Back to Basics Campaign

Recycling Signage on Campus

It’s time to get back to basics: recycling basics, that is. With so many different materials accepted for recycling at U-M, it can be difficult to keep up. Well now we’re making it easy! Back to Basics will aim to increase awareness of recycling on campus and help to clarify what items are acceptable in U-M’s recycling program. This summer, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Office is revamping recycling informational signage that will include photos instead of only text to explain which items are acceptable for recycling. Signage options will be made available to facilities managers near the end of the summer so signage can be in place when the fall semester begins. Stay tuned!

*If you find an area in your building that has not received the new single-stream lids, please email recycle@umich.edu.

Tips From Our Best Recyclers

Our Competitors Share How They Recycle to Win

As you can tell, the U-M recycling program is constantly hard at work - whether it be promoting good practices on campus, improving recycling rates, or especially gaining participation in the “recycling competitions”, RecycleMania and Recycling Champions. The competitions are particularly helpful in learning about the best recycling practices on campus. While all Recycling Champions participants did a great job, we thought it would be helpful to share some of our competition winners’ helpful tips to garner real results in their buildings.

The winner of our Recycling Champions “Recycling Rate” part of the competition, Kelly Iott, works hard at the Argus II Building to make sure she is doing her part to help the overall recycling efforts on campus. Kelly explained that she makes sure to inform all building occupants annually on what can be recycled through printed forms and signs that show where to recycle in the building. She also pushed for the importance of making sure that the custodial staff was involved in the effort, because “they can certainly tell you what is going on with your recyclables and “trash”...who might need some reminding about what can be recycled”. And, like us at the Waste Reduction and Recycling Office, Kelly is a big proponent of using that competitive edge to promote recycling!

Her advice:

Hold an annual contest within your department or entire building such as “clean office”. Give small prizes for someone who has the most trash bags of recycled material after cleaning their office/cubical area. Everyone likes a little challenge/competition so participation is usually a hit on this one. And it can yield a lot of recycled materials, not to mention some really neat and clean offices!
Marcia Bailey, who works with the Hatcher Graduate Library and represented the Buhr Building in the Recycling Champions competition, clued our office in about how the library stays recycle-friendly. Marcia detailed that Hatcher implements a “robust Library Reuse and Recycle program - modeled after Craigslist”, where materials in good condition, ranging from furniture and shelves to white boards, are listed on an internal website before being sent to Property Disposition. This way, the library staff can first choose from available items rather than ordering new material. Marcia definitely understands the importance of reuse and even said “this process reduces cost and keeps serviceable and well made items out of a landfill!”.

Let us know how you and your building recycle at recycle@umich.edu, and we’ll feature you in our intern- run Recycling blog at mrecycle.blogspot.com!

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Composting Pilot at the Michigan League

Be a part of the post-consumer pilot!

As part of the University of Michigan’s commitment to being a leader in sustainability, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Office is launching a post-consumer pilot program in the Michigan League. Already participating in pre-consumer composting, the University hopes to use the post-consumer pilot program to test the feasibility of a university-wide program. In the fall semester, students, faculty, staff, and visitors will see post-consumer composting bins located in Beanster’s Café and in The Underground, as well as at catered events inside the Michigan League.

Stop by Michigan League and participate in the post-consumer composting pilot!

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Student Move Out

Reducing Waste Helps a Ton

This spring marked another successful Student Move Out effort. Working with University Housing, we were able to collect 11.99 tons of clothing, shoes, household items, bedding and food donations. This is an increase over last year’s total of 11.56 tons. All donations were distributed to local non-profit organizations that included Food Gatherers, Easter Seals, Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Shop and Purple Heart. We were happy to once again use this partnership to reduce waste and benefit the local community!
Winners
Recyclemania and Recycling Champions!

This past winter semester marked U-M's seventh year participating in RecycleMania, a nationwide collegiate recycling and waste reduction competition. The competition is comprised of four categories: recycling rate, per capita recycling, per capita total waste, and total pounds of recycling. We competed against 605 schools in this 10 week competition running from January 22nd through March 31st. U-M finished in eleventh place in total lbs of recycling with 747,409 lbs! In conjunction with RecycleMania, we also held the sixth annual intra-campus Recycling Champions competition. Throughout the ten weeks, 54 campus buildings competed to see who had the highest recycling rate, most improved recycling rate, and most reduced their total waste. All buildings did a great job!

Visit recycle.umich.edu for full results.

Get ready for Recycling Champions 2013!

Recycling Rates
For the 2012 Fiscal Year

The numbers are in and the University of Michigan Ann Arbor campus recycled an average building rate of 42% during fiscal year 2012. This number is the percentage of all material collected (recycling and refuse) that is recycled. This is an increase from the 41% recycled in FY 2011, so staff, faculty and students have done a great job over the past year!

The graphic to the right shows the building with the top five recycling rates on campus. Everyone did a great job recycling!

Follow this link to see all of the building rates from FY 2012:
http://www.recycle.umich.edu/grounds/recycle/PDF/2012IntheLoop.pdf

**To find your building, click Ctrl+F and enter the building name to search the PDF**