

Dane County Facilities Management is Talking Trash in 2016:

Dane County Launches New and Improved Waste Reduction and Recycling System in County Facilities

On August 15, 2016 Facilities Management will begin rolling out a new bin and signage system to **reduce waste and improve recycling in both internal and public areas of all Dane County facilities.** (See page 4 below for schedule of informational sessions at your facility.)

For many Dane County employees, waste reduction and recycling while at work have already become a daily habit. Many of you regularly reduce your use of non-renewable or recyclable resources that go from the “trash” can to our county landfill, you limit your printing and other paper use, and you use available recycling bins for cans, plastics, paper, and other items you bring in from home or purchase at work. Some of you even compost organics such as vegetables, fruits, and coffee grounds consumed at work. There are many reasons to do this: Recycling saves money, preserves valuable resources, and helps make Dane County a more environmentally friendly and sustainable place to work and live. We realize, however, that it hasn't always been convenient for employees and the public to make the right choice when it comes to waste reduction and recycling in Dane County facilities.

After taking a close look at every facility owned by Dane County—from the Alliant Energy Center to the Zoo—**we determined we could do better to help you do better!** We also want to make it easier for the public to reduce waste and recycle while using Dane County facilities.

Waste Assessments

As part of the implementation of the [Dane County Government Sustainable Operations Plan](#), the County Board's Sustainability Coordinator and the Solid Waste Division's Special Projects and Materials Manager performed waste and recycling assessments at every county facility receiving trash and recycling pick-up under our contract with Pellitteri Waste Systems, except for the airport which has conducted its own waste audit. The purpose was to assess the types of waste being generated, the current disposal and recycling practices, and to identify potential improvements.

General observations from the assessment:

- The trash and recycling setup (bin type, signage, etc.) varies widely in each facility and in some cases within different areas in the same facility.
- There is little or no signage on the trash and recycling bins to indicate how materials are to be sorted. Despite this there appeared to be generally good separation of trash and recyclables at most facilities.
- The types of items that can be recycled have expanded over the years and the amount of separation required has decreased since recycling in county facilities was initially established. This information has not been conveyed consistently in county facilities.
- There are potential opportunities for cost savings by adjusting the size and collection frequency of the trash and recycling dumpsters at some facilities.
- We can do better!

Benefits of Reducing Waste and Improving Recycling In Dane County Facilities

It saves resources: Recycling saves valuable reusable resources and reduces the energy use and pollution associated with extracting and manufacturing virgin materials. According to U.S. EPA, about 65% of the total waste stream from a typical office building is recyclable. Another recent study indicates that about 19% (by weight) of the waste going to landfills in Wisconsin from industrial, commercial, and institutional sources is commonly recyclable materials that should have been recycled. Based on this information and the observations from the waste assessments we believe there is the potential for at least a 10 to 15% increase in the amount of material recycled from county facilities.

It reduces our carbon footprint: The U.S. EPA's Waste Reduction Model has been used to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions reductions from increased recycling at county facilities serviced by Facilities Management. If 10% of the estimated 557 tons that were disposed of in 2014 were recycled instead of landfilled, the result would be an annual greenhouse gas emissions reduction of 153 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent. That's like reducing the emissions from 32 passenger vehicles driven for one year or 17,000 gallons of gasoline.

It reduces costs: We pay for waste disposal. In many cases, recycling services often cost significantly less than landfill disposal. If we can reuse or recycle more waste we can save on waste disposal *and* we can prolong the useful life of the landfill, which is owned and operated by Dane County. Reusing more materials can also reduce county purchasing costs. Finally, if we reduce waste and revamp our collection structure, we can save money and improve service delivery by freeing up our custodial employees to do other important facilities work.

It improves our customer service: Offering our employees and the public easier opportunities for waste reduction and recycling demonstrates Dane County's commitment to environmental protection, sustainability, and fiscal responsibility. A recent statewide survey indicates that over 95% of Wisconsin residents recycle regularly. People now expect to find recycling containers wherever they travel and members of the public have inquired repeatedly about better recycling facilities in Dane County offices. Offering better waste reduction and recycling facilities is just another way to better serve Dane County customers.

We know that with a more consistent and clear waste reduction and recycling system we will put Dane County government on the path toward reducing what we send to the landfill and increasing what we recycle.

Together, We Can Make This New System a Success! Here's How:

In the coming months, Facilities Management will be outfitting all of our facilities with updated recycling stations as we implement a streamlined waste and recycling program throughout the facilities serviced by our division. As a result of this program, many of you will experience a change involving the way trash and recyclables are removed from your office or workstation area. Facilities Management will be phasing our implementation of this program into our buildings beginning on August 15, 2016, until all of our facilities see the following changes by October 31, 2016:

Facilities Management staff will be removing the plastic liners from the small black trash receptacles in your personal offices and workstations. The unlined receptacles will then become your personal mixed recycling container and should be used for the storage of all recyclable items you personally generate including paper, cans, glass, and plastics. If you have any items that cannot be recycled (such as food waste, etc.) you should dispose of these items

directly into the large black “Landfill” container at the Recycling and Trash Collection Stations located centrally throughout your department.

Under the guidelines of this new program, employees will also be responsible for emptying their personal mixed recycling container, as needed, into the large green “Mixed Recycling” container at the Collection Stations. A comprehensive list of recyclable items will be provided to all employees to be used as a reference when making the choice to recycle an item or to send it to the landfill.

Most departments will utilize the 2-Bin Collection Station, however, those departments serviced by Community Works Services will be outfitted with a 3-Bin Collection Station, which will also include a large blue “Mixed Paper” container. Additional recycling opportunities will also be provided in building lobbies and entrances for your convenience and the convenience of the public:

2-Bin Office Collection Station

**Green = Mixed
Recyclables
Black = Landfill**

3-Bin Office Collection Station

**Green = Mixed
Recyclables
Black = Landfill
Blue = Mixed Paper**

Lobby Recycling Station

**Green = Mixed
Recycling
Black = Landfill**

Outdoor Entry Recycling Station

**Green = Mixed
Recycling
Black = Landfill**



If you are interested in how this initiative will specifically affect you and would like more information, please speak with your supervisor about attending the scheduled informational session for your facility, which will be held prior to implementation of the new program in each facility.

INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

Schedule and location of brief (~20 minutes) informational sessions on this change for departments

City-County Building – Wednesday, August 10, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Room 354

Public Safety Building – Tuesday, August 30, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Conference Room 3 (Room 2103)

Dane County Courthouse – Thursday, September 15, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Assembly Room LL1000

Agricultural Extension / Land and Water Resources, Fen Oak Road - Tuesday, September 27, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Conference Room 121

Northport Human Services – Wednesday, October 5, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Conference Room 110

Dane County Job Center – Wednesday, October 12, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Ballroom (Room 16) **(Neighborhood Intervention Program, PPACA, and ADRC encouraged to attend)**

Badger Prairie Health Care Center – Wednesday, October 19, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Conference Room A

South Madison Human Services – Tuesday, October 25, 2016 @ 11 a.m. – Conference Room 117 **(Stoughton Human Services encouraged to attend)**

Your cooperation in this effort is greatly appreciated. By participating in this improved waste reduction and recycling program, you will be among the many Dane County employees to realize the multiple benefits that this comprehensive effort has to offer.

QUESTIONS?

Please direct facilities-related questions or comments to Amanda DePagter at depagter.amanda@countyofdane.com or 608/266-4350. Please direct sustainability-related questions or comments to Lisa MacKinnon at mackinnon@countyofdane.com or 608/267-1529. And, as always, you can talk to your supervisor if you have questions or comments.