



# Waste Wise

*Preserving Resources, Preventing Waste*

“WasteWise is an empowering program. By showing cost savings through waste reduction, partners are able to protect the environment and at the same time save their employers money. Everyone wins: taxpayers, businesses, and, most importantly, the environment.”

— JOHN FULLER,  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA

## LESS PACKAGING = LESS WASTE

Anheuser-Busch prevented waste by lightweighting two packaging products. Specifically, it reduced the amount of aluminum used to produce its 24-ounce cans by 5.1 million pounds and saved 7.5 million pounds of paper-board by decreasing the thickness of its 12-pack bottle packaging.

## What Is WasteWise?

WasteWise is a free, voluntary partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through which organizations reduce municipal solid waste and select industrial wastes, benefitting their bottom line and the environment. WasteWise is flexible, allowing partners to design waste reduction programs tailored to meet their needs. Any organization, including large and small businesses; nonprofit organizations; and federal, state, local, and tribal governments, is encouraged to join.

## Why Worry About Waste?

Waste reduction makes good business sense because it saves your organization money through reduced purchasing and disposal costs and improved operating efficiency. Waste prevention, recycling, and buying and/or manufacturing recycled-content products form the cornerstones of a waste reduction program.

Waste prevention, also known as source reduction, is the most effective way to control municipal solid waste and is the main focus of WasteWise. When waste cannot be prevented, recycling is the next best option. Recycling saves energy and helps keep valuable materials out of landfills and incinerators. Buying and/or manufacturing recycled-content products helps to close the “recycling loop” and creates a market for recycled materials.



[www.epa.gov/wastewise](http://www.epa.gov/wastewise)

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## Program Fact Sheet

### AN A+ IN RECYCLING

Students at Miami University recycled nearly 15,000 pounds of hardcover books and 31,600 pounds of computer equipment, in addition to materials such as paper, aluminum, and take-out food containers. By reducing the total quantity of materials landfilled, the university saved \$66,500 in avoided disposal fees.

### TOTES SAVE PITNEY BOWES \$100K

Pitney Bowes, Inc. began to use plastic totes, which last up to 25 times longer than cardboard totes, for both intra- and inter-facility transport of component parts at all of its manufacturing sites. The company realized a savings of 132,000 pounds of cardboard, with a calculated annual savings of more than \$100,000.

### REMANUFACTURING ELECTRONICS FOR EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

By remanufacturing and refurbishing computer equipment to donate or sell, Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) prevented nearly 60 tons of computers from disposal in one year. The greenhouse gas emission reductions from this effort are equivalent to the carbon sequestration from growing more than 90,000 tree seedlings for 10 years.

Through waste prevention and recycling, WasteWise partners can greatly reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by conserving raw materials, which reduces the energy needed to retrieve, process, and manufacture those materials.

The concept of environmental stewardship is becoming increasingly prominent as consumers are becoming more interested in organizations' environmental records. By joining WasteWise, your organization can show employees, stockholders, customers, and communities that you care about preserving resources and preventing waste.

### WasteWise: Municipal and Industrial Waste

Municipal solid waste includes materials that could end up in your organization's (or your customers') trash, such as corrugated containers, office paper, yard trimmings, packaging, and wood pallets. Industrial wastes covered by WasteWise include non-hazardous batteries, coal combustion products, foundry sand, non-hazardous sludges, oil filters, non-hazardous ink, and porcelain.

## How Does WasteWise Help?

As a WasteWise partner or endorser, you can access a wealth of **free** technical assistance that will help you design and implement effective waste reduction activities. Through our network of experts and peers, you will learn cost-cutting waste reduction strategies and gain valuable insight from other partners. Key benefits include:

- **The WasteWise Technical Assistance Team** helps you design and implement your unique WasteWise program.
- **The WasteWise Helpline**, a toll-free service, offers access to information specialists trained to answer questions about WasteWise, including technical questions.
- **The WasteWise Web site** contains a variety of resources, including publications, program news, and links to additional waste reduction Web sites. The Member Services section includes useful tools only available to partners; the Member Service section provides guidance on setting goals, measuring results, and reporting.





- **Partner forums** present program information and educate partners on technical topics.
- **Awards and recognition** are available through national and local events, media advisories, and various EPA publications. The WasteWise Awards Program offers special recognition for partners that demonstrate outstanding efforts in all areas of the program.
- **Meetings and mentoring opportunities** allow partners to learn directly from one another.
- **Personalized Climate Profiles** provide reporting WasteWise partners with information on organizations' individual GHG emission reduction efforts.
- **Publications** designed to guide you in developing and implementing your WasteWise program by providing partner case studies, exploration of specialized topics, and coverage of specific business sectors.
- **Communications** from the WasteWise program, including the *eBulletin*, an electronic newsletter, and a listserv to help partners interact.



“WasteWise offers us an excellent opportunity to benchmark our waste reduction and recycling programs against the best in the country. It also provides a steady stream of new ideas that help us sustain and improve our programs.”

— R. HAYS BELL, EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY

## What Does It Take to Be a WasteWise Partner?

Joining WasteWise is easy! To join, complete a hard copy registration form or register online at [www.epa.gov/wastewise](http://www.epa.gov/wastewise). Once you sign up, just follow these steps and you will be on your way to being a successful WasteWise partner.

1. **Identify your waste reduction opportunities.** One of the first steps in designing a successful waste reduction program is identifying areas where waste can be reduced. WasteWise

### COLLECTING NEW MATERIALS ON “WEIRD WASTE DAY”

Concerned with the amount of trash that could not be recycled, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's Green Team created a “Weird Waste Day” on Earth Day 2003 to collect recyclable items that are not typically recycled.

### COURT COSTS LOWERED BY \$60K

The Jackson County, Missouri, Circuit Court cut costs by more than \$60,000 by placing labels over pre-printed case folders, avoiding the need for purchasing new folders.

### BOTTLE CAPS TO CARS

GM North America “closed the loop” by annually using 8,500 tons of nylon fibers from recycled carpet and 5,400 tons of polypropylene from recycled soda bottle caps in its vehicles.



## Program Fact Sheet

### REDUCING CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Waste prevention and recycling programs at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation achieved greenhouse gas emission reductions equivalent to removing nearly 90 passenger cars from the road for one year.

### PURCHASING LESS PLASTIC

Spartech Industries, Inc. recycled more than 2.3 million pounds of plastic recovered from both internal sources and trim materials purchased back from customers to realize an annual savings of \$1.15 million in purchasing costs.

### COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Virco Mfg. Corporation launched a "Cash for Cardboard" program. Virco collects, bales, and sells corrugated cardboard from 27 local schools, ships it to a recycling company, and donates the proceeds back to the schools. In one year, more than \$45,000 in proceeds were returned back to the schools.

can provide tips for conducting a waste audit to characterize waste streams and identify waste reduction options. A waste audit is not expensive or time-consuming and will likely save you money in the long run.

2. **Plan your program and set goals.** The WasteWise Technical Assistance Team will help you identify waste reduction opportunities and help you set achievable goals in the three key areas:
  - Waste prevention
  - Recycling
  - Buying and/or manufacturing recycled-content products
3. **Develop an employee education campaign.** Employee involvement will help you develop an employee education campaign to increase participation and awareness.
4. **Track and measure your waste reduction results.** Knowing how far you have come will help you assess your efforts and plan your next steps. WasteWise will provide resources for calculating waste reduction results and determining the environmental and economic benefits of your program.

“Helping employees understand that their behaviors do have an impact on the environment has helped us meet our goals to reduce waste, while making government more efficient.”

— RON SIMS, KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

## What Does the WasteWise Endorser Program Entail?

EPA launched the WasteWise endorser program to help spread the WasteWise message to more organizations. Endorsers are state and local government agencies, trade associations, nonprofit organizations, and businesses that help their members, constituents, or customers realize that reducing solid waste makes good business sense. WasteWise endorsers commit to recruiting organizations to become WasteWise partners and providing members with ongoing promotional or technical information.



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