

Why do a Waste Audit?



What is a Waste Audit?

A waste audit is a structured process used to measure and assess the amount and types of waste being generated. The results can help identify key waste issues at your school so you can develop targeted action plans for addressing them.

Objectives include:

- To identify where waste reduction can be improved
- To determine the effectiveness of current waste diversion strategies
- To determine types of waste and amounts that are being generated

Benefits of a Waste Audit



At a glance:

Environment: Reducing waste overall reduces the energy required to extract, process, and transport materials in production. Recycling and organic processing help reduce consequences of production by reusing the resources used in the product's creation. They also lower the land impacts of unnecessary waste disposal.

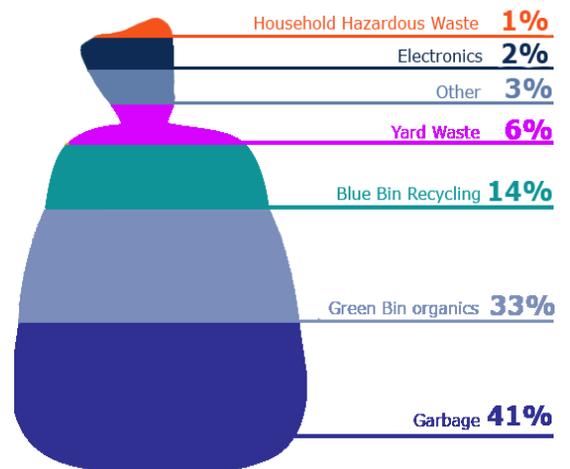
Global citizenship: Waste audits increase student leadership and educate the school community to better contribute to Ontario's goal of a Waste-Free Ontario and to the 12th Sustainable Development Goal: responsible consumption and production, amongst others.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/strategy-waste-free-ontario-building-circular-economy>
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg12>

Provides Opportunity for Education

Recycling: Contaminated recycling is in part due to people's WANT to do the right thing. For example, coffee cups are a frequent source of contamination. People want to place them in the recycling bin because they are mostly made of paper. However, because of their plastic liner, they are NOT recyclable in Toronto. Yogurt cups with a fair amount of yogurt remaining is another example. When they are not cleaned or emptied, the leftover food contaminates other recycling materials in the recycling load, and cause it to be sent to the landfill. Education on subtle differences and requirements is crucial to help stop contamination.

Landfill: With ever changing rules of what goes where, and regional differences in the GTA, people may continue to dispose of recyclable materials in the garbage. Waste audits can help identify the gaps in your school's knowledge through analysis of waste diversion practices.



Campaign Ideas for When You Have too Many / Much...

...Paper Towels

- Give young students half sheets
- Encourage students to shake hands before drying
- Use reusable cloths (start in the staff room or kitchen)
- Decorate paper towel dispensers with reminders of how paper towel is made of trees



...Food Packaging

- Establish a BYOC- bring your own container initiative for events or a waste free lunch initiative for everyday
- Provide reusable dishware and cutlery for student and staff use
- Work with Toronto Public Health to use their resources on healthy eating
- Educate students on seasonal foods and/or make foods with locally grown ingredients

...Water Bottles

- Promote reusable water bottle use
- Upcycle bottles into art pieces, being mindful of maintaining recyclability (i.e., don't use permanent adhesives when assembling a structure or bottles become landfill!)
- Have a competition with eco-friendly incentives such as reusable water bottles
- Collaborate with Toronto Public Health to utilize the Sip Smart Ontario initiative
- Stop your school cafeteria from selling water bottles, offer washable cups or mugs.
- Use these campaigns to support your application for a water refill station

