



CITY OF BOSTON ZERO WASTE TOOLKIT

SCHOOL - HOSPITAL

RETHINK

- ❑ Look at what is in your trash – this is known as a waste audit. List the items, estimate their amounts (percent of total trash) and identify where they came from (i.e. supply vendors, in-house production).
- ❑ Look at your outside trash dumpsters. Note who your trash vendor is, and how often the containers are being emptied.
- ❑ Look in the trash receptacles inside the facility. This will give you an idea of your employees' and constituents' waste habits. Other generators of waste may be a cafeteria or an outdoor landscaping site.
- ❑ Look at the waste generated by construction or renovations on the property. Builders may contract their own waste removal, but the business is still responsible for this waste.
- ❑ Think about ways you could reduce, reuse, recycle or compost any of the items on your waste audit.
- ❑ Know the requirements of Mass DEP's [commercial organics waste ban](#) and [other](#) waste bans, including cardboard, mixed paper and bottles/cans.
- ❑ "[RecyclingWorks](#)" provides free waste reduction technical assistance to businesses, institutions, non-profits, and manufacturers. Call RecyclingWorks Hotline: (888) 254-5525.

REDESIGN

- ❑ Make sure that you are using an efficient number of collection containers for recyclables, food waste, and trash. Work with your hauler to schedule pickups when your bins are almost full.
- ❑ Create waste stations around the campus and in dining locations; place trash, recycling, and compost bins next to each other along with proper bin labeling.
- ❑ Advise your vendors about your intention to redesign your operations to reduce your waste. See if you can work together on this effort.
- ❑ Identify any [hazardous](#) wastes your business might be generating, and look for non-hazardous substitutes to use. Hazardous products are ignitable, corrosive, reactive or toxic.
- ❑ Designate an outdoor smoking area and cigarette disposal.
- ❑ Sell sustainable products in cafeterias or shops.
- ❑ Use deconstruction instead of demolition when renovating.

REDUCE

- Order supplies in bulk to reduce shipping packaging and deliveries.
- Use these [strategies](#) to reduce the food waste generated by cafeterias.
- Go paper free in at least one facet of the business (customer payment, inventorying, communication, etc).
- Reduce the amount of single-use items given to people (fliers, take-out containers, etc).

REUSE

- Reuse shipping materials, like [pallets](#) and boxes.
- Donate surplus or outdated technology to charity for reuse.
- Reuse office supplies (binders, boxes, etc).
- [Donate](#) prepped, untouched food to charities.
- Replace single-use items with durable ones that can be reused.
- Open any unclaimed “lost and found” items to the public once or twice annually.

RECYCLE *and* COMPOST

- Recycle shipping materials, paper, bottles, cans, etc.
- Have a clothing/textile drop off bin for donation or recycling.
- Compost kitchen scraps that cannot be reused.
- Offer a compost bin for lunch scraps in cafeterias.
- Recycle broken or outdated [e-waste](#) through a reputable hauler.
- Learn how to recycle [medical supplies](#) like x-ray films, gloves, and blood pressure cuffs.

CLOSE THE LOOP

- Buy from vendors that make products with recycled content, and actively reduce their waste.
- Use [post-consumer recycled](#) paper products.
- Use composted soil or mulch on site. Buy the compost from a local supplier.
- Use recycled construction materials when renovating or building.

EDUCATION

- Train employees in Zero Waste policy and practices.
- Devise ways to educate [students](#)/patients on waste reduction measures.
- Post signs and send emails advertising the waste policies of the organization.
- Evaluate/track the success rate of waste reduction measures by calculating diversion rates and weighing trash.