

School Waste Assessment Survey

General Information

Date: _____

School District _____

School _____

Address _____

Phone and Fax _____

Principal _____

Person to contact regarding this survey _____

Students assisting with this survey _____

Teacher(s) assisting with this survey _____

Other school staff assisting with this survey _____

This information provides students the names of the people helping with this project and how to reach them. Since you and several players will be working together, it is important to give at least one lead person to contact regarding this survey. Other teachers, the principal, secretary, custodian, food service manager and others will be involved. When you or the students approach them be considerate of their time and ask when an interview would be convenient. Explain why you are conducting the survey and what information you need from them. When interviewing, be prepared and know your questions.

Building Layout and Equipment:

Number of building users (students, faculty and staff, before/after school users) _____

Total number of rooms in your school: _____

Number of: Classrooms _____ Offices _____ Kitchens/Lunchrooms _____

of printers _____ # of copiers _____ # of fax machines _____

Does fax machine use plain paper or thermal roll? _____

of soda machines _____ # of aluminum machines _____ # of plastic machines _____

Where are they located? _____

When do you plan to replace any of the machines above? _____

Who knows more about building users and rooms in the building than the secretary? Ask how many students, staff and faculty use the building daily. Remember, there may also be before and after school groups, like scouts, PTA or community groups who use the building. If they are unable to tell you how many rooms there are your team can split into groups and count. Determining the number of printers at school can be tricky. Splitting into groups is a good way to look for printers in the office and individual classrooms.

Cafeteria

Part A—Food Preparation

What types of packaging are used to deliver food to the cafeteria for preparation?

- large steel cans
- cardboard boxes
- plastic wrap/plastic shrink wrap
- other _____

How does your cafeteria dispose of the left-over cooking grease? Briefly describe how it is stored, disposed, and where it goes when it leaves your school.

Part B—Service

Meals:

- breakfast is available
- breakfast is purchased by ____% of the student body
- hot lunches are available
- hot lunches are purchased by ____% of the student body
- other(snacks, after-school food, etc.)

Trays:

- food is served on reusable trays
- food is served on polystyrene trays
- food is served on _____ (indicate type if other)

Plates, bowls, etc.:

- food is served on/in reusable plates, bowls, etc.
- food is served on/in polystyrene plates, bowls, etc.
- food is served on/in paper plates, bowls, etc.
- food is served in disposable plastic cups
- food is served on _____ (indicate type if other)

What types of packaging are used to deliver food to the cafeteria for preparation?

- large steel cans
- cardboard boxes
- plastic wrap/plastic shrink wrap
- other _____

How does your cafeteria dispose of the left-over cooking grease? Briefly describe how it is stored, disposed, and where it goes when it leaves your school.

Utensils:

- reusable utensils are used
- separate plastic utensils are used
- "sporks" (combined spoon and fork) are used
- utensils are distributed as a set, in plastic wrappers
- other _____

Drinks:

- bulk drink dispensers are used (soda, juice or milk fountain)
- drinks are served in cardboard cartons
- drinks are served in reusable cups
- drinks are served in disposable cups made of _____
- other _____

Part C—Cafeteria Waste Reduction

Describe any waste reduction, reusing or recycling efforts currently practiced in the cafeteria.

Even though you visit your school cafeteria every day it is important for you to speak with your cafeteria or food service manager when investigating these waste issues. Be sure to schedule a time when it is convenient for him/her.

Waste Hauler Information

Part A—Waste in School

Who handles waste in your school? _____

Number of people on staff that handle waste _____

Number of dumpsters _____ Full when emptied? _____ Average % fullness _____%

Collection frequency (daily, twice weekly, etc.) _____

Collection frequency during summer/holidays _____

Look inside your school's garbage dumpster or a classroom trash can. Select five items that represent the bulk of the waste. *Tip: You will have better results if you do this once a day over the course of a week, then average your numbers within each category or conduct a complete Waste Audit.*

Rank these items 1-5, with 1 indicating the item that makes up the majority of the waste in the dumpster or classroom trash can.

Most Present

White paper (computer, copier, ledger, stationary, etc.) 1. _____

Mixed paper (colored, glossy, junk mail) _____

Corrugated cardboard 2. _____

Paper board (thin cardboard) _____

Food waste 3. _____

Aluminum cans _____

Steel or tin cans 4. _____

Plastic containers/bottles _____

Styrofoam 5. _____

Yard waste _____

Least Present

Part B—Waste Hauler Information

Name of Waste Hauler _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Phone and Fax _____

Size of dumpster(s): _____ cubic yards.

Cost of service: \$ _____/Week or \$ _____/Month or \$ _____/School Term

Waste Cost Basis: ___ Flat Rate ___ By Weight ___ By Volume ___ By Pull

Expiration Date of current contract _____

Part C—Calculating Volume of Waste

Calculate the following information.

1. Calculate volume of waste per month.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & \times & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \\ \text{Dumpster size} & & \text{Number of times} \\ \text{in cubic yards} & & \text{dumpster filled} \\ & & \text{per month} \\ & & \text{Volume of waste per} \\ & & \text{month in cubic yards} \end{array}$$

2. Calculate lbs of waste per month. Choose the formula that makes the most sense for your school dumpster.

If Loose/Not compacted:

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times 200 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ lbs./month}$$

Volume of waste per
Month in cubic yards

If compacted:

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times 450 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ lbs./month}$$

How much waste does your school produce annually?

What information or services can your Waste hauler provide to help you reduce waste at the school?

Part A-Waste in School

Your head custodian is they key player here. He/she has a great deal of responsibility during the school day, so be sure to schedule an interview when it's convenient for him/her. When interviewing, get an idea of any issues or problems in your school's waste disposal program.

Part B-Waste Hauler Information

Ask your teacher or school secretary to get this information from your school's Business Office. BE SURE to include the size of your dumpster(s) in cubic yards. If your Business Office cannot give you the size, please call your waste hauler. You will need this number to be able to do the calculations in Part C.

Part C-Calculations

These calculations will help you see the amount of waste that comes from your school each month. You must do calculation #1 before doing #2.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

Part A—Waste Reduction

Does your school regularly use any of these waste reduction steps? (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> e-mail | <input type="checkbox"/> SMART boards | <input type="checkbox"/> toner cartridge recharge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> voice mail | <input type="checkbox"/> chalk boards | <input type="checkbox"/> reusable plates/flatware |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plain paper fax | <input type="checkbox"/> duplex copying | <input type="checkbox"/> reuse folders/envelopes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> scrap paper re-use | <input type="checkbox"/> on-screen editing | <input type="checkbox"/> coffee mugs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> post/circulate memos | <input type="checkbox"/> refillable products | <input type="checkbox"/> cloth towels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dry erase boards | <input type="checkbox"/> bulk dispensers | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |

What other waste reduction steps could the school be taking?

Part B—Recycling:

Does your school have a recycling program? _____ If so, how long has it been in place? _____

What materials are collected and recycled? Check all that apply.

- White paper (computer, copier, ledger, stationary, etc.)
- Mixed paper (colored, glossy, junk mail)
- Corrugated cardboard
- Paper board (thin cardboard)
- Food waste
- Aluminum cans
- Steel or tin cans
- Plastic containers/bottles
- Styrofoam
- Yard waste

How are recyclables handled in your school?

Number of recycling bins _____ Approximate size of recycling bins _____

Location(s) of recycling bins? Check all that apply.

- Classrooms Cafeteria Hallways Other _____

What is done with recyclables? Check all that apply.

- Take to drop-off center Waste hauler collects Donate Other _____

If recyclables are collected by a hauler, please furnish name and contact information available.

How often are materials picked up? _____

Are you paying for recycling service? _____ If so, how much \$ _____/month

Is money received from the sale of recyclable materials? Yes/No

How does you school use this money?

How well is the recycling program at your school implemented? Are students and teachers good about recycling all items that could be recycled?

Part C—Composting: Food and Yard Waste

How is food waste at the school handled? Check all that apply.

- Food waste is disposed of with other mixed waste
- Food waste is collected separately from other waste
- Food waste, including, _____ is composted
- Food waste is vermi-composted (with worms)

How is yard waste at the school handled? Check all that apply.

- Yard waste is disposed of in its own yard waste dumpster
- Yard waste is chipped/shredded and used for mulch
- Yard waste, including _____ is composted

Part D—Purchasing

Who is in charge of your school's purchasing? _____

Are you currently purchasing recycled or re-manufactured products? Check all that apply.

- copy paper
- toner cartridges
- file folders
- memo pads
- equipment
- paper towels
- paper napkins
- toilet tissue
- other (please list) _____

What company/organization do you currently purchase through? _____

What is the most common packaging used to deliver goods and supplies to your school? (cardboard, shrink wrap, etc.)

Most school purchasing is done by the principle and the secretary. They can help you identify products which contain recycled content. You may also want to get permission to examine a supply cabinet or closet, to look at the type of packaging gin which products at your school arrive and to look for the recyclable emblem on packaging

Issues & Actions

This section requires you to think about all of the information that you just gathered. You should decide which waste management problem(s) are the most important at your school.

Consider questions like:

- How does this problem affect how much is spent on trash pick-up?
- How does it affect the cost of purchasing school supplies/equipment?
- How does it affect your school's image in the community?
- How does the situation impact the environment?

What is your biggest waste management difficulty?

Attach additional paper if needed.

What actions can you take to reduce waste at the school? What are your goals?

Attach additional paper if needed.

What actions can you take to reduce waste at the school? What are your goals?

Begin to explore what you can do to solve the problem. Try to find out what others with a similar problem have done. Remember that some of the best ideas may sound silly or even impossible at first. Brainstorm several solutions...Be creative! Utilize the 8-Step Action plan or another problem-solving framework your students are familiar with to get them to think about solutions.