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HOW TO ACHIEVE ZERO WASTE IN WHISTLER RESTAURANTS

Background

This guide was produced with input from local restaurants and industry leaders to help share best practices and overcome challenges associated with achieving zero waste within restaurants located in Whistler, British Columbia.

This guide has been developed by the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE) and the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW).

Using this Guide

This guide provides practical solutions to help Whistler food service businesses keep recyclable and organic materials out of the waste destined for landfill. In addition, the guide provides tools and techniques to reduce the overall amount of waste being generated.

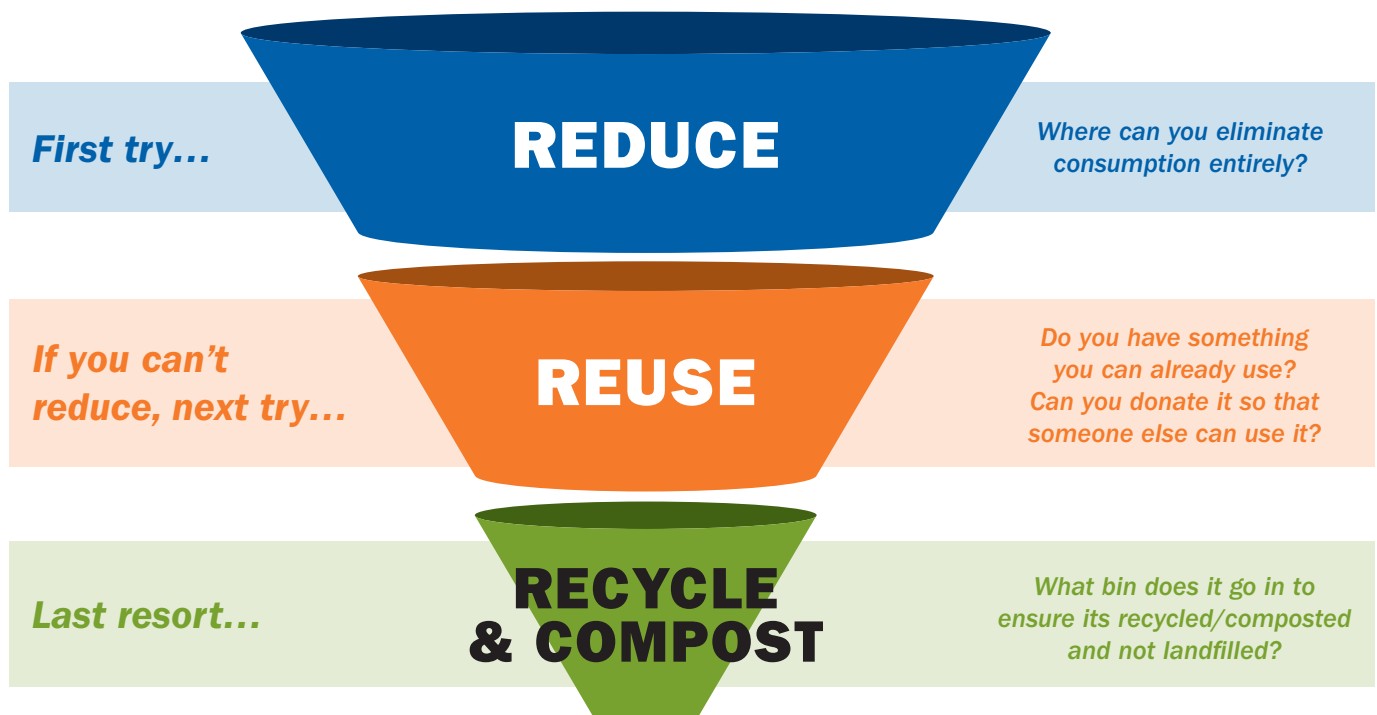
Table of Contents

3	The Zero Waste Strategy
4	Section 1: The Business Case
8	Section 2: Identifying Opportunities
16	Section 3: Signage, Bins and Waste Management Rooms
22	Section 4: Training and Operations
31	Section 5: Sustainable Purchasing
35	Section 6: The Highlight Reel
40	References

THE ZERO WASTE STRATEGY

Having a zero-waste strategy with effective programs is one of the best ways to demonstrate to your guests and employees that sustainability is a priority for your company. After energy consumption, waste is the food service industry's largest environmental impact. Unlike heating or other back of house systems you manage, waste is something that your guests and staff can interact with directly, so choosing sustainable packaging and a good sorting system can go a long way in leaving a lasting impression.

When planning zero waste programs and changes to operations, think back to the 3R's and use them to help prioritize your options.



Try to reduce the number of materials you are consuming first!
Reusing and recycling are only there if reduction is not an option.



SECTION 1:

THE BUSINESS CASE

With concerns surrounding climate change growing and consumer spending trending towards brands with strong environmental commitments, sustainability is no longer just a nice idea, rather it is essential to remain competitive in today's marketplace.

Having strong sustainability commitments demonstrates to customers that you understand the footprint your company has on the natural world and that you take people and the planet into consideration when making decisions.

Waste Management and the triple bottom line

PROFITS

There are many financial benefits of adopting a zero-waste strategy within your business, through direct savings, indirect savings and added value.

Direct savings

- ✓ Waste collection fees (fewer pick up & servicing fees)
- ✓ Waste disposal fees (tip fees)
- ✓ Savings from reduction in products purchased

Indirect savings

- ✓ Increased work satisfaction can lead to higher employee retention
- ✓ Improved brand loyalty can lead to an increase in sales

TIP FEES

Tip fees are waste disposal costs set by the municipality. You might not encounter them directly if you aren't taking your waste to the transfer station, but they are factored into the fees you pay your waste hauler for waste collection.

Recycling and organics are cheaper to dispose of than landfill waste. In addition, landfill waste that has more than 25% recyclables is charged a banned material surcharge which significantly increases the cost paid by the food service provider. Find current tip fees at whistler.ca/waste



The more you bring in, the more you have to throw out...
the best way to save money is to reduce the amount of waste produced in the first place

PEOPLE

The current marketplace is witnessing a shift in consumer behavior, where people are becoming more conscious of their environmental impact as well as the impact of the companies they choose to support. According to Restaurant Canada's 2019 Food Service Facts, Gen-Zers and Millennials, who are Canada's top two restaurant demographics, prefer doing business with companies that prioritize environmental stewardship and social responsibility. (Restaurants Canada Research, 2019)

Moreover, these values are now affecting the workforce, and companies that have ambitious social and environmental agendas are better equipped to attract and retain employees. According to a US study by Cone Communications, 64% of millennials consider a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work. (Cone Communications, 2016)

PLANET

When food waste or other organic materials end up in a landfill, they take decades to decompose and during that time release methane into the atmosphere as a greenhouse gas that is about 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

Getting food waste out of the landfill bin and into the organics bin can have a huge impact on the environment. Sending food waste to composting facilities instead 'closes the loop' by turning food waste into compost. Compost can be added to soil to increase nutrient value leading to better plant health and crop yields. In Whistler, food scrap organics generated by the community are processed at Sea to Sky Soils south of Pemberton.

Avoiding methane production in landfills is not the only impact that can be avoided. When we reduce the number of products we consume, we also reduce other impacts on the planet, such as the energy or water that is consumed when making those products or the emissions generated from shipping those materials to your business.



DID YOU KNOW



It is **against the law** in Whistler to **throw recycling and organics** (food scraps) **into the landfill waste bin?**

As per Solid Waste Bylaw 2139, 2017, restaurants are required to:

- ✓ Have three-stream waste collection (recycling, compost & landfill waste) and signage consistent with guidelines published by the Squamish Lillooet Regional District. [Click here for free downloadable signage](https://sldr.bc.ca/services/recycling-composting-waste-landfill/recycling/recycling-signage-colour-scheme) (sldr.bc.ca/services/recycling-composting-waste-landfill/recycling/recycling-signage-colour-scheme).
- ✓ Collect and divert all food waste & organics to compost (this is considered a contaminant when included in the landfill waste stream).
- ✓ Manage contamination of all three waste streams. This means that all items are ending up in the correct waste stream and nothing is in the bin that doesn't belong.
- ✓ Secure all wildlife attractants in wildlife proof enclosures. [Click here for Solid Waste Storage Technical Design Guidelines](https://whistler.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/RMOW-Solid-Waste-Storage-Technical-Design-Guidelines.pdf) (whistler.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/RMOW-Solid-Waste-Storage-Technical-Design-Guidelines.pdf)



Fines up to \$2000 may be issued for noncompliance of any of the above actions.



Photo credit: Warren Zelman

Top zero waste 'business' practices for Whistler restaurants



Establish zero waste store policies & goals for your restaurant



Demonstrate your organization's efforts to employees by providing them with training/ information and involving them in the process (sorting & tracking)



Demonstrate your organizations zero waste efforts to the public by tracking your waste flows and reporting out/communicating your results via websites, in-store signage and conversations with staff.



SECTION 2:

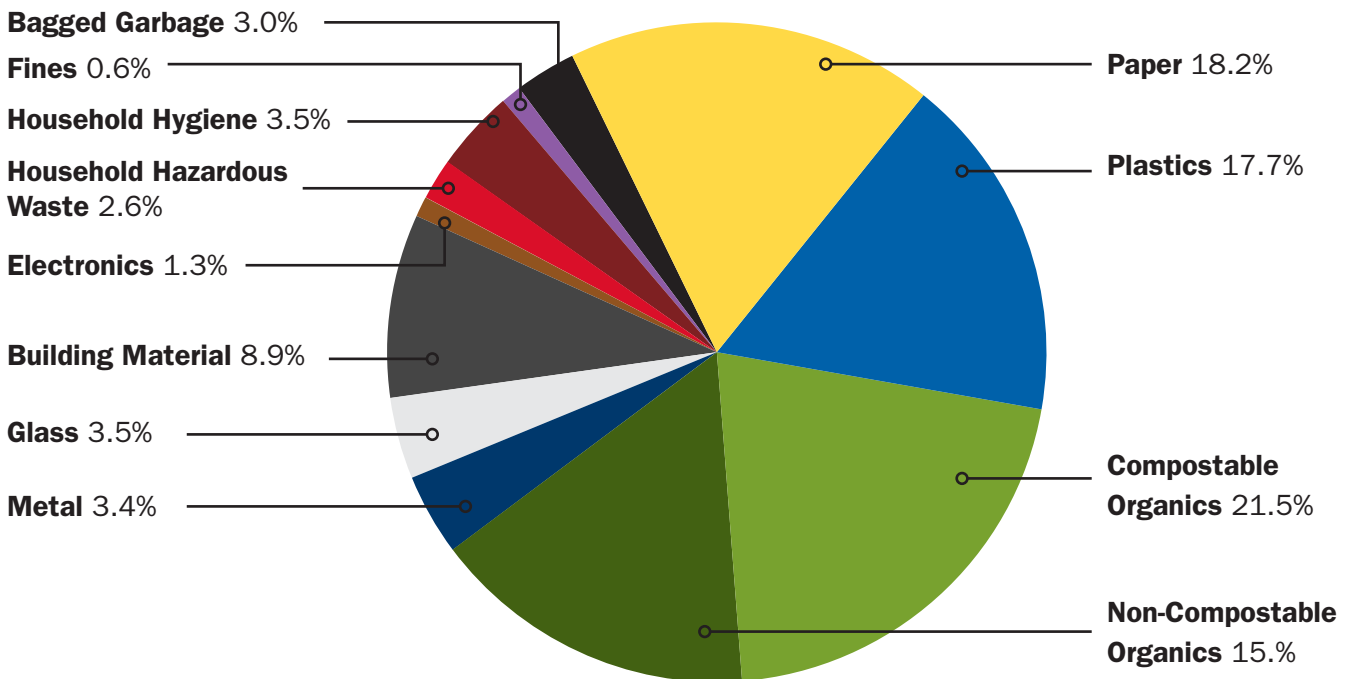
IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES

Diversion Opportunities in Whistler

From data collected and audits performed in Whistler in 2022 we know that:

- ✓ Whistler's Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Sector (ICI) sector is currently diverting about 32% of their recycling away from landfill.
- ✓ Whistler's ICI sector can divert more than 59% of their waste to recycling and composting.
- ✓ The remaining 41% of waste residual that must be landfilled requires a change in product purchasing to reduce that amount.
- ✓ These numbers are from the entirety of the ICI sector in Whistler, but we do have examples of restaurants exceeding diversion rates of 90%.

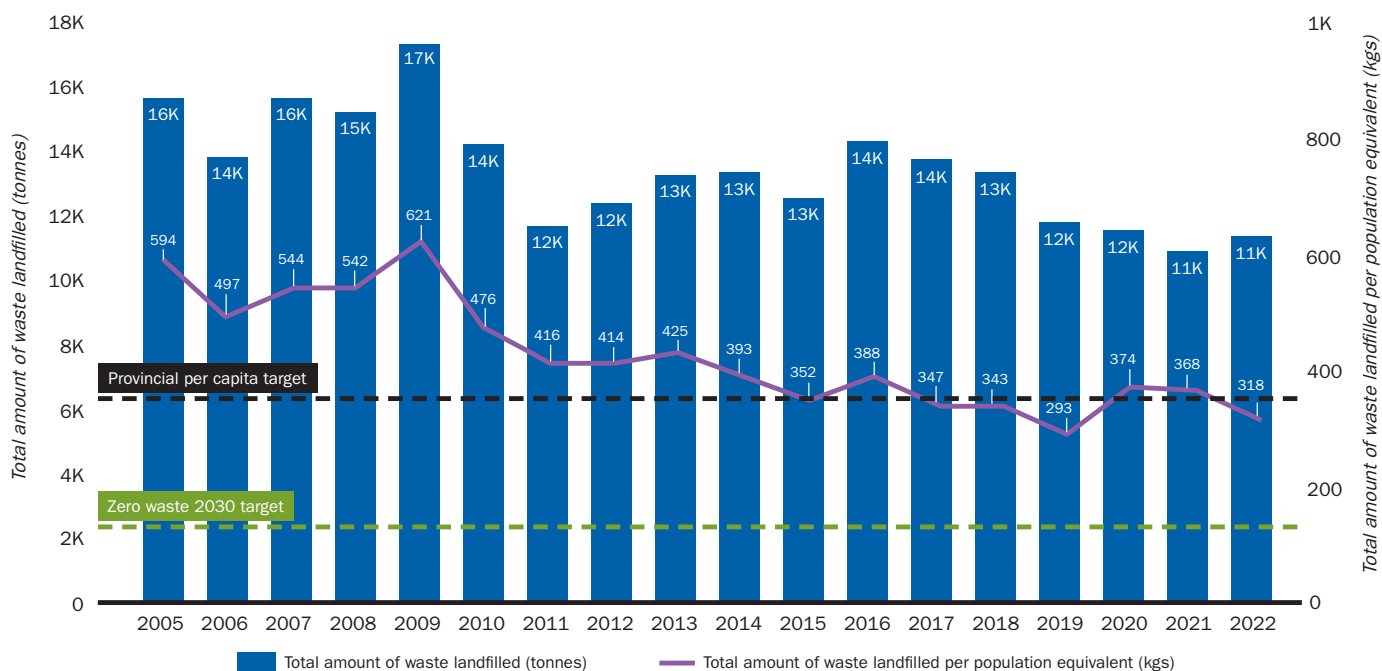
ICI Waste Composition in Whistler



How much is sent to landfill every year?

In 2022, Whistler sent 11,432 tonnes of waste to the landfill. Based on the composition audit approximately 16% or 1,830 tonnes of this were compostable organics from the ICI sector. Getting to zero waste is tough because regardless of population size or number of tourists we still need to reduce the amount of waste we are generating as a community. Whistler has a goal to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill by 80% by 2030 and composting represents our opportunity to achieve this.

Total amount of waste landfilled (tonnes)



Source: RMOW

THE FIRST STEP TO IMPROVED WASTE MANAGEMENT

Understanding where and how waste is generated within your organization is the first step towards identifying opportunities for improvement.

The scope of an initial review and the ongoing monitoring of waste will depend on available budgets and staff resources to complete the work. Waste reviews can be as simple as routinely observing what materials are ending up in landfill waste, compost and recycling containers and whether those materials have been placed into the correct container. Understanding the quantity and nature of how or why waste was generated will help to uncover where necessary changes need to be made in existing waste management policies and operating practices.

Through investigations and audits you can determine:



What is your current diversion rate?

This will help you estimate what materials can come out of your landfill bin and be sent to recycling or composting

$$\text{Diversion rate} = \left(\frac{\text{Recyclables} + \text{Organics}}{\text{Recyclables} + \text{Organics} + \text{Garbage}} \right) \times 100$$



How many kilograms of waste is your restaurant sending to the landfill every year?

This will help demonstrate all efforts to reduce landfill waste when you compare year over year.

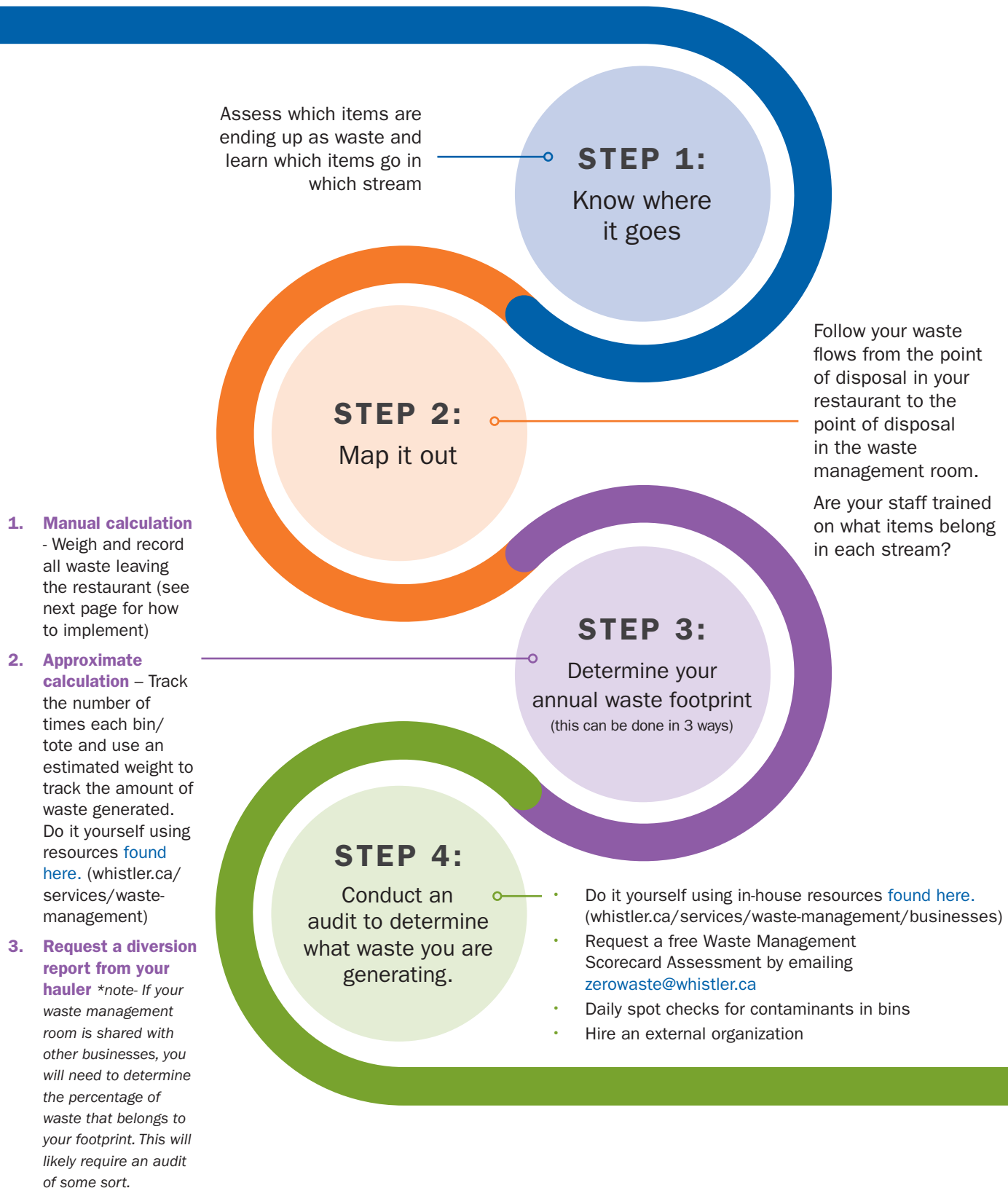


Aiming to achieve a 90 – 100% diversion rate will help you reduce your annual kilograms to landfill waste by sending materials to their appropriate streams.

Diversion is just a means to achieve the ultimate goal which should always be to REDUCE your business' annual kilograms to landfill.

STEPS FOR IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES

– WHERE ARE YOU AT



WEIGH IT ON THE WAY OUT!

TIME TO REIMAGINE 'TAKING OUT THE TRASH'

The challenge

You want to know how much waste your company produces in a year but you're not sure how to figure this out? You were thinking you could get some metrics from your hauler, but then you realized there are two other stores and an apartment complex that you share your waste management room with. You tried getting staff to pile up the garbage and weigh it at the end of the day, but it was adding an extra hour of labor to your daily costs. What should you do?

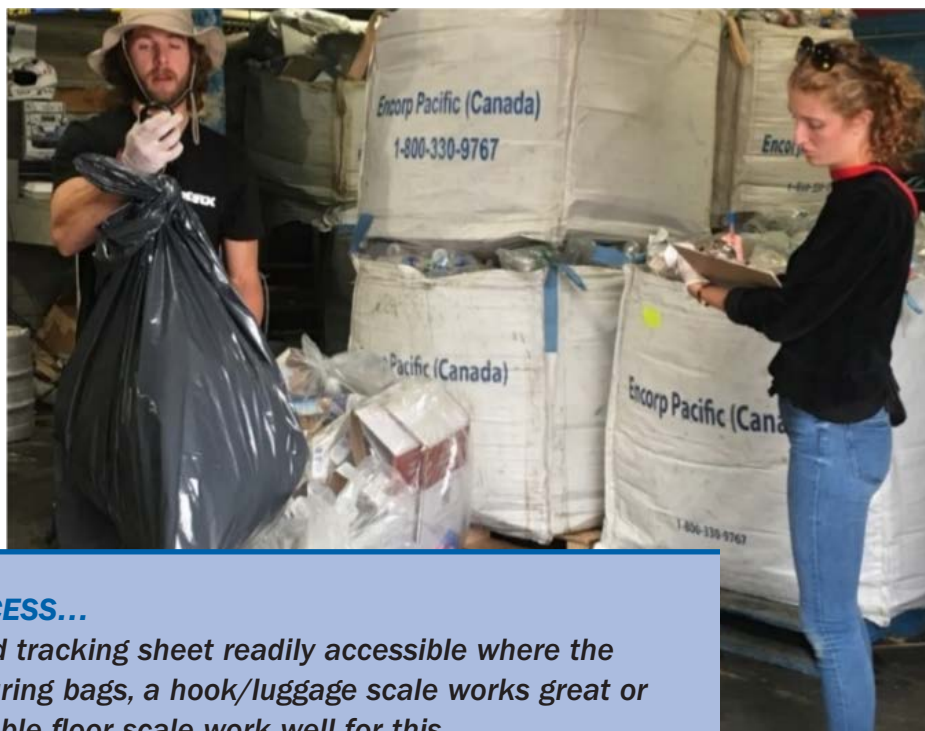
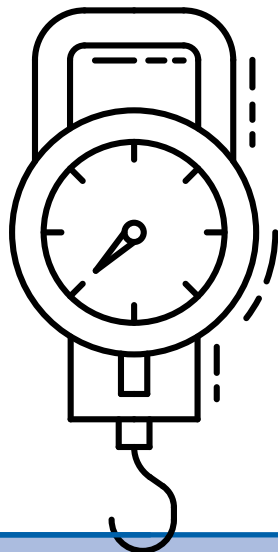
The solution

Weigh it as you go! It may seem like a big ask at first, but once you've trained your staff, it adds very minimal labour time to your garbage run.

Train staff to quickly weigh each bag and record the weight under the corresponding stream on a tracking sheet. This is more efficient than weighing everything at the end of the day because you avoid moving the waste twice!

"It really doesn't take any extra time, we worked out it took 11 seconds extra for a person who took down a garbage bag, which is a small price to pay for the feedback that you get. Super easy to implement and gives you real data that you can work with."

- Harvey Upton, Head Chef,
Glacier Creek



SET YOUR STAFF UP FOR SUCCESS...

Make sure you have a scale and tracking sheet readily accessible where the trash gets taken out. For measuring bags, a hook/luggage scale works great or if measuring totes, then a portable floor scale work well for this.

STEPS FOR IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES

– WHERE ARE YOU GOING

Once you have assessed where you are at, it is time to strategize where you are going

1. What are your top priorities? (Identifying opportunities)
2. What infrastructure will you need to be successful (Signage, bins and waste management rooms)
3. What will you need to do to get others onboard? (The business case & training and operations)
4. What do you need to change to meet your waste reduction goals? (Sustainable purchasing)

With this information, you can create a tailored waste management plan that meets the needs of your business.



Photo: Mike Crane

Top Zero Waste 'Identifying Opportunities' practices for Whistler Restaurants

- ☒ Weigh & record all waste leaving the restaurant. Add this as a quick task whenever employees perform a waste management room run (a luggage scale & clipboard next to bins works great for this)
- ☒ Track all food waste/food loss
- ☒ Have someone do a quick daily visual inspection of bins to look for contaminants & provide feedback to staff
- ☒ Determine how much waste your restaurant produces annually, and your current diversion rate

Whistler Blackcomb

Initiative Overview

Whistler Blackcomb has set a goal of achieving zero waste to landfill by 2030 as part of their broader Commitment to Zero program. To achieve this, every restaurant has a sorting station where food scraps and recyclables are separated from landfill waste. In fact, each sorting station has at least 6 different waste streams to ensure maximum diversion. Every bag is weighed, and the data entered into a tracker, providing accurate waste diversion data. The weekly diversion rate is communicated to staff and is linked to performance reviews.

Challenges Faced

The seasonal nature of Whistler Blackcomb's business and workforce is their biggest challenge in waste management. To overcome this, the organization includes information about waste management in their employee app, uses clear and detailed signage, frequently talks about waste management in pre-shift meetings, and has an Environment Representative in each area of their operations.

Biggest Success

Setting a waste diversion goal has been successful in engaging staff and helping them to understand the importance of waste diversion and reduction. Staff now view recycling and composting as an integral part of their job instead of just something that is nice to do. The Merlin's restaurant at Whistler Blackcomb has become the best performing restaurant for waste diversion, moving from diverting 91% in December to 96% in February.

Key Takeaways

The importance of setting waste reduction goals and tracking the amount and types of waste generated cannot be overstated. Without having goals and data, it is impossible to know where improvement is needed and whether the restaurant is moving in the right direction. Furthermore, senior management leadership is crucial in changing the culture of the restaurant and providing accountability to each staff member.



SECTION 3:

SIGNAGE, BINS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT ROOMS

Waste sorting areas should be convenient, simple to use, and intuitive in order to maximize recycling and minimize contamination. Think about the way staff and customers ‘flow’ through the business and ensure waste-sorting stations can be seen, easily accessed and used correctly.

Signage



Installing **standardized signage** saves time and is helpful for both staff and customers because they only need to learn one system to be successful at home, at work and in the community.

Below is the colour scheme for waste signage throughout the Sea to Sky corridor and Metro Vancouver.



Click here to download Whistler specific, free signage

(slrd.bc.ca/services/recycling-composting-waste-landfill/recycling/recycling-signage-colour-scheme)

Signage Tips

Making signage clear, coloured, and visible from a distance has proven to decrease contamination as people think about which bin to throw their trash in as they're walking up to it.

- ✓ Full coloured background
- ✓ Image based
- ✓ Font size (visible from 20ft)
- ✓ Less is more (focus on collecting the top 2-3 items rather than all the different items)
- ✓ Keep signage requesting an ACTION separate from signage meant to EDUCATE (otherwise the messages get mixed, and both lose their effectiveness!)
- ✓ Use vocabulary guests are familiar with.
E.g. Instead of Compost use "Food & Napkins" or instead of Refundables use "Bottles & Cans"

Bins

Restaurants can be incredibly fast-paced environments, so it's imperative that bin set-ups are strategically placed to maximize sorting potential. Staff need to be able to sort 'on-the-fly' without any inconvenience to regular operations.

Sort it on the line

1. Look at all the places where waste is collected
2. Determine what are the most common items in that bin (hint: it's often food scraps)
3. If you're only using one large landfill waste bin at each location, consider using several smaller bins to collect each waste type separately. (Less volume per bin but more bin options = the same amount of volume as one large bin)
4. Make it organized and easy on staff when they need to take this waste down to the larger waste collection room
5. Require staff to sort as they go (this will become second nature faster than you think!)

Bin size is important

Choosing an appropriate bin size is often overlooked, with people often opting for the largest bins. Bags need to be changed often, regardless of fullness, to avoid the buildup of smells and pests. Larger bins mean larger bags which means significantly more plastic is being consumed to make the larger bags.

If you halve the size of your bin, you can half your plastic consumption just by buying smaller bags.

Better yet, eliminating the use of bags when they are not needed reduces plastic consumption by 100%!

Public or private

Your signage for public facing bins may differ slightly from the signage for your back of house bins in the amount of content on them. Signage for guests should be clear and simple, but signage for staff might require more specific content since they will be utilized as a training tool.

"Sorting on the line can seem daunting but once you have the tools in place it's a no brainer, it actually saves you time and it's better for the environment as you divert more from the landfill."

- Harvey Upton, Head Chef,
Glacier Creek



The Ideal Bin Set-Up

Bins should always be placed together and in the same order to encourage sorting

Remove all public facing bins to ensure you retain control over sorting.

In Back of House Areas:



All streams where applicable



One "main" collection zone with all streams



Waste Management Rooms

Something that is surprisingly more common than you would expect is staff throwing bags of recycling or food waste into the wrong bin in the waste management room. This is typically a mistake due to confusion and a gap in training.

Make sure staff are given a tour of the main waste collection room during onboarding and trained on where everything should go.

When inspecting the main waste collection room(s), consider the following:



Are bins clearly identified?



Are bins accessible?



Is the area clean with no bins overflowing? Well lit?



Are your wildlife attractants secured?

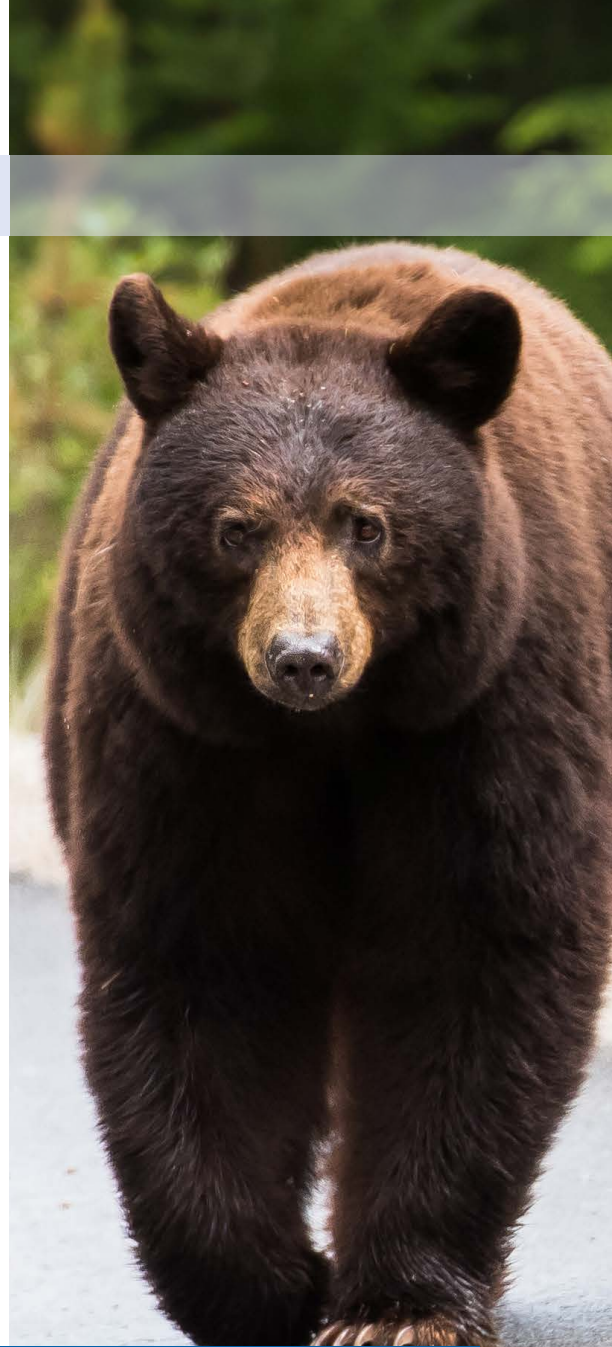
If you feel that your waste management room does not meet these standards, contact your strata manager to voice your concerns and be part of the solution to improve the collection space.

Wildlife Attractants

Whistler's Solid Waste Bylaw requires all properties and businesses to put all landfill waste, organics and recycling in wildlife-proof containers or enclosures.

The following items are all considered wildlife attractants:

- Grease, oil, fats
- All waste streams
- Citronella, bird seed, pet food
- Vinyl & petroleum products
- Natural fertilizers
- Salt & mineral products



Top Zero Waste 'Signage, Bins & Waste Management Room' Practices in Whistler Restaurants

- ☒ All bins are clearly labelled with signage and placed together to maximize sorting potential
- ☒ Remove all public bins
- ☒ Create a centralized waste station with all streams somewhere in the BOH
- ☒ Replace single-stream line bins with smaller multi-stream bins so staff can sort on the fly
- ☒ Ensure the waste management room is well lit and bins are clearly labelled
- ☒ Include a waste management room tour during the onboarding process of staff and ensure what goes where is clearly pointed out

Fairmont

Initiative

The Fairmont implemented an initiative to improve their waste management practices by relabeling bins and creating new signage in their back of house areas. The goal was to increase recycling by changing the signage and ensuring that all staff knew which items should go in each bin.

Customized Signage Design and Creation

To create the new signage, the Fairmont used the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District's (SLRD) Do-It-Yourself signage colours and included pictures of items used in their restaurants, such as a carton of the apple juice they serve, instead of generic pictures. This was a deliberate decision to make the signage more relevant and relatable to staff, thereby increasing the chances of them adhering to the signage.

To ensure that the new signage would effectively convey the intended message, staff were asked for their input on what items they wanted to see on the signs and what items they commonly saw being placed in the wrong bin. This participatory approach to signage creation proved to be very effective in ensuring staff buy-in and compliance.

Training and Education of Staff

The new signage alone was not enough to achieve the desired improvement in recycling rates. The Fairmont found that staff education and training were essential components of the initiative. This was particularly challenging given the high staff turnover in the hospitality industry and the difficulty in finding the time to train staff.

To address these challenges, the Fairmont's sustainability representative tried to have a meeting with the whole team when the signage was changed to explain the initiative and the importance of sorting items correctly. If this wasn't possible, the manager in each department became responsible for training staff on waste management. The Fairmont also found that having an Environment Representative in each area of their operations was beneficial so people could ask where an item belongs if they didn't know.

Results and Impact of the Initiative

The Fairmont's initiative to relabel bins and create new signage in their back of house areas was highly successful in improving waste management practices. Staff compliance with the new signage, coupled with training and education, resulted in a significant improvement in recycling rates.

The success of the initiative was evident from the reduction in the amount of waste that was sent to the landfill. The Fairmont was able to divert a significant amount of waste from the landfill.

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned

The Fairmont's initiative to improve waste management practices through customized signage and staff training provides valuable lessons for businesses looking to do the same.

First, businesses should involve staff in the signage creation process to increase staff buy-in and compliance. Second, staff education and training are essential components of any waste management initiative. Lastly, having an Environment Representative in each area of operations can be beneficial in helping staff sort waste items correctly.

SECTION 4:

TRAINING AND OPERATIONS





Change Management

Change is inevitable when rolling out new zero waste strategies as their purpose is to challenge the status quo and encourage innovative solutions to existing problems. But change isn't always embraced, rather it's often met with resistance because of the unknown.

Having a waste management plan and talking about that plan with the employees can go a long way in easing tensions. Better yet build a waste management plan with the employees to get their input and buy in. Remember to always take into consideration how the changes you are proposing will affect people's day-to-day routines and set your plan up for success by involving staff at all levels.

Training

It's important to educate your employees about the company's waste management goals and other sustainability initiatives because when employees understand how their actions are having a positive impact both locally and globally, it leads to increased participation in programs, less push back to changes in operations, and better overall workplace satisfaction.

Ideas for incorporating effective waste management into staff training programs.

- ✓ Include information in your **staff training manual**
- ✓ Talk about effective waste management at **staff meetings**
 - Include a zero-waste tip of the day in pre-shift meetings/ daily communications
 - Include zero waste best practices as a standing agenda item for recurring meetings
 - Invite inspiring guest speakers from the community to speak your team. Email zerowaste@whistler.ca for topics or ideas on who could come and speak to the staff.
- ✓ **Report cards**
 - Have a staff member track what waste is being generated
 - Take photos of your waste so that you can discuss how to reduce the type of waste with others.
 - Take photos of your bins and note what visible contaminants you see. Are they from your business or from someone else's in the building. If it's someone else's reach out to them through your strata agent to talk about how some simple changes could make things better for everyone.
 - Summarize every year how you did compared to the last time you audited your waste. Are you diverting more or is the problem getting worse?
- ✓ **Lunch & learns** – research and share new best practices.
- ✓ **Social media posts**
- ✓ **Emails & notice boards**
- ✓ **Challenges**
 - 30-day garbage challenge
 - Garbage games like bin-it-to-win-it
- ✓ **Daily checklists**
 - Think of safety checklists that exist and how you might make similar ones for waste/ sustainability

Report Cards

Feedback is incredibly powerful when it comes to changing behavior because you can't change what you don't know. Utilizing a simple report card system can be a great way to track efforts and train staff by providing continuous feedback on how well they are sorting their waste. Have a staff member take 15 minutes once per week, bi-weekly or monthly to take some photos of your bins and make comments on any visible contaminants.

Waste Report Card

Bin location:

Date:

Auditor:

COMPOST



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

CONTAINERS



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

MIXED PAPER



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

MIXED PAPER



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

FLEXIBLE PLASTICS



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

GLASS



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

LANDFILL



Enter comments on any visible contaminants.

Common Sorting Mistakes

Consider turning these points into a multi-week 'training tips' campaign and focus on educating staff one point at a time to avoid overwhelming them with too much information all at once.

Bags

Ensure staff are trained on what types of bags to use in each bin (simple mistake that can undermine everyone efforts)

- ✓ Green compost bags in compost bins
- ✓ Clear bags for recycling. It makes it easier to see if someone placed incorrect materials in the bin
- ✓ Clear bags for landfill waste. It makes it easier to see if someone placed incorrect materials in the bin

Recycling

- ✓ Rinse all containers - dirty containers are a health and safety hazard for the recyclers and interferes with the chemical recycling process that turns your items into something new
- ✓ Paper towel & napkins are compost not paper recycling
- ✓ Paper products covered in oil or grease such as a pizza box are compost not paper recycling
- ✓ Compostable plastics can only be composted not recycled

Compost

- ✓ Use only certified compostable containers (look for BPI certification or ASTM 6400 on the label)
- ✓ Biodegradable products are NOT the same as compostable products. Biodegradable products are landfill waste



Contamination means that there is an item in your waste stream that shouldn't be there.

This can mean organics in your landfill waste bin or landfill waste in your organics bin. It is important to manage contamination as it makes the recycling and compost process very difficult.

Operations

When it comes to rolling out an initiative that requires an element of behavioral change, it's the small details that matter. Things such as the right messaging at the right time, bin placements, prompts and staff training can all play a factor in how well an initiative is received and whether it is a success or failure.

It is important to take into consideration all the daily routines that will be affected by a change in standard operating procedures. A simple acknowledgment that you understand the challenges associated with any proposed change can go a long way in gaining buy-in from your staff or other affected stakeholders. Each position has different requirements so think through how you will incorporate zero waste into your operations.

IDEAS FOR INCORPORATING A ZERO-WASTE PHILOSOPHY INTO OPERATIONS

Owners/Upper Management

- Develop a solid waste management plan that aligns with your corporate sustainability goals
- Set a clearly defined zero waste goal for the restaurant (remember to include an achieve by date)
- Tie performance towards zero waste initiatives to employee goals & objectives
- Allocate a budget for implementing the plan which should include training to educate staff
- Go digital
 - Provide a tablet for taking inventory/ receiving orders
 - Digital system for customer orders / kitchen
 - Digital receipts for customers (most paper receipts actually contain plastics that are not currently recyclable)
- Create a Zero Waste Rep/ Sustainability Champion (like a safety rep)
- Create a single-use items policy and move towards using reusables
 - No takeaway containers or all certified compostable containers
 - Straws only upon request
- Switch to LED lighting to reduce maintenance costs and the number of units used over time (old lights can be recycled at [Nesters Depot](#))
- Utilize digital menus via QR codes and minimize number of printed menus
 - When printing use recycled content cardstock that can be recycled
 - Track left over menus each year and adjust orders accordingly, or better yet, avoiding dating your menu to improve longevity
 - Remember to highlight your sustainability initiatives throughout your menus to provide conversation starters for your staff

Head Chef & Sous Chef

- Ensure back of house waste systems are in place to sort on the line
- Create menus based on locally sourced foods (think seasonal)
- Offer vegan & vegetarian options
- Repurpose offcuts, trimmings, drippings and other by-products
 - Make stock out of vegetable trimmings
 - Purees & sauces from drippings
 - Croutons from bread ends
- Train staff to maximize use of ingredients
 - Utilize correct methods for slicing, dicing, peeling, butchering
- Track food waste and adjust prep volumes accordingly
 - Spoilage and portion sizes
- Place smaller portions out for buffets so that the majority of food can be safely stored in the back of house and donated if not used
 - Donate any edible food to the [WCSS Food Bank](#)

Supervisors

- Ensure all employees have had a thorough waste management room tour and are aware of what goes where
- Create a centralized collection zone for waste in the back of house where all streams are offered based on the flow of operations
 - Redesign dish washer area so that bussers and dishwasher staff can compost all uneaten food waste still left on the plates
- Perform a quick visual inspection of bins daily to look for contaminants & provide feedback to staff
- Implement a system for weighing and recording all waste leaving the restaurant. Add this as a quick task whenever employees perform a waste management room run (a luggage scale & clipboard next to bins works great for this)
- Create a space at staff meetings for sustainability feedback and ideas
- Set the office printer default to double-sided
- Purchase BPS & BPA free thermal paper for receipts so that it can be recycled
- Highlight sustainability initiatives on digital marketing platforms such as the website or social media
- Ensure staff are aware of any sustainability initiatives and encourage them to talk about them with customers when an opportunity arises
- During buffets, encourage servers to tell diners that the norm is to not take too much and that it is more than OK to return for seconds (this can reduce waste by up to 20%)
- Donate any useable items
- Makes sure bins are regularly cleaned to minimize odours

Front of House Staff

- Sort waste on the fly when bussing and throughout daily operations
- Weigh & record all waste leaving the restaurant when performing a run to the main waste collection room
- Encourage guests to access menu via QR codes to minimize use of printed menus
- Understand restaurant's sustainability initiatives and talk about them with customers whenever an opportunity arises
 - Provide speaking points for staff based on your clientele such as 'we only offer straws if they're requested as we're trying to reduce our impact on the environment'
- Start with one serviette per person on the table rather than a stack to avoid waste (you can always provide more upon request)

Back of House Staff

- Sort on the line
 - Repurpose 10L pails to sort materials on the fly during service
- Compost all food waste during prep
 - Remove stickers from fruits and vegetables during prep to avoid plastic being placed in organics bin
- Weigh and record all waste leaving the restaurant when performing a run to the main waste collection room.

Top Zero Waste Operations based on your role and Training Practices in Whistler Restaurants



Owners / Upper Management:

- Allocate a budget for training, signage & bins
- Tie performance of zero waste results to employee goals & objectives
- Go digital wherever possible
- Create a restaurant policy surrounding single-use disposables



Head Chef & Sous Chefs:

- Set up systems on the line to sort on the fly during service
- Create locally sourced, seasonal menus with Vegetarian & Vegan options



Supervisors:

- Implement a tracking system for weighing and recording waste during waste runs
- Ensure staff are trained on how to sort properly and provide consistent feedback on successes / opportunities for improvement



Front of House & Back of House:

- Sort on the fly and compost all food waste
- Weigh and track all waste when performing a waste run

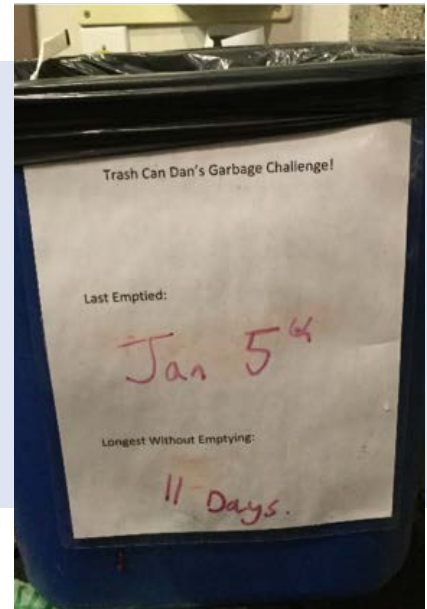
Case Studies

Here are some examples of innovative ways to integrate garbage sorting into training and nudge behavioral changes amongst your staff.

Challenge staff to see how many days they can go without emptying the landfill bin!

This high-end restaurant's record is 16 days for a small bin (front of house waste, not including kitchen) ...think you can beat that?!

If you're sorting everything right, there shouldn't be anything in this bin that attracts rodents or pests.



Team building exercise

Teams that train together, succeed together... so it must hold true for waste too.

It only takes one pre-shift meeting spent re-sorting waste to ensure that people pay attention to where they throw their waste going forward!



Garbage Sorting Challenges

Play a garbage sorting game at your next staff meeting! Challenge staff to sort a tray of waste and see who can get the best time, or better yet, have them face off tournament style!

Even without the element of competition, this is a great learning experience as people take a moment to stop and read the signage. Consider including it as part of staff-onboarding for new hires.





SECTION 5:

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING

Sustainable purchasing is good for both the planet and the company's bottom line. When you reduce the amount you purchase, you immediately see financial savings as well as reducing all the impacts that would have been associated with the production of that product.

It's a good idea to track any savings from reducing the amounts you buy, then use that found budget to fund other projects. For example, switching to a 'straws only on request' policy, you will reduce your annual expenditure on straws. These savings can be applied towards the purchase of more expensive compostable alternatives for the smaller amount that you may require.

Questions to think about for smart purchasing

- ✓ Is this product necessary?
- ✓ Can it be bought in bulk?
- ✓ What is it made from? Does it contain recycled content?
- ✓ Where does it go once it's disposed of? Can it be re-used, re-manufactured or recycled?
- ✓ How far does it have to travel to get to you?
- ✓ Can you work with suppliers to eliminate or reduce packaging?
- ✓ Has it received any type of environmental certification or ecolabelling?
- ✓ What aspects might harm the environment as a result of the production of this product?

EXAMPLES OF SMART PURCHASING

Look for opportunities to buy in bulk

- Buy and use dispenser beverages in concentrate or bulk form
- Use refillable condiment bottles that can be restocked with bulk purchased condiments
- Use washable ramekins and bulk purchased condiments for sides of butter, jam, peanut butter, ketchup, salad dressing, etc.
- Avoid pre-portioned individually packaged products

Choose sustainable products

- Use reusable coasters instead of paper napkins when serving beverages
- Use high efficiency hand dryers instead of paper towel in your washrooms. Paper towel can be composted but is bulky and can fill bins quickly
- Use concentrated cleaning products – don't pay for the water added to a product
- Package take away food in tinfoil or compostable packaging – avoid plastic and Styrofoam materials

Move to reusables and avoid single-use items

- Distribute condiments, cutlery and accessories from behind the counter instead of offering them self-serve
- Move to an 'on request' model for straws
- Move to an 'on request' model for takeaway coffee cups and use reusable coffee cups first



Remember, always keep the zero-waste core strategy at the forefront of your mind when making purchasing decisions.

Top priority – reduce the purchases you make/products you consume

Secondary priority – reuse (redistribute) items you already have

Last priority – choose products that can be recycled or composted







Are compostable plastics the solution?

Compostable plastics are made from renewable sources, unlike traditional plastics which are made from oil, but they still generate a lot of emissions through the manufacturing and shipping process. In addition, compostable plastics can be very difficult for consumers to recognize, and they can often end up in the landfill or recycling bin. Compostable plastics can't be recycled and are considered a contaminant in this waste stream, and they can take hundreds of years to decompose if they end up in a landfill.

If your business uses compostable plastics, make sure that they are certified and that they end up in the compost bin! Compostable fibreware is a better option as consumers are more likely to recognize the product is compostable. The nice thing about using compostables in Whistler is that we have a local compost facility that can process that material, unlike plastics it doesn't need to go down to the city.

IS IT A **CERTIFIED** COMPOSTABLE PLASTIC?

If it looks like it contains plastic, it must be a certified "bio-plastic" to be safe for soils.

✓ Products that appear to contain plastic must be certified compostable by the following certifications:	✗ These do NOT mean compostable:
 COMPOSTABLE IN INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES	BIODEGRADABLE
 COMPOSTABLE www.compostable.info	MADE WITH RECYCLED MATERIAL
	MADE FROM PLANTS
	MADE FROM PLANT STARCH
	OXO-DEGRADABLE
Must have letters PLA	NATURAL
ASTM D6400	BIO
ASTM D6868	ECO
	ECO-FRIENDLY
	EARTH-FRIENDLY
	GREEN
	CERTIFIED GREEN
	 Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment

Top Zero Waste Sustainable Purchasing Practices in Whistler Restaurants

- ✓ Buy in bulk to reduce waste from packaging
- ✓ Choose green (see definition throughout section)
- ✓ Favor purchasing products that are locally sourced & seasonally produced
- ✓ Favor purchasing products that have an environmental or social certification (FairTrade, Oceanwise, Rainforest Alliance, FSC, Organic, Free Range, ASTM 6400, Energy Star)
- ✓ Avoid items that must be landfilled

CASE STUDY

BReD

Initiative

BReD is committed to reducing food waste by sourcing ingredients locally and buying second grade produce that grocery stores won't accept. By purchasing locally sourced ingredients, BReD aims to reduce the distance the food travels, which means less risk of spoilage and fresher and better quality produce. Additionally, buying second-grade produce helps reduce food waste by giving farmers a market for produce that would otherwise go unsold.

Biggest Challenge

One of the biggest challenges faced by BReD is working with farmers who sell at markets. Farmers often save their best produce for these markets and may not have enough to sell in bulk to wholesale customers like BReD. Therefore, BReD has to stay in close communication with the farmers to ensure they don't miss out on any interesting fruits and vegetables that are available. This requires a significant amount of effort on the part of BReD to continually check in with farmers and build relationships with them.

Biggest Success

BReD's Pemberton carrot cake is a prime example of the company's efforts to reduce food waste in action. The cake is made with larger carrots that are only available later in the year, as the carrots need to be big enough to grate. Once the carrots are done, BReD could source them from abroad, but doing so would not be sustainable. Instead of making the same cake all year round, BReD switches out the carrot cake for B-grade organic fair-trade bananas. These bananas are second grade produce that grocery stores won't accept, but they are perfect for cakes. Customers rave about the Pemberton carrot cake and appreciate BReD's commitment to sustainability.

Key Takeaways

BReD highlights the importance of building relationships with local farmers to reduce food waste. It also emphasizes the need to be flexible in menu planning, as availability of produce can change quickly due to weather or other factors. Additionally, purchasing second-grade produce that grocery stores won't accept can be an effective strategy to reduce food waste.



SECTION 6:

THE HIGHLIGHT REEL

Now that you've spent some time working on a solid waste management plan, can you answer all of these questions?

Section 2

- ☐ How many tonnes of waste does your company send to the landfill every year? Are you increasing or decreasing this amount each year?
- ☐ What is your current diversion rate?

Section 3

- ☐ Which of the required streams in Whistler do you generate waste for?
- ☐ Do you have sorting systems in place to collect all the different streams of waste you produce in all the areas they are generated?
- ☐ Are you using the right bags for each stream?

Section 4




- ☐ Do your staff understand how to use your sorting system?
- ☐ Is your sorting system self-explanatory?
- ☐ After you have sorted your waste in house, where does it go? Who takes it there? Are they placing it in the right bin to get recycled? Composted? Landfilled?

Section 5





- ☐ What products do you have to send to the landfill? Are there any sustainable alternatives you can replace them with?

Top zero waste practices for Whistler restaurants by section







Top zero waste 'Business' practices for Whistler restaurants

-  Establish zero waste store policies & goals for your restaurant
-  Demonstrate your organization's efforts to employees by providing them with training/information and involving them in the process (sorting & tracking)
-  Demonstrate your organizations zero waste efforts to the public by tracking your waste flows and reporting/communicating your results via websites, in-store signage and conversations with staff.




Top Zero Waste 'Identifying Opportunities' practices for Whistler Restaurants

-  Weigh & record all waste leaving the restaurant. Add this as a quick task whenever employees perform a waste management room run (a luggage scale & clipboard next to bins works great for this)
-  Track all food waste/food loss
-  Have someone do a quick daily visual inspection of bins to look for contaminants & provide feedback to staff
-  Determine how much waste your restaurant produces annually, and your current diversion rate






Top Zero Waste ‘Signage, Bins and Waste Management Room’ Practices in Whistler Restaurants

-  All bins are clearly labelled with signage and placed together to maximize sorting potential
-  Remove all public facing bins
-  Create a centralized waste station with all streams somewhere in the back of house
-  Replace single-stream line bins with smaller multi-stream bins so staff can sort on the fly
-  Ensure the waste management room is well lit and bins are clearly labelled
-  Include a waste management room tour during the onboarding process of staff and ensure what goes where is clearly pointed out

Top Zero Waste Training and Operations Practices in Whistler Restaurants

-  **Owners / Upper Management:**
 - Allocate a budget for training, signage & bins
 - Tie performance of zero waste results to employee goals & objectives
 - Go digital wherever possible
 - Create a restaurant policy surrounding single-use disposables
-  **Head Chef & Sous Chefs:**
 - Set up systems on the line to sort on the fly during service
 - Create locally sourced, seasonal menus with Vegetarian & Vegan options
-  **Supervisors:**
 - Implement a tracking system for weighing and recording waste during waste runs
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-  **Front of House & Back of House:**
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