

Recycling Services Newsletter

ISSUE 1 - FALL 2019

Facilities Planning and Management (FPM) Recycling Services is committed to establish a sustainable campus through reduction of waste produced, reusing materials as much as possible, as well as recycling materials into new products. Our focus is to continue promoting the three R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, which is vital in achieving an effective waste minimization/zero waste program. Taking a campus as large as Iowa State University on the path to become a zero waste campus is a challenge; however, by using the waste management hierarchy approach, our goal is to keep 85% of waste out of the landfill by 2025.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Facilities Planning and Management

“Iowa State University is on a mission to become a zero waste campus by keeping at least 85% of its waste out of the landfill by 2025.”

Our Approach

Over the past year, FPM Recycling Services has promoted sustainable materials management best practices to faculty, staff, and students. This is a different approach from what the City of Ames does by recovering energy from waste. However, before sending waste to the landfill, Recycling Services is always exploring all available opportunities to divert waste, and in doing so, we send materials that cannot be either reused or recycled to the Ames Recovery Plant. In the event these materials do not fall into the area of focus (reduce, reuse, recycle) or energy recovery, we safely dispose of them in the landfill.



WASTE MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY APPROACH

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CAMPUS COLLABORATION EFFORTS

Over the previous year FPM Recycling Services has identified and worked closely with key campus departments and units to promote recycling services on campus. These include: Department of Residence, Athletics Department, Student Government, Academic Departments/Colleges/Labs, and Building Supervisors.

DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENCE

In-Room Residence Hall Recycling Initiative

With the bulk of our campus waste generation coming from students living in residence halls, there was a need for FPM Recycling Services to form a strong partnership with the Department of Residence to influence student behavior. The partnership led to the development of an in-room recycling program, which makes it easy and convenient for all students to recycle in their rooms. Prior to this, a house-based program was used, where recycling bins were located on each floor of the halls and the recycling chairs were responsible for taking them out. This was not as effective as it should be due to student turnover and the level of engagement decreasing.

Four residence halls (Maple, Willow, Larch, and Linden) were selected in spring 2019 to participate in the in-room recycling pilot. Each of the halls represented a sample of the typical residence halls on campus, which provided the opportunity to determine the feasibility of the model. Each room was provided with a blue bin for students to collect recyclable materials.

An assessment, which involved electronic survey questions and focus group meetings with sustainability chairs, residents, community advisers, and hall directors, was administered at the end of spring 2019 semester, with feedback to evaluate the success of the pilot. The results showed a 92 percent success rate.

“Success of the pilot program led the Department of Residence to a full-scale in-room recycling program for all students living in all residence halls starting fall 2019.”

BIN DISTRIBUTION DAY



Compost System Trial in Frederiksen Court

In spring 2019, FPM Recycling Services also partnered with the Frederiksen Court Council to pilot a compost system program in select apartments, which was coordinated by Carissa Moyna, the compost team leader. This project was designed to increase waste diversion, but more importantly, reduce food waste through composting as well as educate students about composting as a way of empowerment post-graduation.

There are plans to expand the compost project to other Frederiksen Court apartments, subject to funding.

ZERO WASTE GAME-DAY



ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

Athletics was identified as a potential partner based on the amount of waste produced, especially during game-day events. In fall 2018, FPM Recycling Services visited with the department to learn more about their goals and plans on waste diversion/recycling, as well as to explore ways of working together in improving waste diversion efforts before, during, and after games to support the university's zero waste goals. This conversation is at a preliminary stage, and we hope through this effort we can institute a zero-waste game-day program in all Iowa State athletic events that will increase our waste diversion from the landfill and save operational costs.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

For any campus recycling program to be successful, student involvement and engagement is key. Establishing a strong collaboration with the student government is very instrumental to insuring campus-wide recycling efforts are received by the student body.

In September 2018, FPM Recycling Services instituted a student-focused recycling committee comprised of the FPM Recycling Coordinator and the student government director of sustainability, alongside its recycling subcommittee with the mandate to champion recycling education, marketing, engagement, and dialogue among students on campus. In addition, the committee served as the “eyes and ears” for FPM Recycling Services to provide feedback.

On November 15, 2018, the committee organized and celebrated America Recycles Day at the Memorial Union, which was the first of its kind at Iowa State. The event was an engagement opportunity for anyone to learn more about recycling and our zero waste efforts on campus. It attracted faculty, staff, and students who learned more about the single stream recycling system, and how the university plans to achieve zero waste. America Recycles Day is an annual event happening every November 15, a Keep America Beautiful national initiative, dedicated to increasing, promoting, and celebrating recycling in the United States.

AMERICA RECYCLES EVENT



“Student involvement and engagement is key.”

In addition, a survey was conducted by the student-centered recycling committee team in spring 2019 to assess and understand students' current knowledge of recycling and other sustainability initiatives on campus. The survey provided valuable feedback that will help FPM Recycling Services deliver quality and engaging recycling programs across campus not only to students, but also to faculty and staff.

Currently, FPM Recycling Services is working closely with the Student Government Sustainability team to address a major material in our waste stream; plastics, especially in dining halls, food courts, and cafes. We want to partner with Dining Services to rethink and reduce the use of single-use plastics and provide a more sustainable option like biodegradable or compostable options.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

To effectively achieve zero waste on campus, FPM Recycling Services identified ways we can reduce waste coming to campus. Such as working closely with Procurement Services to review current contracts, as well as ensuring the development, consolidation, and administration of future contracts that departments/units sign with various vendors are sustainable, cost effective, and reduce the waste footprint on campus. Through these processes, there have been operational cost savings upwards of \$10,000.

“Moving forward, these efforts will continue as we push to eliminate or reduce waste generation on our campus.”

CUSTODIAL SERVICES AND BUILDING SUPERVISORS

Identifying strategic stakeholders and partners in driving an effective recycling program was another key focus. In summer 2018, the recycling coordinator introduced himself to both building supervisors and custodial staff because of the roles these individuals play in campus buildings, especially in regard to waste management. These groups share recycling and waste management goals, as well as seek support for recycling programs within their buildings.

“After a year, the collaboration has provided opportunities to share recycling processes, updates in campus buildings, and feedback on how recycling can be improved.”

Custodial staff have embraced changes in recycling operations and assisted with building waste audit studies. They have provided first-hand information regarding recycling issues within campus buildings, which assists with quality recycling services provided to campus.

BUILDING SUPERVISORS MEETING



These collaboration efforts also led to identifying building recycling coordinators who serve as a contact person between occupants and the recycling coordinator. They help identify floor recycling champions to help promote, educate, share recycling messages to occupants, determine appropriate locations for recycling bins, ensure signage is posted adequately throughout the building, and contact the recycling coordinator with any questions.

AMES LABORATORY RECYCLING INITIATIVES

A partnership has been established with Ames Laboratory's Environmental Health and Safety department to increase and encourage recycling in all laboratories. This partnership led to the implementation of a pilot waste-reduction effort by removing desk-side trash bins from office spaces and providing a communal option for staff. This encourages waste reduction and increases recycling habits in lab offices. There are hopes this will be emulated across campus by other departments to support the zero waste initiative.

AMES LABORATORY RECYCLING PRESENTATION



RECYCLING OPTIMIZATION AND OPERATIONAL PROJECTS

RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE INVENTORIES

In the summer of 2018, FPM Recycling Services conducted inventories of all indoor and outdoor recycling infrastructure in order to ensure efficient and effective administration of the recycling program across campus. The inventory provided an opportunity to map out our recycling bins so as to increase visibility and ensure consistency with bin signage and design across campus, resulting in easy-to-understand communication about the recycling process.

WASTE AUDIT AND PILOT STUDIES

In fall 2018, FPM Recycling Services conducted a series of waste audits, surveys, and pilot studies in Facilities Planning and Management (FPM) which served as a test department to evaluate the current Iowa State office recycling processes at Iowa State. This provided the opportunity to identify ways to improve operations on campus, and collect baseline information for measuring the effectiveness of the campus's waste-diversion strategies and goals. Participants were surveyed pre- and post-study.

“Pre-study waste audit results showed more than 55% of recyclables were found in desk-side trash bins.”

Post-study results showed 23% of recyclables were found after the introduction of signage and education.”



Survey responses generally showed more recycling education and communication about what goes into the blue recycling bins for single stream recycling is key to a successful recycling program.



OFFICE SPACE WASTE AUDIT - FALL 2018

RECYCLING DATA APPLICATIONS

Due to estimations and insufficient recycling data provided by our recycler, in March 2019, FPM Recycling Services, in conjunction with FPM's Information Technology Services unit, developed and implemented an internal recycling data application. This application measures weekly weight of recycling materials placed in 55-gal blue bins before they are emptied. Custodial Services staff enters this data before the bins are placed on loading docks for collection.

In addition, single stream pick-up requesters also have the opportunity on the recycling website to indicate how full bins are before pick-up. With this application, more accurate recycling data has been generated for each building to help track each campus building's waste generation and pattern.

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT AND GUEST LECTURES

FPM Recycling Services has been actively involved in several campus engagement and guest lecture efforts to discuss campus recycling initiatives. The recycling coordinator has visited classes, departments, and colleges to engage campus and share the university's zero waste goals and how everyone plays a part.

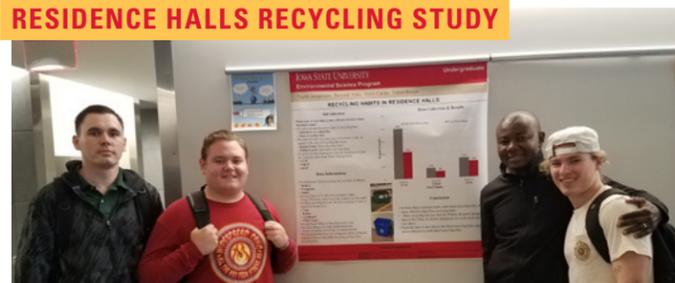
COLLEGE OF DESIGN GUEST LECTURE



CARVER HALL WASTE AUDIT STUDY



RESIDENCE HALLS RECYCLING STUDY



FRESHMAN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE LECTURE



In fall of 2018, our recycling coordinator guest lectured at a freshman Environmental Science class and at a second-year Interdisciplinary Design class to present on-campus recycling initiatives, the university's zero waste goals, the importance of waste reduction, and expectations from students.

COLLEGE OF DESIGN

Other engagement opportunities included a presentation made by the recycling coordinator to the executive cabinet of the College of Design to:

- discuss how recycling and the zero waste concept may be incorporated into design studios to reduce waste generation and increase waste diversion in the college.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE 203

In spring 2019, the recycling coordinator worked closely with students in Environmental Science 203 to:

- conduct a waste audit study, as well as evaluate the new recycling signage in Carver Hall over a four-week period. This project provided opportunities for students to experience the waste that was generated in this academic building.
- study recycling habits in residence halls by assessing what type of recycling is most effective between the new in-room model and floor-based recycling model.

KEEP IOWA STATE BEAUTIFUL

Keep Iowa State Beautiful has and will continue to create a culture of beautification on campus, to encourage individuals and teams to monitor designated areas, and to host events for the campus and community to remove litter thereby beautifying campus and surrounding areas.

ADOPT CAMPUS PROGRAM

The Adopt Campus Program is an opportunity to beautify Iowa State on your own schedule. It is designed for groups of people (e.g., students, faculty, staff, and community members) to remove litter from campus.

Recruit your student organization members, your staff, your house-mates, your friends, or anyone you can find to help beautify campus.

AREAS CURRENTLY ADOPTED ON CAMPUS

- Agronomy Hall
- Durham Center
- General Services Building
- Hamilton Hall
- Kildee Hall
- Lake LaVerne
- Library
- Martin Residence Hall
- Parking Lot 41
- Parking Lot 46
- Parking Lot 47
- Ross Hall
- Sukup Basketball Complex
- Jack Trice Stadium



STASH THE TRASH RECYCLING BINS



STASH THE TRASH

Keep Iowa State Beautiful partnered with the Volunteer Center of Story County, City of Ames, and other private companies in the community to organize the annual Stash the Trash event. This volunteer effort brings together the Story County community to help clean up Ames after the winter, creating more beautiful neighborhoods, parks, campus, and Ames community. There was 316 volunteers who participated in the spring 2019 Stash the Trash event.

This year, the volunteers were encouraged to separate recyclables from the trash they picked up. There was 205 pounds of recyclables diverted from the landfill, and 3,120 pounds of trash was cleaned up from the community.

JOIN OUR ZERO WASTE VOLUNTEER TEAM

FPM Recycling Services is looking for faculty, staff, and students who are passionate about recycling, sustainability, and are concerned about the waste pollution in our environment to join our zero waste team. This yet-to-be formed team will volunteer at events to drive our zero waste goal movement on campus.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS:

- Commit to act as champion for all recycling and sustainability events on campus.
- Help track and monitor bins during events to reduce contamination rates.
- Educate event attendees about what is recyclable, compostable, or goes to the landfill.
- Monitor a three-bin zero waste station to educate and guide people in sorting their materials into the correct receptacles for compost, recycle, or trash.
- Collect food scraps from games and events and take them to the compost farm.
- Help set up and tear down temporary zero waste stations for events.
- Be a zero waste educator at events to facilitate recycling and composting.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS:

- Interest in recycling, composting, and waste reduction.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to be on your feet for three to four hours in all kinds of weather.
- Ability to take part in at least two zero waste events per month (or as needed).
- Ability to lift at least 25 lbs.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE EMAIL RECYCLING@IASTATE.EDU.



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