



Township of Monroe

County of Middlesex

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\$85K NJDEP Clean Communities Grant Advancing Monroe's Litter Removal Campaign

MONROE – The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection awarded Monroe Township an \$85,000 Clean Communities grant in late June as part of its annual initiative to assist with litter removal and programming and to enhance community beautification throughout the state.

The NJDEP based its most recent awards, totaling \$19.4 million in 2018, on the number of housing units and miles of county or municipally-owned roadways within each respective community and region.

“I’m excited to announce that we’ll soon be embarking on a communitywide litter cleanup campaign, which will be largely driven by this latest grant award,” said Monroe Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro.

“Our recycling staff has taken the lead on this project as a way to improve the efficiency of its operation and restore our natural landscapes.”

Experts point to pedestrians, motorists, overflow of household garbage, construction sites and uncovered trucks as major contributors to the nation’s widespread litter problem.

To counteract these factors and as a means to jumpstart its litter-removal campaign, Monroe’s Recycling Division has begun promoting its Clean Communities mini-grant program.

“We offer \$500 mini-grants to qualified nonprofits wishing to host a litter cleanup event,” said Joe Slomian, a representative from Monroe Township’s Recycling Department. “It’s a great way to get involved, to make a visible impact through community service and to impress upon our residents the severe consequences of littering.”

As a complement to the litter removal campaign, a portion of the Clean Communities grant money will also be designated for equipment upgrades, stormwater cleanup, as well as education and prevention initiatives, Slomian said.

“We are very pleased with this grant funding and with the steps our Recycling Department and our Environmental Commission, which also routinely hosts cleanups, are taking to be proactive,” said Councilman Leonard Baskin, liaison to the Monroe Township Environmental Commission. “It’s going to take strategy and a combined effort by our community to effectively tackle what amounts to a persistent littering problem.”

New Jersey’s Clean Communities grants are funded through legislated user-fees placed on manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors that produce litter-generating products.

“This funding is critical to our efforts to keep New Jersey clean,” said Sandy Huber, executive director of the New Jersey Clean Communities. “Municipalities and counties will use Clean Communities grant funding to pay for programs, such as volunteer and paid cleanups, equipment purchases, enforcement activities and public education.”

To learn more or apply for Monroe Township Recycling Division’s Clean Communities mini-grant program, contact Slomian at 732-656-4575.

Media inquiries may be directed to Monroe Township’s Public Information Officer, Maria Prato, at 732-521-4400 or mprato@monroetwp.com.