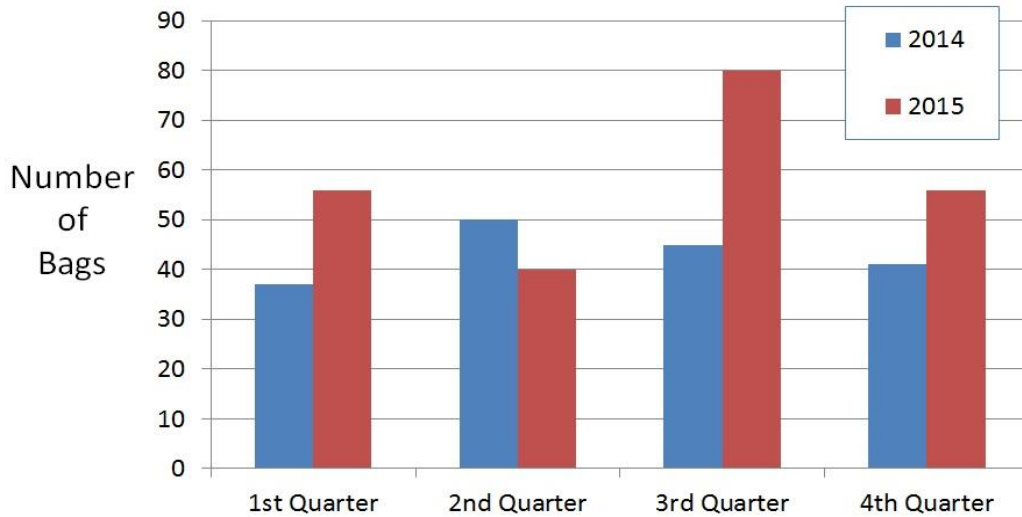




Increasing Recycling Participation: Holy Cross Village Council Increases Public Engagement



Comparison of the number of bags of recycling collected in 2014 and 2015.

Challenge: Only 22% of residents and businesses participate in recycling and too much solid waste takes space in the landfill instead of being recycled.

Project Objective

The Holy Cross Village Council improved the recycling program and increased participation in recycling aluminum and #1 PET bottles.

Results

- In 2007, the village began recycling aluminum cans through ALPAR for 35¢ per pound. In 2011, we added #1 PET plastic bottles with no payout. Seventeen households participated then. It's easier to count number of bags versus number of households.
- Recycling bins and collection bags were selected, purchased and given out to households. Money received from ALPAR helped us purchase a monthly drawing prize. A household earned two drawing tickets for every full bag of recyclables turned in.
- Three collection points were set up for people to drop off their bags. They could also bring them to the Tribal Office. Later a shed was donated to store the bags.



Recycling bins set up



Collection bin



Youth helping prepare to ship



Community Environmental Demonstration Projects

Funding and technical support provided by Zender Environmental through the **Community Environmental Demonstration Grant Program**. Grants were small US EPA-funded, Alaska-based projects for innovative, locally-led ways to better the health of tribal members and their environment. The Community Environmental Demonstration Grant Program was made possible with the Alaska Tribal Multi-Media Grant from the US EPA.





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Benefits

- People have containers to separate their aluminum and #1 plastic bottles at their home making it easier to keep them separated for shipping.
- There are a lot less cans and bottles scattered around town.
- Summer youth workers had work to do: they helped set up the collection bins, gather the bags and prepare recyclables for shipping.
- Students learned about keeping our community clean and re-using things to make art and useful products: colorful mobiles, purses, hot pads and decorative boxes and cups.

Lessons Learned

- Education is an ongoing need and task. It reminds people why recycling is needed and valuable, encourages them to keep doing good, and informs people new to the activity.
- Education also helps to remind people the steps to take and can help them feel comfortable asking questions and give them the chance to ask them. Sometimes people wouldn't go out of their way to contact us or see us at the office to ask questions.
- Just keep being available to answer questions.
- Accept that not every single person will recycle no matter how easy it is or how many incentives are offered.

