

DNR EXPANDS FOOD WASTE DIVERSION EFFORTS: IOWA WASTE EXCHANGE READY TO HELP

BY SHELENE CODNER, AREA 2

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) continues to advance statewide efforts to reduce food waste through its Increased Food Storage Capacity Grant Program. This initiative provides financial assistance to help organizations expand their ability to safely store and distribute surplus food—keeping valuable resources out of Iowa landfills and supporting communities in need.

Eligible applicants, including nonprofit organizations, food banks, pantries, schools, and other food rescue or distribution partners, may apply for up to \$5,000 in funding for freezers, refrigerators, and shelving. Projects should demonstrate both a clear need for additional storage capacity and a strong commitment to diverting food waste.



Understanding and navigating grant applications can be challenging, but the Iowa Waste Exchange (IWE) is ready to assist. A statewide program of the DNR administered by Region XII Council of Governments, the IWE connects organizations with expertise, technical assistance, and resources to reduce waste and improve efficiency. Area Resource Specialists help applicants identify funding opportunities and strengthen proposals, improving their likelihood of success.

Marhonda Hill of the Evangelistic Missionary “All in Together” Food Pantry in Des Moines shared her experience:

“The Iowa Waste Exchange was pivotal in helping us secure the Increased Food Storage Capacity Grant. Their expert guidance streamlined the process and strengthened our application. We’re incredibly grateful for their partnership—it allows us to expand our capacity to rescue and distribute nutritious food to more individuals experiencing food insecurity.”

For additional information about DNR’s Increased Food Storage Capacity Grant opportunity visit <https://www.iowadnr.gov/environmental-protection/land-quality/waste-planning-programs> and click on *Food Waste* or contact Reid Bermel, reid.bermel@dnr.iowa.gov or your IWE Area Resource Specialist. Find your Area Resource Specialist at www.iowawasteexchange.org.