

California State University Dominguez Hills

2023 Zero Waste Action Plan Update

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Contact: CSUDH Office of Sustainability, Facilities Services, NSM F-127

2023 Calendar Year Update

Since the implementation of the Zero Waste Action Plan in 2020, volumes from Republic Services currently tracked by the Office of Sustainability were used for the purposes of internal and state recycling reporting. The service level varied throughout the calendar year due to ongoing right-sizing efforts in alignment with campus activities. Each monthly invoice took account of the number of trash bins at each location.

Based on the available data compared to 2021, CSUDH generated the following tonnages in 2023:

Year	Trash (Tons)	Recycle (Tons)	Organics (Tons)	Diversion(%)
2021	618.10	563.35	73.89	50%
2022	819.92	653.79	256.62	52%
2023	754.52	531.90	310.11	53%

In order to achieve a 90% diversion rate assuming similar waste generation volumes year by year, CSUDH would need to identify solutions that would divert or avoid 595 more tons of trash from ending up in the landfill.

Types of Waste Generated on Campus

Styrofoam, plastic straws, plastic cutlery, plastic film, saran wrap, compostable ware, foil, paper towels, food wrappers, waxy paper beverage cups are common landfill items on campus. Republic Services, the campus waste hauler, does not accept 100% plant-fiber based materials at this time. Much of this waste is generated from food or beverage packaging imported in by commuter students and staff as CSUDH does not have a dining hall (only a commercial food court). The in-house Dining provider attempts to use compostable ware, however, Republic Services does not accept compostable ware or non-food organics (including food soiled paper) unlike other haulers which limits diversion opportunities.

Waste Prevention/ Re-use

Infrastructure

- The Office of Sustainability created a Zero Waste Training video in December 2023 that became required, assigned, training for all employees via CSU Learn in January 2024. This helps support [SB 1383](#) annual training requirements for all employees.
- The Office of Sustainability worked with Campus Dining to remove remaining single-use plastic utensils and straws and replaced them with wooden cutlery and paper straws throughout the 2023 calendar year. Campus Dining also phased out all non-compliant food service packaging per [SB 1335](#).
- Campus Dining continues to use the Toro Token program, which was launched Fall of 2019, where any customer can buy a \$5 token and exchange it to get a clean reusable container instead of a disposable container for their meals. Dining collects and washes the dirty/returned containers and hands back the token to the user which they can exchange for a clean container on their next visit. Approximately 500 reusable containers are now in circulation as a result.
- Campus Dining also has a “bring your own coffee mug” program, which incentivizes the consumer with 10 cents off each time someone brings their own reusable mug for coffee or tea.
- The Office of Sustainability worked with the Farmers Market organizer to phase out single-use plastic, such as bags, straws, cutlery, and plastic water bottles provided by vendors, making the Farmers Market zero waste.
- A Zero Waste Punch Card was also launched at the Farmers Market to assist and reward campus users for bringing reusable items, such as water bottles, bags, straws, and cutlery sets.
- In 2023, Campus Dining recovered and delivered 1,091.70 lbs of food to the food pantry.

Contamination

Although new bin infrastructure was implemented in 2022, similar contamination trends were found in all three waste streams in 2023. The items listed below were commonly found in various dumpster locations on campus, which do not belong to that specific waste stream:

Dumpster type	Contamination
Trash (landfill bin)	Food scraps Plastic to-go containers Clear plastic Starbucks cups
Recycle Bin	Chip bags Starbucks cups for hot drinks

	Plastic straws Plastic cutlery Waxy cardboard to-go containers
Compost Bin	Waxy coated disposable plates Bioplastics

Although signage is picture based and lists items not accepted in each waste stream, confusion on certain items continues to be an issue. Further diversion education is needed as well as prioritizing reduce and reuse measures to assist with contamination issues.

2023 Calendar Year Activities

To support the goals of the Zero Waste Action Plan, the Office of Sustainability implemented various programs to help CSUDH further adopt zero waste practices.

- In 2023, Pop-Up Thrift events were expanded from being held only at the beginning and end of each semester to taking place on the first Tuesday of every month during active school semesters to encourage reuse of donated items from campus.
- CleanCity Network sensors, which are placed on every hauler waste bin and detect fullness, are still in use and have assisted with right-sizing the campus. The enclosure located by the Library and Theater were right sized from 3x/week to a permanent 2x/week schedule based on this live sensor data.
- Housing updated their policy to mandate placement of internal recycle and organics containers in addition to trash to assist with diversion. Housing also implemented organics service at every other enclosure in Phases I and II to make composting more accessible.
- Since January 1, 2019, the CSU has mandated a CSU Single Use Plastics Policy which assures, to the maximum extent economically feasible, the purchase of single-use plastics including plastic straws, plastic water bottles, and plastic bags are eliminated. Purchase preference shall be given to reusable products, followed by locally compostable and/or recyclable products. Procurement, auxiliaries, and all relevant stakeholders continue to work with campus sustainability staff to assess and select the most sustainable alternatives.
- The Farmers Market Zero Waste Punch Card was launched as part of a user-behavior campaign to encourage bringing reusable items to campus. Anyone who completed the card was entered in an opportunity drawing for a reusable notebook

called a Rocket Book. While engagement was low, plans to relaunch the program in 2024 are in place.

- Custodial and Grounds training are conducted semesterly to ensure proper waste separation and review updates to services.
- Zero waste educational activities were hosted at the Farmers Market every Tuesday during the academic semester in efforts to engage and educate the campus community on zero waste practices and campus initiatives.

Future Activities

Future Activities for the 2024 Calendar Year

To continue supporting CSUDH's zero waste efforts, the Office of Sustainability will be pursuing the following initiatives in more depth over the course of the 2023 calendar year:

Planned Initiative	Impact	Category
Continued Aramark partnership & support for food donations from Dining	Increase diversion	Organics
Aramark and Toro Token Educational Support	Campus dining zero waste initiative	Zero Waste
Pop-Up Thrift Event Increased Frequency	Reduce usable supplies going to the landfill, Increase e-waste recycling education	Service Reduction
CleanCityNetworks Sensor Data Upkeep	Right-size campus with proper service frequency	Service Reduction
Housing Support	Implement internal recycle and compost containers amongst residents, Encourage sustainable living	Diversion
Waste Audits	Identify areas of contamination and user behavior	Diversion/ Contamination
Farmers Market Zero Waste Punch Card	Encourage zero waste user behavior by rewarding bringing reusable items to campus	Zero Waste
iWasteNot Recyclopeda App	Provide quick and easy access to guidance for students (and staff) on proper recycling practices	Outreach and Education

iWasteNot ReCap App	Help recapture valuable University property from the waste stream and put it to good use rather than purchasing new and disposing	Zero Waste
New Student Orientation	Provide new employees with zero waste practices, campus goals, and initiatives	Outreach and Education
Custodian Training	Provide education on proper waste separation and service specifics for internal zero waste stations	Outreach and Education
Grounds Training	Provide education on proper waste separation and service specifics for internal zero waste stations	Outreach and Education
Special Events	Implementation of recycle and organics receptacles in addition to trash	Diversion
Custom Signage for External Zero Waste Stations	Increase proper material separation	Diversion/ Contamination
Partner with Ceremonies and Events for a zero waste commencement	Provide a reusable option for water so as to not generate waste.	Diversion



Office of Sustainability, Facilities Services
NSM F-127
California State University Dominguez Hills
1000 East Victoria Street
Carson, CA 90747

Tel: (310) 243-2303
sustainability@csudh.edu

Additional questions? Contact Zero Waste Coordinator Scarlett Zamora at
szamora@csudh.edu or (310) 243-2161