

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Campus Sustainability
AREA: Operations

Number: 14.02.01

SUBJECT: Recycling and Waste Minimization

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The University of Houston will establish a recycling and waste minimization program in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 361.425. As the generation of waste is inherent to the operation of a university, this policy applies to all faculty, staff, students and University guests.

The University of Houston is committed to reducing its total waste stream while increasing the percentage of recycling across all categories, including "residential housing" items, demolition and construction debris, and food waste.

Reuse and recycled materials are critical to preserving our natural resources. A comprehensive, efficient, and user-friendly reuse and recycling infrastructure enables our campus community to landfill less solid waste and increase Campus diversion rates.

The purpose of this document is to establish a grass-roots recycling program at the University of Houston that encourages proper disposal of recyclables throughout campus.

1. Provide recycling bins and receptacles outdoors, at dining facilities, at residential facilities, departments, schools, colleges, laboratories, and offices.
2. The recycling materials collected will include paper and paper products, aluminum cans, and plastics.
3. Provide ongoing training and education to faculty, staff, and students about the recycling program.
4. Collect and review recycling operational data and carbon footprint.
5. Make the program cost-efficient and self-supporting.

II. POLICY

The University of Houston demonstrates its commitment to sustainable practices through an ongoing recycling and waste minimization program. has started efforts to reduce waste. The following methods will be utilized to reduce campus waste: source reduction, reuse of materials, recycling, purchase of recycled materials, and education and training.
by recycling and emphasizing the importance to exceed the mandated minimum recycling rates of city and state. In addition to the existing recycling program, the University will initiate programs in public education and public policy related to recycling.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Composting- The controlled biological decomposition of organic materials through microbial activity. Depending on the specific application, composting can serve as both a volume reduction and a waste treatment measure. A beneficial organic composting

activity is an appropriate waste management solution that shall divert compatible materials from the solid waste stream that cannot be recycled into higher grade uses and convert these materials into a useful product that is put to beneficial reuse as a soil amendment or mulch.

- B. Recyclable:- Material that has been recovered or diverted from the solid waste stream for purposes of reuse, recycling, or reclamation, a substantial portion of which is consistently used in the manufacture of products which may otherwise be produced using raw or virgin materials. The University recycles paper and paper products, aluminum cans, ~~and~~ plastics, and glass containers (on a limited basis) (#'s 1 through 7).
- C. Recycling: - A process by which materials that have served their intended use or are scrapped, discarded, used, surplus, or obsolete are collected, separated, or processed and returned to use in the form of raw materials in the production of new products. Recycling includes the composting process if the compost material is put to beneficial reuse.
- D. Source reduction: - An activity or process that avoids the creation of municipal solid waste by reducing waste at the source.
- E. Sustainability Team – A team developed to establish lines of communication across all Campus departments, to track and report information on goals and metrics throughout the year, and to actively participate in recycling education efforts.
- F. Green Department Certification – Certification that identifies and recognizes departments on campus taking extra steps to demonstrate greener operations and lower their environmental footprint. The program identifies a set of conditions and actions – some optional and some required – that departments can take to obtain certification. Certification is contingent on documenting all required prerequisites.
- G. Recycle-mania – A yearly competition between colleges comparing the amount of recyclables collected to the amount of garbage produced.
- H. Waste audits – The amount of recyclables items placed in trash bins in various dorm locations on campus. These statistics are used by Princeton Facilities.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Plant Operations is responsible for:
1. establishing a program for the separation and collection of all recyclable materials generated by the University's operations, including, at a minimum, aluminum, steel containers, aseptic packaging and polycoated paperboard cartons, high-grade office paper, and corrugated cardboard;
 2. providing procedures for collecting and storing recyclable materials, containers for recyclable materials, and procedures for making contractual or other arrangements with buyers of recyclable materials;
 3. evaluating the total cost of ownership, including purchase price, operating cost, maintenance, collection and disposal, and recycling costs when selecting suppliers;

34. evaluating the amount of recyclable material recycled and modifying the recycling program as necessary to ensure that all recyclable materials are effectively and practicably recycled, including:
- a. establishing centralized recycling efforts for each campus building;
 - b. continue placing paper and plastic recycling bins with effective signage alongside all indoor garbage bins and in many other strategic locations;
 - c. establishing better accessibility and frequent use of recycling receptacles by systematically placing more multi-material bins throughout campus – especially in areas where the bins are not currently located, such as classrooms; and
Note: This activity will provide the infrastructure necessary for achieving a higher recycling rate.
 - d. placing a greater number of recycling bins in key high-traffic locations (such as lecture halls);
Note: Despite the fact that eating and drinking is prohibited in many campus lecture halls, it happens often, and the lack of recycling bins in these facilities encourage many recyclable containers to end up in landfills. However, placing bins inside of lecture halls could invite other distractions, which should be weighed carefully.
5. exploring waste-reducing technologies;
6. implementing a progressive rate structure for garbage collection which will further incentivizing recycling; and
Note: Departments might further prioritize recycling if each ton of garbage generated resulted in a higher incremental collection cost.
7. providing recycling program training to custodial staff.

4. coordinating composting efforts with the University's dining service provider.

B. The Campus Sustainability Task Force (CSTF) is responsible for:

1. establishing educational and incentive programs to encourage maximum employee participation in the recycling and waste minimization program;
2. creating a more inclusive and diverse recycling program by, for example, increasing opportunities for recycling electronic waste materials, and composting paper towels from bathrooms and animal waste from laboratories;
3. establishing policy guidelines to promote campus users' purchasing power to promote the availability of products that are resource-efficient, energy efficient, water efficient, and of recycled and rapidly renewable content for building materials, subsystems, components, equipment, and supplies;
4. Increasing the campus diversion rate above xx% by raising the "waste awareness" of campus users with available waste and consumption data. The CSTF also sets an initial goal for the campus diversion rate, in conjunction with the City of Houston goal or the State of Texas goal;

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- 4.5. Expanding the Sustainability Representative program by recruiting and engaging student ambassadors for recycling and resource conservation, including residential housing;
26. reviewing recycling and solid waste data and making recommendations to enhance the program results.
7. developing, identifying, and recognizing those departments on campus with Green Department Certification that have taken extra steps to have greener operations and lowering their environmental carbon footprint;
8. establishing an organized and convenient recycling system for all athletic events with a more conspicuous and user-friendly arrangement of recycling bins and garbage cans; and
39. monitoring the campus's carbon footprint.

~~Through a coalition between the Campus Sustainability Task Force and the University's Plant Operations will have the responsibilities providing recycling bins and receptacles for the University, monitoring, collecting, sorting, and then properly recycling the material. The University's designated contact person for Campus Sustainability Task Force is Emily Messa and designated contact person for Plant Operations is Pat Sanchez.~~

V. PROCEDURES/PROVISIONS

1. On a quarterly basis, the Campus Sustainability Task Force will review public areas where recycling bins are available. Every building and each floor of the residence halls must have at least one recycling bin for paper and one recycling bin for plastic and aluminum cans in a readily accessible public area, and add bins at least in each building and on each floor in residence halls.
2. ~~Administrative offices~~ Colleges, departments, and programs are responsible for implementing a recycling and waste minimization program in their area, including but not limited to the purchase of recyclable materials when practicable and coordinating pickup and drop off schedules with Plant Operations' Facilities Management, should request additional Recycling bins and educational material for their offices and suites at ~~may be~~ are ordered online at <http://www.uh.edu/green/>.
3. As more campus departments participate in the recycling and waste minimization program, the Campus Sustainability Task Force (or another group) will oversee the program and monitor campus progress.
34. On a monthly basis, Plant Operations will provide the Campus Sustainability Task Force with ~~statistics of material recycled in the previous month~~ measurements of campus waste and recycled material. At a minimum, these statistics will be published on the Campus Sustainability web site: <http://www.uh.edu/green/>.
45. ~~Information about a~~ Acceptable recyclable materials as well as comprehensive guidelines will be posted on the Campus Sustainability web site: <http://www.uh.edu/green/>.
56. ~~Departments should contact the Plant Operations Customer Service Center to report recycling bins that have not been emptied at 713-743-4948.~~
6. ~~Departments may contact the Campus Sustainability Task Force to provide recycling education to their employees. Please contact the Task Force at: greenuh@central.uh.edu.~~

7. Recycling education will be provided during New Hire Orientations and New Student Orientations. [The Campus Sustainability Task Force provides ongoing training and education for current employees and students.](#)

VI. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Assistant Vice President for University Services
Associate Vice President for Plant Operations

Review: Every three years, on or before June 1

VII. APPROVAL

Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance

President

Date of President's Approval: _____

REVISION LOG

<u>Revision Number</u>	<u>Approved Date</u>	<u>Description of Changes</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>Initial version</u>