account for nearly 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year. One common culprit for water waste is silent toilet leaks which are generally simple DIY fixes. Correcting leaks is not only an important environmental issue but an economic concern for the region’s ratepayers. Other simple indoor and outdoor water conservation measures are also key messages for the committee.

Paid Media. The committee ran a one-week media campaign from March 14 to March 20 as part of the national



Fix-a-Leak Week promotion from EPA. The campaign highlights how wasteful and expensive household leaks – especially toilet leaks – can be for residents. The campaign included traditional television, radio, digital display ads with retargeting, an appearance on the Hampton Roads Show, and social media. Throughout the year, specific messages about water conservation were included in our Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. The Water Awareness Committee distributed numerous promotional items to help residents conserve water including rain gauges, shower timers, toilet leak detection dye tablets, seed bookmarks, and hose nozzles.

Public Relations. Public relations support for this topic with news releases and articles in the askHRgreen.org newsletter.

Social Media. We engaged with the community via Facebook and Instagram. Water conservation messages included checking for leaks, smart outdoor watering tips including use of rain barrels, indoor water conservation tips, and promotion of drought tolerate landscaping practices.

Storm Drains & Illicit Discharges

The Stormwater Education Committee continues to educate the public about the negative water quality impacts of illicit discharges. The popular “only rain down the drain” message was incorporated in multiple ways and is a foundational message for the committee. There were a variety of outreach efforts for this message during FY22 including storm drain marking, the cigarette



receptacle grant program, a new household hazardous waste (HHW) media campaign, and the creation of “Thank You for Washing Wisely” fundraiser car wash kits.

Paid Media. The committee developed a new illicit discharge campaign in FY22 to address proper storage and disposal of HHW for residents. The campaign encourages residents to keep chemicals out of the environment by returning old and unwanted chemicals to a HHW facility. The one-week campaign ran February 28 to March 6 and included digital television, digital display ads with retargeting, and social media. Throughout the year, storm drain topics were included in our Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches. Though launched in late spring 2021, the “Every Day We Love the Bay” sidewalk decals have proven highly durable and are still in place at select locations throughout the region.

Outreach Materials. The committee maintains a comprehensive library of brochures and rack cards addressing best management practices for preventing both commercial and residential illicit discharges. The committee also continues to promote the storm drain marking program and received three applications in FY22. Many more storm drain medallion projects were completed through individual locality efforts.

Public Relations. Public relations supported this focal area through news releases and features in the askHRgreen.org newsletter.

Social Media. Information about storm drains and the “only rain down the drain” message were also featured in

the Facebook branding campaign, increasing the number of users who see this content on Facebook and Instagram. Organic and branded outreach topics included awareness of local water quality, marine debris, car wash tips, HHW storage, litter prevention, and multiple only rain down the drain messages.



Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund (CBRF) Grant. The committee received a \$15,000 grant from the CBRF program. The funds went towards purchasing 68 pet waste stations to provide inventory to the pet waste station grant program, hosting eight low-cost rain barrel workshops resulting in 120 rain barrels distributed to Hampton Roads residents, and the creation of 13 fundraiser car wash kits. The new car wash kits divert dirty wash water generated during fundraiser car washes to grassy areas to prevent soap, oil, and dirt from entering the storm drain. Branded as part of the “Thank You for Washing Wisely” car wash campaign, the kits include drain seals, spill berms, submersible pump, extension cord, and garden hose. The committee also produced a helpful tutorial video to accompany the kits and ensure proper usage. Localities are partnering with groups and car wash hosts to implement the new program.

FUNDRAISER CAR WASH KIT
USER GUIDE

CLEAN CAR
+ Clean Bay!
askHRgreen.org

Using a fundraiser car wash kit is an easy way to prevent water pollution.

Getting started

1

Locate the storm drain(s) down hill from where you will be washing. Use the drain seal (A) to cover the storm drain opening completely.

2

Fill the hydra barrier with water (B) then position in a U-shape in front of the covered storm drain. This dam creates a containment area to collect the dirty wash water.

3

Place the submersible pump (C) inside the U-shaped dam and connect the garden hose (D) to the pump.

4

Run the hose to a grassy area where all wash water can soak into the ground.

5

Connect the pump to the extension cord (E) and the extension cord to the GFCI adapter (F).

6

Run the extension cord away from the draining wash water to keep connections dry. Plug the GFCI adapter into the power source.

7

Begin your car wash and adjust containment area as needed to catch the most wash water. The pump will cut on when water reaches a depth of 1-1/4 inch. If the water reaches this depth and the pump does not cut on, reset the yellow GFCI adapter.

Drain Seal (A)

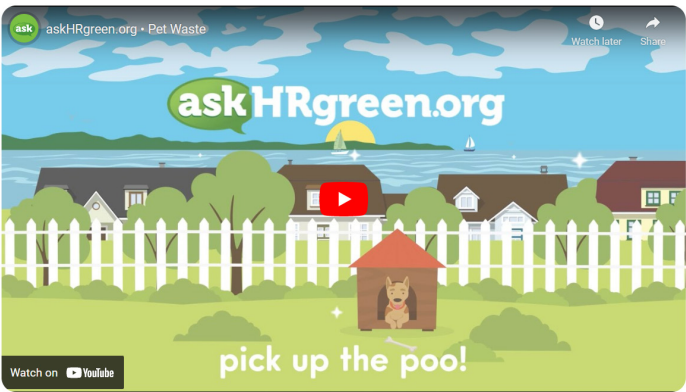
Submersible Pump (C)

Extension Cord (E)

Hydra Barrier (B)

Garden Hose (D)

GFCI Adapter (F)



a jingle about scooping the poop even at home in our own yards. This campaign specifically addresses pet owners who are likely to scoop the poop in public out of courtesy for others but do not have the same habit in their private yards. The campaign was featured on traditional and digital television, digital display ads with retargeting, and social media. Throughout the year, pet waste messages were also included in our Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.


Outreach Materials. The committee purchased dog waste bag holders, message pens, and two sizes of scoop the poop stickers to support the pet waste message.

Public Relations. Public relations supported this focal area through news releases and features in the askHRgreen.org e-newsletter.

Social Media. Pet waste messages were also featured in the Facebook and Instagram branding campaign. Branded and organic social media posts were targeted towards pet owners and specifically promoted scooping the poop in your own yard.

Pet Waste Station Grant Program. Launched in 2013, the askHRgreen.org Pet Waste Station Grant Program is geared towards providing neighborhood associations, community groups, and property management companies an opportunity to receive a free pet waste station. In return, the hosting neighborhood or group will agree to maintain the station. Maintenance includes emptying the trash regularly and replacing the dog waste bags and trash bags as needed. The neighborhood is also tasked with spreading the word about the new stations, the negative impact of pet waste on local water quality, and

encouraging its use among dog-walking neighbors. Since the launch of the program, 449 pet waste stations have been installed in Hampton Roads. Of those, 57 were awarded during FY22.



New Pet Waste Stations in FY22	
Chesapeake	4
Hampton	9
Isle of Wight	2
James City County	2
Newport News	10
Norfolk	5
Portsmouth	6
Suffolk	9
Virginia Beach	9
York County	1
	57

Lawn Care & Fertilizer

Proper lawn care practices remain an important message for the Stormwater Education Committee. Educating the public about proper lawn care, and fertilizing practices in particular, can positively impact local water quality. The practices promoted through the committee include keeping yard debris out of storm drains, soil testing prior to fertilizing, mulch mowing grass and leaves, planting more trees or native plants, among many others.

Paid Media. The committee picked up an existing chalkboard art inspired media campaign for a two-week campaign from September 27 to October 10. The campaign included traditional and digital television, radio, digital display ads with retargeting, video pre-roll, an appearance on the Hampton Roads Show, and social media.



The campaign explains the negative water quality impacts of blowing leaves and grass clippings into storm drains while promoting mulch mowing and soil testing. A variety of lawn care topics are also included in our Google SEM campaign, driving traffic to the askHRgreen.org website from relevant keyword searches.

Outreach Materials. The committee maintains a supply of brochures and rack cards focusing on soil testing and lawn care best practices. There is also a specific rack card geared towards commercial landscapers. Southeastern Virginia Native Plant Guides are also available for distribution.

Public Relations. Soil testing and other lawn care best management practices are commonly included in various public relations strategies throughout the year including news releases and the askHRgreen.org e-newsletter. The Bay Star Homes program is another important tool for encouraging residents to use waterway-friendly lawn care practices. One newsletter was distributed to Bay Star Homes participants in the fall of FY22.

Social Media. Lawn care and fertilizing tips are also featured in the Facebook branding campaign, increasing the number of users who see this content on Facebook and Instagram. Facebook and Instagram were utilized for sharing a variety of best management practices including soil testing, keeping yard waste out of storm drains, replacing turf grass with native plants, mulch mowing, and installing rain barrels. The lawn care quiz on the askHRgreen.org website was also promoted on social media.

10-for-10 Tree Giveaway. To promote tree planting and native plants, the committee hosted a 10-for-10 tree giveaway. The contest was part of the askHRgreen.org 10th anniversary celebration. Individuals who signed up to receive the askHRgreen.org newsletter were entered to win one of 10 free eastern redbud trees. Winners were split between the peninsula and southside. In total, 124 new enewsletter subscribers were gained through the promotion.

Public Relations Activities

Date	Media Outlet	Topic	Length	Circ/Imp	PR Value
Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2021	WTKR-TV, 10/11 pm broadcasts - 30 secs each	AskHRgreen.org mini grant program brief	60 seconds	60,400	\$1,800.00
Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021	The Virginian-Pilot	School gardens, rain barrels and more	24 column inches	232,007	\$11,691.00
Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021	Daily Press	School gardens, rain barrels and more	24 column inches	95,728	\$1,440.00
Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2021	WAVY-TV Online Report	AskHRgreen.org website celebrating 10 year anniversary by honoring 10 local educators with \$10k awards	N/A	10,000	\$1,500.00
Nov-Dec 2021	Coastal Virginia Magazine	The gift of going green	1 + 1/3 pages	30,000	\$25,320.00
Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2022	Chesapeake Weekly TV	Green Star Teachers interview with Katie Cullipher	1:16 minutes	5,000	\$0.00
Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022	WY Daily News	AskHRgreen.org offers tips for recycling Christmas trees in Hampton Roads	678 words + photo	30,000	\$2,250.00
Friday, Feb. 11, 2022	Suffolk News-Herald	Suffolk teacher receives green star for enviromental efforts	400 words	10,431	\$1,500.00
Friday, Feb. 21, 2022	TidewaterVa.net	Great American Cleanup-Hampton Roads	N/A	0	\$0.00
Tuesday, March 01, 2022	Tidewater Family Plus	Great American Cleanup calendar listing	1/8 page	20,000	\$750.00
Tuesday, March 1, 2022	City of Suffolk Website	Great American Cleanup calendar listing	N/A	5,000	\$0.00
Tuesday, March 1, 2022	City of Virginia Beach Website	Great Amerian Cleanup press release	N/A	5,000	\$0.00
Tuesday, March 1, 2022	City of Williamsburg Website	Great American Cleanup save the date	N/A	5,000	\$0.00
Tuesday, March 1, 2022	The Hampton Roads Messenger	Save the date for the Great American Cleanup	160 words	1,000	\$900.00
Tuesday, March 1, 2022	City of Portsmouth Website	AskHRgreen.org awards \$10,000 to region's green star teachers (press release)	N/A	5,000	\$0.00
Wednesday, March 02, 2022	WYDaily	Director of Williamsburg Community Growers named Green Star Educator	210 words	30,000	\$900.00
Friday, March 4, 2022	Suffolk News-Herald	Suffolk prepares for another great year of cleaning up	410 words	10,431	\$1,500.00
Thursday, March 10, 2022	The Flagship	Resolve to keep your neighborhood clean, sign up for Great American Cleanup	430 words	40,000	\$2,550.00
Wednesday, March 16, 2022	Isle of Wight Public Education	Carollton elemetary teacher recognized for environmental education (newsletter)	N/A	5,000	\$0.00
Saturday, March 19, 2022	WYDaily (Williamsburg Yorktown)	2022 Great American Cleanup will be held, March in Hampton Roads, March 25-26	100 words	30,000	\$750.00
Tuesday, March 22, 2022	WAVY-TV Great American Cleanup	Reck on the Road: Great American Cleanup	5:03 minutes	25,000	\$4,500.00
Thursday, April 7, 2022	The Flagship	Naval Station Norfolk Volunteers in the 24th Annual Great American Cleanup	315 words	40,000	\$1,868.01
Saturday, April 9, 2022	WTKR-TV news report	Keeping and disposing of hazardous chemicals safely	2:10 minutes	80,000	\$1,500.00
Monday, April 11, 2022	The Hampton Roads Messenger	Spring cleaning safety tips from askHRgreen.org!	217 words + photo	1,000	\$900.00
Friday, April 15, 2022	WTKR-TV "Coast Live"	Safe disposal of medications, interview with Lacie Wever	4:00 minutes	12,000	\$3,000.00
Wednesday, May 11, 2022	The Virginian-Pilot guest column	Volunteer efforts help clean Hamtpon Roads. You can help.	18 column inches	232,007	\$8,768.25
Wednesday, May 11, 2022	The Daily Press guest column	Volunteer efforts help clean Hamtpon Roads. You can help.	18 column inches	95,728	\$1,080.00
Thursday, June 2, 2022	The Flagship	Preventing pollution from our use and disposal of household chemicals	Mention of askHRgreen.org	40,000	\$900.00
Monday, June 27, 2022	Keep Virginia Beautiful	Green grant of \$1,000 awarded to askHRgreen.org for litter prevention	325 words	1,000	\$900.00
				1,156,732	\$75,367.26

Total circulation or audience	1,156,732
-------------------------------	-----------

Total articles and interviews	29
-------------------------------	----

Total PR budget	\$13,685
-----------------	----------

Total publicity value	\$76,267
-----------------------	----------

Return on Investment (ROI) 5.6:1

The Virginian-Pilot

Jumble Daily & Crossword
Play Now

COLUMN

Opinion: Volunteer efforts help clean Hampton Roads. You can help.

By Rebekah Eastep
Guest Columnist • May 10, 2022 at 6:05 pm

A wide-angle photograph showing several people wearing orange safety vests and carrying bags, engaged in a cleanup activity along a sandy beach or shoreline. The water is calm, and there are trees in the background under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

Over two brisk, sunny days, more than 1,400 volunteers hit the streets, sloshed through wetlands, combed shorelines and spruced up parks as part of the Hampton Roads Great American Cleanup, March 25-26. An annual Keep America Beautiful event, [askHBgreen.org](#) coordinates this effort locally, working with clean community coordinators from the 17 cities and counties in Hampton Roads. In addition to giving the region a good spring cleaning, volunteers planted 264 plants, painted trash cans and structures, mulched playgrounds, pulled invasive weeds and removed graffiti.

This annual event has become the official kickoff to a spring season of caring for our local land and waterscapes, and was it ever needed. Volunteers cleared more than 33 tons of litter from our region — compared to 24 tons of trash recovered during our 2021 cleanup. This equates to an extra 9 tons of litter removed from our communities and waterways when compared with last year. In all, volunteers cleaned up 66,300 pounds of trash.

As a region, it's time to get serious about shedding some of this weight.

Not only is it an eyesore, but litter also impacts property values and invites crime. It harms our region's rich natural resources, and it deters from attracting new business opportunities and visitors to our region. It is also a blow to community pride.

What to do about it? We have a few ideas.

One, do your part to prevent litter from happening. Simple strategies like securely closing trash can lids, keeping a trash bag in your car, covering truck loads, and reducing your overall use of single-use packaging can help prevent unintentional littering. Of the top littered items in the U.S. (cigarette butts, food wrappers, beverage containers, grocery bags and straws) all are disposable products. Choosing reusable and low-waste alternatives is a great first step towards reducing trash in our communities (and our landfills).

Two, get involved. There are many opportunities to help tackle litter in Hampton Roads. Through the [askHBgreen.org](#), Team Up 2 Clean Up program, residents and local businesses can organize their own cleanups at any time. Simply contact the coordinator in your community to connect with local resources, which may include lendable litter kits you can borrow from local community centers or libraries. Or, you can sign up to participate in existing cleanup events, such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Clean the Bay Day on June 4.

Three, if you own a business, make sure to have trash cans and cigarette butt receptacles strategically placed outside your business. Convenient receptacles make it easy for people to make the right choice when it's time to dispose of their trash.

Four, invite your neighbors to join you on a regular sweep-the-block outing. It is a wonderful way to join forces and understand how we are all connected to the region.

The cleanup season is just getting started, and there is still plenty of work to be done. Litter picker uppers are needed from shore to bay and in parks and neighborhoods across Hampton Roads. Let's make it a priority and see if we can't shed a ton or two of litter from the region before this time next year.

A portrait of Rebekah Eastep, a woman with long brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark red blazer over a black top and a gold necklace.

Rebekah Eastep is a team leader of the askHBgreen.org public awareness and education campaign for the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. (Bobby Cullipher / HANDOUT)

A man with curly brown hair and a beard, wearing a blue blazer over a white shirt, stands next to a woman with short dark hair, wearing a blue sleeveless top. They are both smiling. In the background, there is a chalkboard and a screen displaying the letter 'C'. The image is part of a social media post with a heart icon, a comment icon, a share icon, and a bookmark icon at the bottom.


A man with short brown hair, wearing sunglasses and a red, white, and blue plaid button-down shirt, stands in a park. The background features green trees, a grassy area, and a body of water under a clear blue sky. A small wooden structure is visible on the right. A 'WVIA.com' logo is in the bottom right corner.

The Gift of Going Green

Coastal
VIRGINIAMag.com

After a year of pared down gatherings and simplified celebrations, it's tempting to ramp up the holiday fun to 11 for 2021. Yet, among the lessons of COVID for many of us was a greater appreciation for life's simple joys. That got us thinking about how we could keep the festive spirit alive without going overboard this year.

by Leona Baker | Nov 11, 2021



Considering the holidays' impact on our environment seemed like a good, mindful place to start. What are some ways to make the holiday season leaner and greener? How can we deck the halls with less waste? Give gifts with fewer boxes and bows? Clean our plates without cluttering up landfills? Trim the tree while taking care of the planet?

Combined Media + Web Results

PAID ADVERTISING WEEKS	52 consecutive
TOTAL IMPRESSIONS	20,766,656
TOTAL VIDEO VIEWS	244,773
TOTAL CLICKS/ACTIONS/ENGAGEMENTS	187,653
TOTAL PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN BUDGET	\$213,817
TOTAL MEDIA ADDED VALUE	\$61,172
TOTAL EXPOSURE VALUE	\$351,256
RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)	1.64:1

Terms

added value
Earned but unpaid advertising value.

ad group
In Search Engine Marketing (SEM), an ad group contains one or more ads which target a shared set of keywords.

average position
A ranking system that determines where your search engine marketing ad will display on a web search results page (i.e. top of page v. bottom of page).

bounce rate
The percentage of visitors who enter the site and “bounce” (leave the site) rather than continue viewing other pages within the same site.

click through rate (CTR)
A way of measuring online advertising. The CTR of an advertisement is defined as the number of clicks on an ad divided by its impressions, expressed as a percentage.

cost-per-click (CPC)
The cost associated with a person clicking on a display ad in search engine marketing.

exposure value
The combination of advertising cost, added value, and public relations value.

frequency
The number of times an individual (among the target audience) is exposed to the message.

impressions
The number of times an advertisement or public relations placement can be seen or heard by an audience.

public relations value
The equivalent advertising cost of a public relations article, interview, internet placement, etc. times three. Because a public relations placement has a higher value with an audience than advertising, it is assigned a higher value.

reach
The number or percentage of people within the target audience who are exposed to an advertising message at least once over a specific period of time.


search engine marketing (SEM)
The process of attracting traffic to a website from search engine results pages on a pay-per-click basis.

search engine marketing (SEO)
The process of improving the quality of a website so that it appears higher in natural (“organic”) search results.

unique visitors (users)
The number of people who visit a website within a specific period of time. If they visit more than one time within the period, their initial visit as well as their subsequent visits are counted as sessions. A user may have one session or multiple sessions.

Appendix A

Search Engine Marketing Results
July 2021 - June 2022

Campaign report July 2021 - June 2022 Total				
				
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022				
Annual Campaign Totals	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
	274,428	21,771	62%	7.93%
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	376,459	16,103	50%	4.28%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	36,463	6,123	87%	16.79%
Electronics Disposal	29,721	4,261	71%	14.34%
Recycling At Home	50,415	3,067	65%	6.08%
Native Plants	54,192	2,268	35%	4.19%
Lawn Care	41,207	1,761	66%	4.27%
Battery Disposal	10,374	1,256	80%	12.11%
Medication Disposal	7,452	1,201	84%	16.12%
askHRgreen General	1,978	463	71%	23.41%
Tap Water	13,920	387	64%	2.78%
Soil Testing	4,167	206	60%	4.94%

July 1, 2021 - July 31, 2021				
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
	22,719	1,628	57%	7.16%
July 1, 2020 - July 31, 2020	46,318	942	41%	2.03%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	3,414	592	89%	17.34%
Electronics Disposal	2,399	317	65%	13.21%
Native Plants	4,267	166	23%	3.89%
Lawn Care	4,089	132	63%	3.23%
Battery Disposal	942	106	76%	11.25%
Medication Diposal	530	105	76%	19.81%
Recycling At Home	2,239	77	41%	3.44%
Tap Water	1,515	27	51%	1.78%
Soil Testing	426	21	56%	4.93%
Plastic Bag Recycling	226	19	43%	8.41%

August 1, 2021 - August 31, 2021				
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
	22,227	1,692	59%	7.61%
Aug 1, 2020 - Aug 31, 2020	50,011	1,449	46%	2.90%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	3,587	658	90%	18.34%
Electronics Disposal	2,217	306	65%	13.80%
Native Plants	3,667	160	29%	4.36%
Lawn Care	4,123	155	60%	3.76%
Battery Disposal	876	96	73%	10.96%
Recycling At Home	2,510	75	48%	2.99%
askHRgreen General	211	67	81%	31.75%
Tap Water	1,855	54	50%	2.91%
Medication Diposal	361	49	74%	13.57%
Plastic Bag Recycling	262	23	48%	8.78%

September 1, 2021 - September 30, 2021		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	27,387	1,832	51%	6.69%
Sept 1, 2020 - Sept 30, 2020	42,713	1,484	62%	3.47%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	3,551	659	85%	18.56%
Lawn Care	6,214	271	55%	4.36%
Electronics Disposal	2,083	257	63%	12.34%
Native Plants	6,366	236	28%	3.71%
Recycling At Home	3,373	110	43%	3.26%
Battery Disposal	896	89	73%	9.93%
Medication Diposal	366	59	67%	16.12%
Tap Water	1,441	37	50%	2.57%
Soil Testing	445	18	64%	4.04%
TMDL	530	9	45%	1.70%

October 1, 2021 - October 31, 2021		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	28,121	1,732	59%	6.16%
Oct 1, 2020 - Oct 31, 2020	37,250	1,582	62%	4.25%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	2,641	426	83%	16.13%
Electronics Disposal	2,335	289	69%	12.38%
Lawn Care	5,827	251	64%	4.31%
Native Plants	5,773	193	35%	3.34%
Recycling At Home	4,663	182	58%	3.90%
Medication Diposal	1,092	139	85%	12.73%
Battery Disposal	893	87	75%	9.74%
Tap Water	1,448	42	63%	2.90%
askHRgreen General	198	37	69%	18.69%
Soil Testing	422	24	59%	5.69%

November 1, 2021 - November 30, 2021		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	21,928	1,670	71%	7.62%
Nov 1, 2020 - Nov 30, 2020	28,857	1,482	62%	5.14%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	3,236	520	86%	16.07%
Electronics Disposal	2,530	343	75%	13.56%
Recycling At Home	5,055	257	68%	5.08%
Battery Disposal	1,045	123	83%	11.77%
Lawn Care	2,882	114	71%	3.96%
Medication Diposal	608	96	91%	15.79%
Native Plants	2,775	92	50%	3.32%
Tap Water	1,214	33	75%	2.72%
askHRgreen General	167	29	69%	17.37%
Soil Testing	297	15	67%	5.05%

December 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	17,887	1,516	75%	8.48%
Dec 1, 2020 - Dec 31, 2020	28,113	1,567	66%	5.57%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	2,880	445	90%	15.45%
Electronics Disposal	2,395	345	77%	14.41%
Recycling At Home	4,077	247	72%	6.06%
Battery Disposal	1,126	136	84%	12.08%
Medication Diposal	590	86	90%	14.58%
Lawn Care	1,636	72	79%	4.40%
Native Plants	1,718	58	47%	3.38%
Tap Water	1,166	41	83%	3.52%
Soil Testing	216	17	75%	7.87%
askHRgreen General	140	15	66%	10.71%

January 1, 2022 - January 31, 2022		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	18,401	1,686	70%	9.16%
Jan 1, 2021 - Jan 31, 2021	33,011	1,524	59%	4.62%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	3,208	491	88%	15.31%
Electronics Disposal	2,629	394	75%	14.99%
Recycling At Home	4,071	262	67%	6.44%
Battery Disposal	1,001	133	85%	13.29%
Medication Diposal	673	123	89%	18.28%
Native Plants	2,242	90	36%	4.01%
Lawn Care	1,182	48	75%	4.06%
Tap Water	1,333	47	77%	3.53%
askHRgreen General	132	32	77%	24.24%
Great American Cleanup	133	14	47%	10.53%

February 1, 2022 - February 28, 2022		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	19,899	1,697	64%	8.53%
Feb 1, 2021 - Feb 29, 2021	23,123	1,269	58%	5.49%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	2,467	412	86%	16.70%
Electronics Disposal	2,485	352	74%	14.16%
Recycling At Home	3,672	226	65%	6.15%
Lawn Care	2,941	171	69%	5.81%
Native Plants	3,328	149	36%	4.48%
Medication Diposal	664	107	80%	16.11%
Battery Disposal	818	105	82%	12.84%
askHRgreen General	139	36	74%	25.90%
Tap Water	1,077	31	67%	2.88%
Soil Testing	383	30	62%	7.83%

March 1, 2022 - March 31, 2022		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	23,430	2,001	62%	8.57%
March 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021	7,806	180	91%	2.31%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	2,815	487	83%	17.30%
Electronics Disposal	2,554	373	71%	14.60%
Recycling At Home	3,939	288	65%	7.31%
Native Plants	4,818	216	34%	4.48%
Lawn Care	4,373	207	69%	4.73%
Medication Diposal	644	108	85%	16.77%
Battery Disposal	721	104	81%	14.42%
askHRgreen General	247	71	70%	28.74%
Great American Cleanup	302	61	53%	20.20%
Soil Testing	469	25	64%	5.33%

April 1, 2022 - April 30, 2022		PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Total Monthly Campaign	PPC Impressions			
	25,414	2,224	57%	8.75%
April 1, 2021 -April 30, 2021	30,164	1,668	47%	5.53%
Top 10 Keyword Groups	PPC Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Click Thru Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	2,807	515	84%	18.35%
Electronics Disposal	2,716	446	70%	16.42%
Recycling At Home	5,196	410	66%	7.89%
Native Plants	7,049	313	31%	4.44%
Lawn Care	3,241	152	66%	4.69%
Medication Diposal	811	140	81%	17.26%
Battery Disposal	678	91	80%	13.42%
askHRgreen General	187	40	62%	21.39%
Rain Barrels	335	21	59%	6.27%
Great American Cleanup	225	16	31%	7.11%

May 1, 2022 - May 31, 2022				
	PPC			Click Thru
Total Monthly Campaign	Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Rate
	25,569	2,169	62%	8.48%

May 1, 2021 -May 31, 2021	26,286	1,693	53%	6.44%
----------------------------------	--------	-------	-----	-------

	PPC			Click Thru
Top 10 Keyword Groups	Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Rate
Search - dynamic ad group	3,288	498	85%	15.15%
Electronics Disposal	2,875	461	75%	16.03%
Recycling At Home	5,779	456	70%	7.89%
Native Plants	7,193	312	37%	4.34%
Lawn Care	2,628	115	69%	4.38%
Battery Disposal	727	106	83%	14.58%
Medication Diposal	548	95	86%	17.34%
askHRgreen General	157	42	74%	26.75%
Tap Water	630	20	50%	3.17%
Rain Barrels	345	18	49%	5.22%

June 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022				
	PPC			Click Thru
Total Monthly Campaign	Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Rate
	21,536	1,924	70%	8.93%

June 1, 2021 -June 30, 2021	22,807	1,263	64%	5.54%
------------------------------------	--------	-------	-----	-------

	PPC			Click Thru
Top 10 Keyword Groups	Impressions	PPC Clicks	Impression Share	Rate
Recycling At Home	5,841	477	76%	8.17%
Search - dynamic ad group	2,569	420	90%	16.35%
Electronics Disposal	2,503	378	78%	15.10%
Native Plants	4,996	283	49%	5.66%
Medication Diposal	565	94	87%	16.64%
Battery Disposal	651	80	83%	12.29%
Lawn Care	2,071	73	77%	3.52%
askHRgreen General	133	39	72%	29.32%
Tap Water	794	24	70%	3.02%
Rain Barrels	285	14	62%	4.91%