



Green Matters

Actions today for a healthier tomorrow

June 2014

The Portland Building 2014 Annual Materials Assessment

What is it?

The City of Portland's waste management goals are to increase its recycling rate to 85% by 2015, and increase its waste recovery rate to 90% by 2030. In early 2014, Facilities Services conducted a materials assessment to see how close we are to reaching that goal. The following is what was found.

How did we do?

The good news is that total recycling and composting is at a three-year high. 2012's audit revealed 593 lbs total landfill-bound waste, which went down to 436 lbs in 2014. However, more than 50% of the waste could have been recycled, composted, or reused, and at least 10% could have been prevented in the first place.

Does it matter?

Yes! Recycling isn't just good for the environment; it saves money and creates jobs. In 2011, the scrap recycling industry created 459,140 jobs with \$60 billion in wages and 90.1 billion in economic activity.

How can you help?

- Bring a coffee cup to work.
- Limit use of non-recyclable and compostable items.
- Throw leftover food in the compost in stead of the trash.
- Ask vendors to offer compost-friendly or reusable packaging.



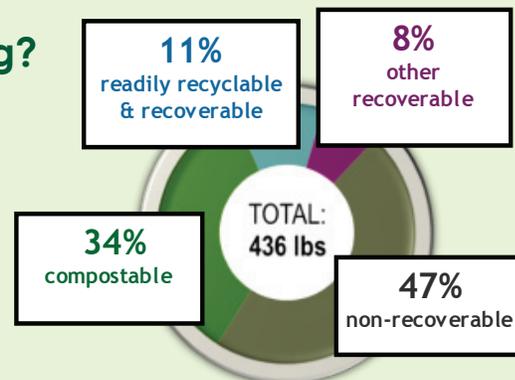
These two rows of bins show some of the most common types of waste: coffee cups (left) and to-go food containers (right).

We could have avoided 60% of our waste

Here's how the waste audit breaks down

Better than recycling?

Waste prevention is even more efficient than recycling. By consuming and throwing away less, the need to manage waste is reduced and we also save money. The City's goal is to reduce waste generation to below 2007-08 levels by 2015.



Green Team Trivia

Each Green Matters will now feature a question about the previous issue. The first five correct responses will win a beautiful, high-quality OMF Green Team insulated coffee tumbler. Show off your environmental pride!

Question:

According to the City's idle reduction policy, how long should you allow your car to idle if it looks like you will be stopped for a while?

(hint: check last month's Green Matters!)

Email guess to:

ethan.cirmo@portlandoregon.gov



Brought to you by the OMF Green Team