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## College Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling Policy

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### Introduction

The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) is committed to reducing its impact on the environment by managing its waste in an efficient and sustainable manner. The College recognizes the rising financial and environmental costs associated with landfill waste disposal and incineration of solid waste material, which underscore the importance of effective source reduction, recycling and waste diversion programs.

SUNY-ESF maintains an aggressive and successful waste management and recycling program, which is administered by its Physical Plant and Facilities Office. This program has resulted in recycling approximately 40% of the solid waste stream generated on the SUNY-ESF campus.<sup>1</sup> Although capturing and recycling 40% of the solid wastes generated demonstrate a commendable effort by campus occupants, there is potential to improve. Their findings of a waste stream audit conducted by *The Green Campus* Initiative concluded that on average, 24% of the trash that is generated by the campus and taken to either landfills or incinerators is easily recyclable material. A base-line waste stream audit of Baker Laboratory<sup>2</sup> conducted in spring 2009 found that 43% of this building's solid waste was effectively being recycled. Further, the base-line audit identified the following waste components as those, in particular, for which increased recycling efforts would likely boost the overall percentage of the building's (and the campus) waste stream being diverted from landfill or incineration: These recyclable materials included glass, mixed paper, corrugated cardboard, plastics, scrap metals, compostable materials, and electronics. In just three days, a total of 325 pounds of recyclable material was accounted for in the general waste stream of this campus.

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<sup>1</sup> During a three-semester period, from Fall 2007 through Fall 2008, SUNY-ESF's campus activist group, *The Green Campus Initiative*, conducted a well-organized and controlled audit of the waste stream produced by the campus. During this period, on three separate day-long events, the group collected trash bags from all campus facilities and physically hand-sorted the refuse into recyclable, and non-recyclable material. This study determined that 40% of the solid waste generated throughout the campus was being recycled. The study also illustrated that approximately 24% of the solid waste destined for disposal consisted of materials that could be recycled.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A, Baker Laboratory Base-line Waste Stream Audit.



**Policy**

The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry shall maintain effective programs to reduce its waste stream. These programs, as outlined herewith, shall include source reduction purchasing strategies, effective waste and recycling collection stations along with occupant education. It is the College's goal to divert 50% or more of its solid waste from disposal (landfill or incineration).

The Physical Plant and Facilities Office shall manage and monitor the campus' waste and recycling program and shall work in conjunction with other campus entities, such as the Office of Communications, The Green Campus Initiative and the President's Climate Action Committee, to develop and implement occupant education programs relative to waste reduction and recycling. The Business Office (Purchasing Department) shall implement source reduction purchasing strategies.

Re-use, recycling and waste reduction shall be a shared responsibility of all campus occupants and shall require participation and cooperation with programs that are established to achieve the campus' waste diversion goal.

Accepted on behalf of the  
State University of New York  
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling Program**

### **Responsibilities**

The Physical Plant and Facilities Office will have ultimately responsibility for implementation of the policy. General responsibility will be that of the Director of Physical Plant or his/her designee. Responsibilities under this office also include development and management of a waste management and recycling tracking and review process as a means to monitor waste reduction success and improve overall campus waste reduction performance over time.

This tracking and review process shall track the wastes as identified in Appendix B herewith, which shall be tailored as applicable for each of SUNY ESF's buildings. Tracking is made more difficult on a campus setting, as campus waste is co-mingled from multiple buildings of disparate occupancies and uses prior to disposal. SUNY ESF will conduct individual building waste audits to determine the amount of waste that is generated in each of its buildings as a percentage of the occupied space of the entire campus. Once established, this will be randomly spot-checked at each building a minimum of once per quarter, and the percentage adjusted accordingly. Using this method will facilitate the college's ability to gauge its success in recycling efforts in each building, even though disposal receipts reflect the amalgamated recycling efforts of the entire campus.

### **Objectives**

All occupants of SUNY-ESF, including staff and student body, are expected to put forth a reasonable effort to maximize re-use and recycling and minimize the amount of waste that is destined for disposal. The following general strategies will be used toward this effort:

1. Reduce the requirement to discard materials in general. Ask suppliers to take back any packaging or reusable items such as pallets, boxes, styrofoam packaging materials, etc. A major element of this objective is source reduction through sound purchasing strategies, further explained in the *Guidelines* section.
2. Reuse materials and equipment whenever possible. Pass on equipment, unused supplies, furniture, etc. before considering its disposal. Distribution of serviceable equipment and furniture will be coordinated through the SUNY ESF Property Control Manager (Physical Plant Operations).
3. Recycle whenever possible. Segregation of recyclable materials is essential for reduction of waste generated on campus.



## Guidelines

1. These guidelines for solid waste reduction and recycling compliment separate sustainable purchasing policies, which address procurement of materials, equipment and furnishings with recycled and recyclable content, local materials, post consumer waste, low mercury content, low V.O.C. content and manufacture of sustainably produced materials.
2. Reduction:
  - A. Purchasing Source Reduction:
    - i. Reasonable effort will be made to purchase goods and equipment that
      - a. minimize packaging and shipping materials, or
      - b. substantially utilize recyclable packing and shipping materials, or
      - c. are provided by suppliers that accept return of packaging materials for reuse or recycling.
      - d. Procure products in bulk packaging to reduce packaging wastes.
    - ii. These efforts will be monitored and coordinated by the Purchasing Office. The Purchasing Office will also:
      - a. Identify and project needs that exist in regard to equipment, supplies, and services for which recycled and/or recyclable materials might be available.
      - b. Review prior and current requests for equipment, supplies, and services to determine the present usage of recycled and/or recyclable products.
      - c. Diligently strive to identify vendors that can competitively supply recycled products.
      - d. Utilize commercial directories and federal, state, and local sources of information to identify marketed products that are manufactured using recycled materials.
      - e. Develop and publish a recycled products list and encourage users to procure these products in lieu of non-recyclable products.
      - f. Encourage, promote and facilitate the procurement of products with long useful lives and low lifecycle costs and environmental impacts.
  - B. Material Use Reduction:
    - i. Offices will consider the use of shared resources such as networked copiers, scanners and printers.
    - ii. Minimize waste paper, strategies include:
      - a. Minimize excess mailings and junk mailings by
        1. actively removing names from unwanted mailing lists for catalogs, magazines, journals, newsletters, etc.;
        2. minimizing subscriptions by sharing and distributing commonly used literature such as, magazines, journals, etc. within work groups and offices.
      - b. Implement double-sided copying and printing as a campus standard and a requirement for document submissions (scholarly papers, proposals, etc.).
      - c. Decreasing margin widths on printed letters and literature.
      - d. Minimize printed matter in favor of electronic/digital documents
        1. Bulletins and brochures should be distributed electronically and posted in prominent locations rather than being printed and broadly distributed.
        2. Limit printing needs to actual requirements for distribution and eliminate significant printing overruns.
3. Separate lightly used waste paper from the waste stream for re-use in scratch and note pads (*to be made by the Department of Paper Science and Bio-Process Engineering*).



4. Reuse Strategies:

- A. SUNY ESF operates a robust program for distribution and reuse of used office equipment and furnishings. This program is operated through the SUNY ESF Property Control Manager and is facilitated by the IT Department as well as the Grounds Department. Serviceable equipment is evaluated and inventoried for potential re-use and made available, usually on a first come, first serve basis to fulfill campus wide needs. Equipment is sometimes earmarked at the time that it is offered as surplus, to fulfill earlier requests. Serviceable equipment and furnishings that are not re-used on the SUNY ESF campus within several months (or as limited by storage capacity) are offered as surplus equipment to other SUNY institutions and/or NYS departments through the Office of General Services (OGS). If OGS is unable to distribute the equipment to another state agency, the equipment is aggregated and auctioned to the public. Occasionally, surplus equipment may be sold to SUNY ESF staff and students in a garage sale format, when other options have been exhausted. Through this system, SUNY ESF disposes of very little equipment or furniture as solid waste.
- B. Offices or departments that possess excess office supplies are to offer these to other departments via campus wide email, on a first come, first serve basis.

5. Recycling:

- i. Recycling is the responsibility of all building occupants at all times. Building occupants must identify, separate, and place recyclable materials in appropriate recycling containers.
- B. Office paper, corrugated cardboard, plastics, bottles, cans, scrap metal, mixed paper, electronics, and batteries must always be placed in appropriate containers.
  - i. Staff offices will have a clearly marked container for recyclable paper products, placed near the regular waste receptacle. Office occupants are to periodically deposit the recyclable paper in central collection areas, where it will be collected by the janitorial staff on a regular basis.
  - ii. Office areas, computer labs with printer and/or copiers will have a clearly marked receptacle for recyclable paper products to be collected daily or as required by janitorial services. These containers will be placed near the copier/printers for easy access.
  - iii. Receptacles for recycling of cans, bottles and plastics, paper and non-recyclable waste materials will be placed in easily accessible locations throughout the facility. Containers for recycling of batteries, printer and toner cartridges will be strategically placed within each building and the location of such containers posted at all recycling locations.
    - a. Custodial services personnel will determine prime locations for receptacles to at high traffic locations and where they may be easily serviced.
    - b. These receptacles must be clearly marked for the type of material to be placed in them, and must be easily accessible, with easy access lids for single-handed use.
    - c. Custodial services will properly remove, store and dispose of fluorescent lamps in accordance with separate procedures for handling, storage, documentation and disposal of mercury-containing materials. This process is initiated by a Work Request.
  - iv. Vending machine areas will have appropriately marked recycle containers for bottles and cans, paper materials, and general waste.
  - v. General use areas, such as main hallways, will have strategically placed, accessible recycle bins for cans and bottles, paper, batteries, and general non-recyclable waste materials. Containers will be placed in central locations near high population areas or intersections where they can be easily seen and accessed. This includes areas near main entrances so people entering and exiting have quick, easy access.



- C. Collection station equipment/pickup area.
  - i. Collection station equipment/containers for recyclable material will be positioned centralized areas, indoors, on or convenient to the ground level floor of all facilities. Locations shall facilitate easy collection by Grounds personnel for transfer to centralized campus location. Containers shall be available for sorting cardboard, paper, plastics, bottles and cans with redemption value, batteries, electronics, and any metal materials.
  - ii. The Custodial Services Unit of the Physical Plant collects all recyclable materials and places them in these containers, as required or on a daily basis, along with regular trash.
  - iii. Any large equipment (not subject to surplus/reuse) is also collected here, for transport to the Grounds Shop and dismantling for separation of recyclable materials.
- 6. Awareness and Training:
  - A. To ensure all facility occupants are aware of the waste management and recycling requirements for SUNY-ESF, the following guidelines apply:
    - i. All receptacles for collecting recyclables shall be boldly marked for their purpose. A general listing of the types of recyclable materials to place in the container will be affixed to the outside of the container.
    - ii. All in-coming Freshmen or transfer students shall receive an information page in orientation/welcome packages that highlight the campus' waste reduction and recycling policy. Early in each academic session/semester, students will be briefed on the tenants of this policy, emphasize its importance relative to the culture of the institution and point out where additional information sources may be found.
    - iii. Physical Plant and Facilities will maintain a website that includes waste reduction and recycling information, including lists of currently recyclable materials and a "How to" guide.
  - B. The Communications Office will assist in development of signage and literature to raise campus awareness of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Policy as well as these guidelines.
  - C. With funding provided through the Office of the President, the Campus Green Initiative will enact an incentive program to reward exemplary recycling and waste reduction efforts by campus individuals or groups. The Communications Office will advertise receipt of these rewards on a regular (weekly or bi-weekly) basis via campus wide email and postings on the College's website.