



EARTH RESOURCE FOUNDATION'S ZERO IN ON ZERO WASTE: “Don’t Let Your Bottom Line Go to Waste”



EASY STEPS TO GET STARTED ON THE ZERO WASTE PATH

- 1) Understand that Zero Waste is a Goal and a Process:
 - Zero Waste is a goal that is both pragmatic and visionary where all discarded materials are resources for others to use.
 - Zero Waste is a process covering the “cradle to cradle” lifecycle of materials that reduces the volume and toxicity of waste and materials and conserves and recovers all resources. Implementation eliminates all discharges to land, water or air that may be a threat to planetary, human, animal or plant health.
- 2) Identify Waste in Your Business:
 - Most companies do not realize the resources (money) they throw into the trash can everyday.
 - Track what you are throwing away each week. Separate into categories: paper, glass, plastic, metals, etc.
 - Measure your current waste for benchmarking and goal setting.
- 3) Practice the 8 R’s : Respect, Rethink, Refuse, Return, ReBuy, Reduce , Reuse, Recycle to identify where you can eliminate waste.
 - Respect: the earth, others and yourself
 - Rethink: how you design, produce and distribute your products and services
 - Refuse: to buy items that aren’t reusable, recyclable or completely necessary
 - Return: packaging materials (boxes, can and other containers), toners, etc to manufacturers and vendors
 - ReBuy: buy recycled products. Recycled Products Cooperatives www.recycledproducts.org for recycled paper, folder, pens, pencils, binders – just about everything
 - Reduce: the amount of packing materials, bags, disposable items, etc
 - Reuse: the backside of your paper for interoffice memos, printing out emails
buy reusable cups, silverware, and plates to give your employees and office guests
 - Recycle: everything –use it until it can’t be used anymore and then recycle it
- 4) Implement Waste Eliminating Practices - Here’s a few things you can start doing today!
 - Put recycling bins at every employee’s desk. Only have trash cans in kitchen areas.
 - Encourage your janitorial service to reduce the amount of plastic liners they use for trash cans.
 - Use environmentally friendly cleaners, paper towels, napkins, etc.
 - Reuse envelopes for non-important mail.
 - Email or fax versus mailing invoices, documents, newsletters.
 - Use an electronic email fax service and only print out what is needed.
 - Use environmentally friendly packaging.
 - Reuse packing materials.
- 5) Evaluate, Communicate, Celebrate and Recapitulate.
 - Measure your results, enjoy your successes and continue the process to reach a goal of 90% diversion.

For more resources: visit <http://www.earthresource.org/zerowaste.html>

Contact: Stephanie Barger, Executive Director at stephanie.barger@earthresource.org
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P.O. Box 12364, Costa Mesa, CA 92627 949-645-5163 www.earthresource.org
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