



**KENT COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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S.O.R.T. program helps Kent County reduce landfill waste

Pilot program leads to permanent Rockford installation that educates residents on proper waste materials disposal

Grand Rapids, MI – A pilot program by the **Kent County Department of Public Works** (DPW) and the **City of Rockford** helps residents divert resources away from landfills by placing their waste materials into the right bin.

The DPW's Separate Out Trash Recycling (S.O.R.T.) program helps guide where waste should go using colored bins that separate recycling and trash. After a successful temporary pilot program in 2021 using the branded bins at the Rockford Outdoor Refreshment Area, the city is installing permanent S.O.R.T. bins in all municipal buildings and parks.

"The S.O.R.T. program has been a major success in Rockford, and we take great pride in helping divert waste from landfills whenever and however we can," said **Thad Beard**, City Manager for the City of Rockford. "The consistent and uniform access to the S.O.R.T. bins help our residents think twice about where their waste goes and provides education on recycling and waste in our community. We look forward to the continued use of this program."

By utilizing the S.O.R.T. bins, users are helping reduce landfilled waste and bring Kent County closer to its goal of reducing landfill waste by 90% by 2030. The DPW is hoping to expand the use of S.O.R.T. bins to other communities using the blueprint of the Rockford pilot program.

"This program is a great example of how the community and local government can work together to divert waste from landfills," said **Katelyn Kikstra**, waste reduction educator with the DPW. "We applaud the City of Rockford for making this commitment for a more sustainable community and the Rockford Sustainability Committee for keeping the project moving. We look forward to partnering with other groups to continue the success of the S.O.R.T. program."

Anyone interested in using S.O.R.T. bins in their office, business, school, place of worship or upcoming social event can visit the [DPW's website](#) to submit a request for materials to set up the bins. The DPW offers a sign maker tool and vinyl wraps to place on waste bins that let people know what waste should go in each bin. The DPW will provide input on options available in your community for organics, recycling, and trash collection.

The Kent County Department of Public Works provides municipal solid waste disposal services to ensure the effective removal, storage, and disposal of residential and commercial solid waste through various facilities and programs, including Waste-to-Energy, Recycling and Education Center, North Kent Transfer Station and South Kent Landfill.

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