ZERO WASTE

ZERO WASTE

INTRODUCTION

"Zero Waste or Darn Near" is Boulder County's commitment to sensible resource management in government operations, where staff won a 2012 state award for reducing solid waste by 69% in county buildings. Boulder County is equally committed to developing policies, programs and infrastructure that will help residents and businesses recycle traditional and hard-to-recycle materials, compost at home and at work, and safely manage the hazardous materials that are associated with many home care and automotive products, including oil paints and antifreeze. The jobs that are created in the reuse and recycling industries—from used building material outlets to compost facilities—help strengthen the Boulder County economy.

ZERO WASTE GOAL

Become zero waste and manage resources responsibly and effectively

INTERNAL

TARGET 1

Increase internal county diversion to 85% by 2020

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Increase composting by county employees to achieve 85% waste diversion; continue education about including soiled paper in compost stream

STRATEGY 2
Continue to divert construction materials from internal county building projects

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 3
Maximize waste diversion by county employees to meet or exceed the county's goal of "Zero Waste or Darn Near" by 2025

INTERNAL

TARGET 2

Comply with Boulder County internal zero waste purchasing policies to support recycling and composting programs as well as the development of markets for recycled products and local compost

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Purchase recycled-content paper and other office supplies; buy compostable food service items marked "BPI certified compostable" when possible; buy rechargeable batteries, reusable cups and other reusable items when possible

STRATEGY 2
Avoid brightly colored papers, which are not easily recycled and thus contaminate the recycling stream

STRATEGY 3
For print and copy jobs—use the highest post-consumer recycled content paper available.

STRATEGY 4
Discourage bottled water for county sponsored meetings and events when tap water is available; discourage the use of bottled water dispensers in county buildings

INTERNAL

TARGET 2 CONT.

Comply with Boulder County internal zero waste purchasing policies to support recycling and composting programs as well as the development of markets for recycled products and local compost

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES CONT.

STRATEGY 5
Purchase compost from permitted Colorado processors and show the U.S. Composting Council Seal of Testing Assurance

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 6
Continue to participate in the State Electronics Challenge, which tracks purchases and management of computers, monitors, phones, printers and copiers for compliance with national ENERGY STAR and EPEAT programs

Boulder County is committed to discouraging bottled water and bottled water dispensers at county meetings and in county buildings when tap water is available.

EXTERNAL

TARGET 3

Construction materials diversion: Divert 60,000 or more tons of construction waste per year from disposal (estimated 27% of waste stream)

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Support capacity for construction and demolition transfer, sorting, and possible processing

STRATEGY 2
Require construction and demolition project recycling and reuse in additional sectors

STRATEGY 3
Include clean, damaged dimensional lumber in slash management programs

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 4
Require trees and slash from clearing and landscaping to be diverted from the landfill

> For a full list of strategies and descriptions of these strategies, please view the Zero Waste Action Plan: BoulderCounty.org/find/library/gogreen/2010.pdf

EXTERNAL

TARGET 4

Compost: Divert 42,060 or more tons of compost per year from disposal (estimated 12.2% of waste stream)

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Support capacity for additional composting

STRATEGY 2
Provide curbside collection of compostable materials

STRATEGY 3
Support total at-home composting program

STRATEGY 4
Support opportunities for tree limb management

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 5
Support multifamily compost collection system

EXTERNAL

TARGET 5

Commercial diversion: Divert 8,350 or more tons of commercial waste per year from disposal (estimated 2.8% of waste stream)

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Provide commercial volume-based collection with enhanced recycling programs, including incentives for businesses to adopt zero-waste collection programs through coupons for services

STRATEGY 2
Provide free waste audits for businesses and support for zero waste implementation by expanding outreach and advising services currently being provided through Boulder County Public Health's Partners for A Clean Environment (PACE) program

STRATEGY 3
Update land use codes to improve commercial and multifamily recycling requirements

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 4
Support commercial food composting

STRATEGY 5
Provide single-stream, multifamily recycling collection countywide

STRATEGY 6
Support bans on sending recyclables, yard waste and food waste to the landfill

STRATEGY 7
Provide zero-waste building planning assistance

STRATEGY 8
Promote markets for county-generated recyclables and compost

EXTERNAL

TARGET 6

Reduce toxicity of materials purchased in Boulder County and divert more than 430 tons per year of hazardous material from landfill

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Increase diversion of hazardous materials by expanding business drop-off at the Hazardous Materials Management Facility

STRATEGY 2
Educate consumers and businesses to reduce the purchase and use of toxic and hazardous products

STRATEGY 3
Educate students about hazardous materials through in-school presentations and projects

STRATEGY 4
Increase collection of residential and commercial hazardous materials at the Hazardous Materials Management Facility

STRATEGY 5
Increase electronics collection

EXTERNAL

TARGET 6 CONT.

Reduce toxicity of materials purchased in Boulder County and divert more than 430 tons per year of hazardous material from landfill

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 6
Maximize collection of residential and commercial hazardous materials to eliminate landfill disposal

*> For a full list of strategies and descriptions of these strategies, please view the Zero Waste Action Plan: **BoulderCounty.org/find/library/gogreen/zwap2010.pdf***

EXTERNAL

TARGET 7

Other Strategies: Divert additional 46,000 or more tons per year from disposal (estimated 21% of waste stream)

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Cultivate municipal contacts and advocates

STRATEGY 2
Develop zero waste branding and initiate comprehensive education program

STRATEGY 3
Provide residential volume-based collection with embedded recycling

STRATEGY 4
Support opportunities for waste diversion and reuse at spring cleanup events in mountain communities

STRATEGY 5
Provide zero waste education and support zero waste collection systems in schools

STRATEGY 6
Offer metal recycling at additional locations
.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 7
Require zero waste planning for large events on public property

EXTERNAL

TARGET 8

Increase waste prevention through product stewardship programs in the county

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1
Promote voluntary product stewardship opportunities offered by retailers and manufacturers

STRATEGY 2
Support and advocate for product stewardship initiatives at the state and local level

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 3
Have the Resource Conservation Advisory Board identify a list of "priority items," and encourage manufacturers or retailers to charge "Advanced Disposal Fees"—such as the fees charged on tires—that will help cover the eventual cost of disposal

*> For a full list of strategies and descriptions of these strategies, please view the Zero Waste Action Plan: **BoulderCounty.org/find/library/gogreen/zwap2010.pdf***

POLICY PRIORITIES

Support Legislation and Other Means for Promoting Product Stewardship

Boulder County supports legislation, regulation or other means for promoting product stewardship by manufacturers and consumers, in order to decrease waste and the harmful effects of toxic materials in waste and packaging. Product stewardship can achieve corporate and consumer responsibility through regulation at the manufacturing level and attribution of consumer responsibility, for example labeling of pesticides, disposal fees and advance disposal fees, national bottle law and bottle deposits, computer take-back, and control of toxics, particularly in electronics.

Support Legislation Promoting Waste Reduction and Diversion to Increase the Level of Waste Reduction In Colorado and to Provide Coloradans with Increased Access to Waste Reduction Services

Boulder County has long been a leader in implementing progressive policies and programs to increase recycling and waste reduction opportunities for county residents and businesses. In 2010, the county adopted a Zero Waste Action Plan, identifying steps county residents, businesses and governments can take to reach an ultimate goal of zero waste by 2025. The plan estimated Boulder County's existing diversion rate at about 35% through reuse, recycling and composting programs. Expanding waste diversion efforts across the state will complement and support Boulder County's zero waste goals.

BOULDER COUNTY LEADS THE WAY

In 2005, when Boulder County first adopted a resolution calling for "Zero Waste or Darn Near" in countywide operations by 2020, Boulder County was one of a handful of governments in the nation setting such a bold goal. Now, communities from Austin to San Francisco are setting zero waste targets that encourage recycling, composting and hazardous materials reduction not only in government operations, but among residents and businesses as well.

In 2012, Boulder County won a state award for government waste reduction: In County operations, waste diversion has risen from 27% in 2008 to nearly 70% in 2011, thanks to convenient recycling and composting opportunities in all county buildings and an aggressive employee education program.

TAKE ACTION

Residents and businesses in Boulder County can do more than recycle and compost to help the county achieve zero waste. Try these extra steps:

- Buy in bulk to reduce purchases.

- Cook at home.

- Take hard-to-recycle materials to Boulder's CHaRM facility.*

- Seek out locally produced mulch and compost to use in your yard.

- Tour the Boulder County Recycling Center and visit the Hazardous Materials Management Facility, both near the intersection of 63rd and Arapahoe in Boulder.*

- Visit a Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE) certified business that has earned a Zero Waste Area of Excellence rating.

- Take a reusable cup or refillable water bottle when you go out.

- Use recycling bins in parks and other public places.

- Buy paper, greeting cards and other products made from recycled materials.

- Watch a recycling education video online.

- Sign up for one of Boulder County's compost workshops.

* Visit **BoulderCountyRecycles.org** for maps and more tips.