

# Sixth Cycle Used Oil Opportunity Grant Application Tips

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These tips have been prepared to assist you in writing a more complete application.

Remember that this is a competitive grant. Your application will be scored against the same criteria as every other application submitted. A common misunderstanding is that “I will have a better chance of receiving a passing score if I don’t ask for much money”. Actually, an application requesting \$30,000 in grant funds will be scored in the same manner as an application requesting \$300,000.

## General comments

### *Stormwater Programs*

If you plan to do a stormwater pollution prevention program remember that only education and mitigation costs related to oil and oil byproducts will be considered eligible. In addition, your stormwater management program *must* be approved by the appropriate California regional water quality control board and the project must be consistent with that program. If you are submitting a regional application each participating jurisdiction must provide evidence of approval.

### *Resolution*

If your resolution reads something like this: “The Director of the Happy Valley Solid Waste Management Authority, or their designee, is hereby authorized and empowered to execute in the name of the above named county, etc....” and you would like the designee to be able to sign documents related to the grant such as payment request forms, **the Director must provide a signed letter stating the title of who his/her designee will be.** Otherwise, only the Director will be authorized to sign.

### *Regional and Joint Powers Authority Applicants*

The lead applicant must submit a resolution, but the participants’ names do not have to be listed in it. The lead applicant must obtain resolutions or authorization letters (see below) from all participants in their regional or Joint Powers Authority (JPA) program. **The lead applicant must submit these resolutions or authorization letters as part of their grant application package. The inclusion of the participants’ names in the lead applicant’s resolution does not take the place of the authorization letters.**

### *Authorization Letters*

There are two authorization letter options for regional and JPA applicants. Although a jurisdiction can choose either letter option, the jurisdiction’s signature authority must sign each letter. The options are:

- Specific Authorization Letter: Gives authorization to a lead agency for a specific grant cycle (i.e. OG6 2001-2004).
- Blanket Authorization Letter: Gives authorization to a lead agency for all Used Oil and HHW grants during a specific time period (can be valid for up to five years). The Blanket Authorization Letter must be submitted by a participating jurisdiction to their lead agency. In turn, the lead agency will keep these letters on file and submit copies of the blanket authorization

letters with **each** application they submit on behalf of the participants. For example, if your jurisdiction is a member of a JPA and plans on participating in three types of grants (Used Oil, HHW, Block) with the JPA, then you only need to send in a single Blanket Authorization letter opposed to three separate letters. The JPA lead will submit a copy of the letter with each of the grant applications to the CIWMB.

### ***Changes to requirements for JPA's***

In the past, a copy of the JPA agreement was sufficient to identify the participants in the grant application. However, a JPA agreement might list all participants of the JPA at the time it was drafted, but might not accurately reflect the members wanting to participate in a particular grant application. Therefore, we are requiring the authorization letters in place of the JPA agreement.

### **Need**

This section comprises 25 percent of the total available points for the application so make sure every item is addressed thoroughly. If the need is not well defined and supported, it is likely that your application will not be competitive. The need is the foundation of your proposal. Your application needs to demonstrate not only that your proposal is based on need, but also that your need is compelling and will be judged in comparison to other applicants.

### ***Describe need identifying current gap in service using surveys and studies to justify project***

- Make sure your need is focused on the intent of the Opportunity Grant- “for the establishment of new programs and expansion of existing programs that address the proper management of used oil”. Clearly define the portion of your jurisdiction this project will target (for example: 40 small farms, or 10,000 boaters) and why they need the project.
- Provide local, pertinent data focused on your jurisdictions concerns. Local data provided to support your need is much more valuable than a statewide data or surveys and will be scored higher as a result.
- Types of Local Demographic Studies/Statistics that might be useful include: target population size; % population targeted; ethnicity, age distribution, median household income, number of single family homes, multiple family housing units, etc., Reference the following websites: [www.ciwmb.ca.gov/profiles](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/profiles) and [www.dof.ca.gov](http://www.dof.ca.gov)
- What are the consequences if the proposal is not funded? Answer the question “What are current collection opportunities/education and outreach efforts and why are they not adequate to meet need?” Describe available collection opportunities (and include a map of collection sites); frequency of collection, current amount of used oil and filters collected, and current and past educational outreach efforts.

### ***Health and Safety Concerns***

- Document any illegal used oil disposal, such as midnight drop-offs, in the jurisdiction. Be specific, for example: “Bob’s Auto Parts reported oil dropped off overnight in front of his business sixteen times during the first quarter of 2001.” Detail what the environmental impacts are. Also include any documented incidents of hazmat responses or other environmental clean-ups that included oil. Additionally, explain presence of water sources, aquifers, etc. that are in jeopardy if the problem continues...

### ***How do current/previous projects relate to this one (including Used Oil Block Grant)?***

- For example, “With our Fifth Cycle Used Oil Opportunity Grant funds we sited two Used Oil Agricultural Collection sites. However, both sites are located in the northern part of the county. We have now identified two additional sites in other parts of the county as potential collection sites.”

Completion of the Summary of Used Oil and HHW Grants form requested under “Completeness” does not fulfill this section. This is your opportunity to *describe* other related projects you have undertaken.

## **Objectives**

**Goals** should be broad, yet feasible and attainable. Goals answer the question “What do we want to achieve through the oil recycling program”? Examples include:

- Increase current used oil collection opportunities by establishing a Curbside Used Oil Collection Program in the City.
- Decrease improper disposal of used oil filters by adding filter collection to an existing Curbside Used Oil Collection program.

**Objectives** should be focused, specific statements that outline what you need to do to achieve your goals. The function of objectives is to quantify your goals. Therefore, your objectives should include an outcome, a target audience and a timeframe. Objectives should answer the questions:

- What is to be done?
- To whom will it be directed?
- When will it be done?

Objectives also need to be specific, measurable and attainable. Be realistic about what can be accomplished within the term of the grant (i.e., do not set goals that are unattainable). If a grant proposal is too optimistic, a large portion of the project may be unfinished at the end of the grant term which may not look good when applying for future grants.

## **Methodology**

What tasks and activities will be conducted to achieve the goals?

### ***Why is this the best way to meet the need?***

- Describe in detail why *your* proposed project is the best way to meet the need. Include information regarding the other options you researched and explain where they fell short and why this is the *best* way to meet your need.
- For public education component, how did you determine what materials to develop and how they should be distributed?

### ***Staffing***

- Who will perform the tasks? Is back-up staff available?
- Who else will be involved in this project (i.e. partners, contractors)? Identify their roles and responsibilities. Make sure the person responsible for each task is spelled out in the work statement.

### ***Coordinating Organizations***

Coordinate with other organizations that have a vested interest in the project, such as non-profit groups, boating associations, farm bureaus, etc. These groups may provide an insight regarding the best way to reach your target audience. Information provided in your application relating to coordination with these groups show you have researched and explored different avenues with regard to your proposed project.

In addition, coordination and communication helps ascertain that you do not reinvent the wheel. It also allows you to use the experience of those that have done similar projects and modify and improve upon them.

### ***Future funding/program sustainability***

How will your project be funded once the grant is over (tipping fees, county funds)? “We will maintain this project with future Opportunity Grant funds” is inadequate, since the Opportunity Grant is a competitive grant there is no guarantee of future funding.

### ***Work Statement***

Make sure that the timeframes specified in your Work Statement are realistic and can address your needs. The term of the grant is only 24 months. You must demonstrate that your project can be implemented within that timeframe.

- Be realistic about the time necessary for each task.
- Do not put items in the Work Statement that were not addressed in the need.

## **Evaluation**

While evaluation does take time, it is essential towards documenting your programs success and project effectiveness.

To assist you in your evaluation efforts refer to “Finding Your Way Through the Evaluation Maze” guidebook. If you do not have a hard copy you can request one from your grant manager. The guidebook can also be found on the Board’s website at <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/UsedOil/EvalGuide/>

### ***Process and Outcome evaluation***

**Process:** This is the tracking part of evaluation (number of events you held, how many brochures you distributed, etc.).

**Outcome:** How will you determine whether your program had an effect on your audience?

### ***Evaluation and modification during project implementation***

- Discuss potential challenges that may be faced during the implementation of the grant and plans for dealing with them.
- Identify the strategies, milestones, & tools that you will use to monitor the project.
- Project evaluation should be ongoing throughout the grant term, not just at the end of the grant term. Continuous evaluation will allow you to identify problems and concerns as you go along and make adjustments as needed.

- Describe any evaluation reports to be produced and their use.

### ***Criteria for success***

- How will you know when your goals have been met? “We know our program was successful because we gave away all 5,000 key chains”. This is *not* what we are looking for here! That is process evaluation and we are looking for outcome evaluation here.
- As a result of your efforts, did you change the behavior of your target audience (i.e., for example: did you collect 5,000 gallons of used oil and 5,000 used oil filters from the new Agricultural centers, and/or show an increase in the awareness of the community of the need to recycle used oil and filters by a 50 percent increase in calls to the hotline?

### ***Who is responsible for evaluation?***

List a specific person and/or title, not just an agency name.

### ***Explain any statistical tests or questionnaires to be used***

Explain what type of tests or questionnaires will be done, why they are needed and what you hope to ascertain from them.

## **Budget**

When planning your budget make sure you factor in potential salary increases for personnel time over the life of the grant.

Provide a budget narrative in addition to a budget itemization. Describe all equipment, services & supplies requested.

- “Equipment” or “supplies” do not provide sufficient detail. Explain type of equipment or supplies to be purchased such as “filter crusher” or “500 bilge pads”.
- Remember to use only the budget categories that are specified in the application instructions.

### ***Quotes/documentation***

- Each item listed on the Budget Itemization should have corresponding quotes and/or supporting documentation. Supporting documents should be numbered and arranged in the same order as listed in the budget itemization. If quote lists more than one item, please highlight the applicable item.

### ***All elements itemized in the budget***

- An item or expenditure may be cut from the budget if it is not described in the grant narrative and/or Work Statement.

### ***Cost Savings***

This may not be applicable for every budget, but should be addressed in some manner, even if it means saying “not applicable”.

- Is the project cost effective? While a curbside program might be a good idea for your jurisdiction, it might not be cost effective. What are the per capita costs?

Managerial, contingency and miscellaneous are clearly described and kept to a minimum.

Justify and explain all non-specific costs such as overhead.

## **Completeness**

In addition to the criteria listed below, points may be deducted for things such as a late resolution, too many pages in the narrative, application not double-sided, or an unclear proposal.

Double-check your application and make sure everything on the checklist is included, and arranged in the order prescribed. Avoid assumptions that the application is the same as last year or that reviewers have access to outside information.

### ***Letters of Support***

Include letters of support from individuals, organizations, jurisdictions, etc. that would be served or affected by the proposed project.

### ***Ability to coordinate contracted activities***

Explain all prior experience that qualifies the key personnel to implement this program. Include completed Summary of Used Oil and HHW Grants form (**Exhibit E**).

### ***Resumes or background statements for key personnel***

Identify individuals who will be implementing project and provide resumes and/or letters describing their work experiences. All references must be submitted with the application.

## **Evidence of a Recycled Content Purchasing Policy**

Provide evidence of commitment of “closing the loop”.

The policy should validate your jurisdiction’s pledge to use recycled content products, recyclable or reusable products, or other waste reduction measures where appropriate. A sample policy can be found at [www.ciwmb.ca.gov/buyrecycled/Policies/CIWMB.htm](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/buyrecycled/Policies/CIWMB.htm)

- Points will be awarded if you provide documentation showing a commitment to sustainability with regards to the use of re-refined oil. Documentation can be multiple receipts of re-refined oil purchased in the past year. Receipts should document the purchase of more than one quart of oil. Documentation could also be a policy showing the commitment to the purchase re-refined oil.
- This policy should outline not only the applicants commitment to recycled content purchasing, but also an ongoing review of the policy regarding how the amount of recycled content products purchased each year can be increased.

## **PROGRAM CRITERIA**

***1. Establish a new program, or expand an existing program to include collection of used oil and/or filters from curbside, boaters or agricultural sources***

If you plan to do a new agricultural or curbside program make sure you include the collection of used oil filters.

***2. No Past OG5 funding.***

This provides an opportunity for those applicants who did not receive opportunity grant funding in the prior cycle. This criterion supports the Board's direction in reaching out to all of the communities across the state.

***3. Establish an oil collection program and/or an oil collection education program targeting a non-English speaking and/or underserved population***

Show how you will target a non-English speaking and/or underserved population by considering their specific needs with regards to language, culture, access, etc. This is about understanding and targeting a community not merely translating information from English into another language.

A population could be considered underserved due to geography, economics, lack of knowledge about recycling used oil and/or filters, or other reasons.