



Vineland focused on reducing litter

Daniel J. Kov, @dailyjournalkov 9:18 p.m. EDT June 17, 2016

VINELAND - City officials are renewing their focus on eliminating litter from the streets and curbsides of Vineland with help from a state grant.

Vineland picked up \$152,185 in state money that's earmarked for the city's annual anti-littering campaign. Current plans call for new signage in addition to the usual bout of trash pickup.

"This is the most we've ever received," Sharon Flaim, Solid Waste/Recycling Coordinator with Vineland, said.

The sum comes from \$23.7 million in Clean Communities grants designed to help municipalities and counties in New Jersey coordinate cleanup and beautification efforts.

Overall, Cumberland County is receiving \$213,520, according to the Department of Environmental Protection.

"Each New Jersey county is receiving Clean Communities money to help beautify their communities and protect natural resources," DEP Commissioner Bob Martin said in a news release. "Keeping our communities clean is just one way to improve the quality of life and build pride in our municipalities statewide."



Banding together to clean

In Vineland, the city plans to use the money — like it does each year when it receives the CC grant — toward cleanup efforts, which includes trash pickup in parks, a promotional campaign, new trash and recycling bins for public spaces and more.

This year, city officials also will put some money toward new signage in certain “trash hotspots,” according to Flaim.

City engineers are currently brainstorming locations for the signs and how much in fines they can impose on litterbugs, Flaim said.

A date for implementation hasn’t been decided yet, she said, but one thing is for sure — the signs will be reflective.

“When headlights hit the signs they’ll be reflective so they’re seen at night, like Route 55,” Flaim said.



Landis Park, Wednesday, Jun. 8, 2016 in Vineland.

Flaim said she’s seen a recent uptick in litter throughout the city.

“There’s always been litter, but I think now there may be more,” she said. “We see more fast food wrappers, coffee cups, a lot of water bottles, paper bags... It’s still litter once it’s thrown out the window.”

Mayor Ruben Bermudez agreed.

“People are starting to understand that this is important,” Bermudez said. “We have work to do.”

Like each year, the grant funds anti-littering campaigns in the schools, too.

"We try to get the children involved because then they take that message home," Flaim said. "If you get them when they're young enough, then they pass the word along to their parents."



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Charles Burnette, of Vineland, cleans up litter at Vineland Industrial Park, Tuesday, Jun. 14, 2016 in Vineland.

Also available through the CC grants is a Community Pride Trailer, a 5-by-9 foot vehicle loaded with tools and other cleanup gear that the city hopes civic groups rent out for voluntary cleanups.

"It's wonderful that we have people willing to volunteer their time to help keep Vineland clean," Bermudez said. "After all, you're less likely to litter or accept littering by family and friends if you're out in the community helping to pick it up."

Those looking to utilize the trailer are encouraged to call the city at (856) 794-4089. There are requirements on usage. They include:

- The trailer may only be used in Vineland.
- A cleanup project must have a designated coordinator.
- The project must include a minimum of at least five volunteers.
- The trailer may be borrowed for only two days at a time.
- Vineland City workers will deliver and pick up the trailer from the designated project area.

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