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Volunteers Needed for Smarter Discards and Smarter Health and Wellness Studies

DUBUQUE, Iowa – How can the City of Dubuque increase the amount of material diverted from the landfill and improve its curbside collection of trash, recycling, and organics? How does a combination of new technology and community engagement assist in achieving personal health and wellness goals?

The City of Dubuque is seeking volunteer Dubuque residents to participate in two free Smarter Sustainable Dubuque pilot studies designed to collect data that will help answer those questions. Volunteers for the Smarter Discards Pilot Study need only be City residential curbside collection customers, while volunteers for the Smarter Health and Wellness Study *must* have an Android smartphone to download two apps developed for the study by IBM Research.

SMARTER DISCARDS

The Smarter Discards Pilot Study will review Dubuque's curbside trash and recycling performance. The information collected through this pilot study will be used to make decisions regarding policies, staffing, and equipment issues related to waste management and curbside collection. Volunteers will authorize their weekly setout data (trash, recycling, and organics/yard debris weights) to be collected by the City in anonymized form via an online portal/website under development by IBM Research. The portal/website includes household goal challenges, incentives, and analytics that offer visualized data of performance changes, insights into discard patterns, and comparisons to other area households' consumption rates.

As an incentive, volunteers for this study will receive an “organics recycling tool kit” that includes a one-and-a-half gallon "kitchen-catcher" container for food scraps, a box of compostable kitchen-catcher bags, a sheet of five yard debris decals, and one paper yard debris bag. Up to 400 volunteers can participate in the Smarter Discards study. To volunteer, or for more detailed information, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/smarterdiscards or call 563-690-6111.

SMARTER HEALTH & WELLNESS

The Smarter Health and Wellness Pilot Study is a partnership between IBM Research, the City of Dubuque, and the University of Iowa College of Public Health. It will explore how a combination of new technology and community engagement assists participants in achieving health and wellness goals. Volunteers are needed to download two applications to their Android smartphone that use “micro-sensing” technology to record data of physical activity anonymously. The data is then analyzed for activity, goal, and comparative “How am I doing?” feedback to the individual. The results of this research will be used to advance the health and wellness portion of Smarter Sustainable Dubuque through the incorporation of additional measurements and tools for health improvement. Up to 250 volunteers are needed for this study by May 1, 2013. To volunteer, or for more information, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/smarterhealth or call 563-690-6111.

Smarter Sustainable Dubuque is a research-based initiative designed to give Dubuque residents the information they need to make smarter choices related to how they manage resources such as water, electricity, discards, and how they achieve their personal wellness goals. Smarter Sustainable Dubuque is part of the Sustainable Dubuque initiative, which began in 2006 when the Mayor and City Council made sustainability a top priority for the City.

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