



INAUGURAL 2015 ZERO WASTE ANNUAL REPORT

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COMMITTING TO ZERO WASTE

As an original signatory to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2007, the University of Colorado Colorado Springs has committed to achieving carbon neutrality guided by the UCCS Climate Action Plan 2010 and UCCS Sustainability Strategic Plan 2012-2020. Within these documents, UCCS has a strong commitment to waste diversion and a final goal of zero waste. The University's commitment to recycling, composting, and reusing has surpassed that of the state of Colorado.



The state of Colorado currently has a diversion rate of 11% compared to the national average of 34%. Our university resides in one of the ten most wasteful states in the country. Colorado's recycling industry is suffering under the common misconception that "recycling is free." Due to landfill hauling fees costing drastically less than other states across the U.S., people are losing interest in paying to have their materials recycled when they can landfill them for a fraction of the cost.





Even with a very low diversion rate across the state, recycling still has a major impact on the state's economy and job and labor force. Recycling, reusing and remanufacturing industries currently provide 85,000 jobs in Colorado and \$8.7 billion in direct economic impact. Recycling creates at least nine times more jobs per ton than landfills, while remanufacturing reusable products creates as many as 30 times more jobs. With many commodities still in need of end markets, there are many opportunities for entrepreneurs to find uses for these materials. To continue to sustain the recycling industry and reduce transportation carbon footprint, we need these types of investments in finding new ways to reuse resources within our city and state.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RECYCLING



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At the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, we provide student employee positions through the Office of Sustainability including recycling assistants, recycling assistants - cardboard collection crew, and zero waste coordinator. Each of these positions provides much needed support to the zero waste initiatives the office supports, produces, and educates the campus community. Tasks include researching peer institutions for the most recent education marketing, organizing campus events, education the campus community on the proper disposal of items, partnering with other departments and staff on campus to solve contamination issues, implement new ways of reduction of materials, collection of commodities (specifically cardboard,) and ultimately gain knowledge that will be beneficial for them when applying for jobs after graduation.

CONSERVING OUR RESOURCES

Colorado could potentially save an estimated \$145-178 million each year by reselling materials on the recycling market that are thrown in the landfill. The state has plenty of opportunities to provide both jobs and economic growth in Colorado by increasing our recycling rate and identifying local end market users for commodities.

The University also provides an uncommon opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Innovation, which could prove to foster those ideas of entrepreneurship and finding solutions to using materials that currently do not have an end use for new products. Along with the Bachelor of Innovation, the University recently committed to requiring a sustainability-themed course as part of the campus-wide general education program, Compass Curriculum. With each student that graduates from UCCS introduced to sustainability, there will be an increased awareness of environmental issues and hopefully a positive impact on the recycling industry.





ZERO WASTE INITIATIVES & EVENTS

As an institution of higher education, the Office of Sustainability provides many avenues to interact with and educate the campus community on proper disposal of materials into the many recycling streams. UCCS provides single-stream recycling, commercial-grade composting, electronics recycling, lawn and limb/organics composting, surplus donations, separation of cardboard for baling, ink and toner recycling, metal recycling, shredded paper recycling, motor oil recycling, and based on the projects for the year, roll-offs of specific items (e.g. toilet retrofit in which the toilets were crushed and made into aggregate that became the foundation for a construction project on campus.)

Our office also provides annual events and initiatives for engagement. Mt. Trashmore is an annual waste audit in the form of piling a 'mountain' of the campus' trash into one pile in the middle of campus and inviting volunteers to help sort and audit what could have been diverted from the landfill. This event not only provides us with beneficial information about what key items we need to educate the campus community, but it also allows people to engage with their trash in a way that will stick with them as the time they dug through a mountain of trash.



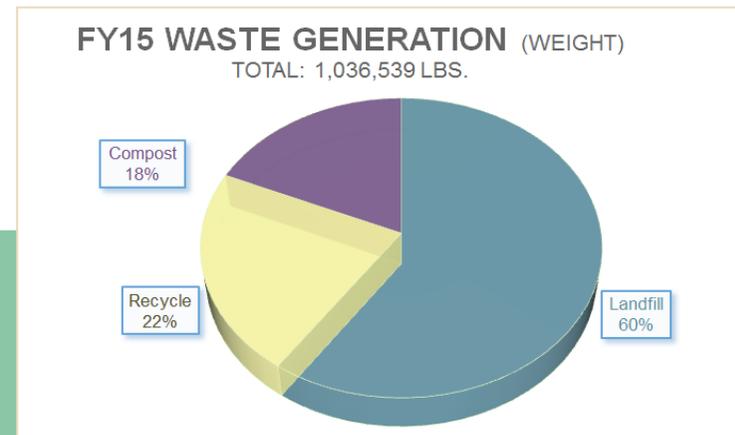
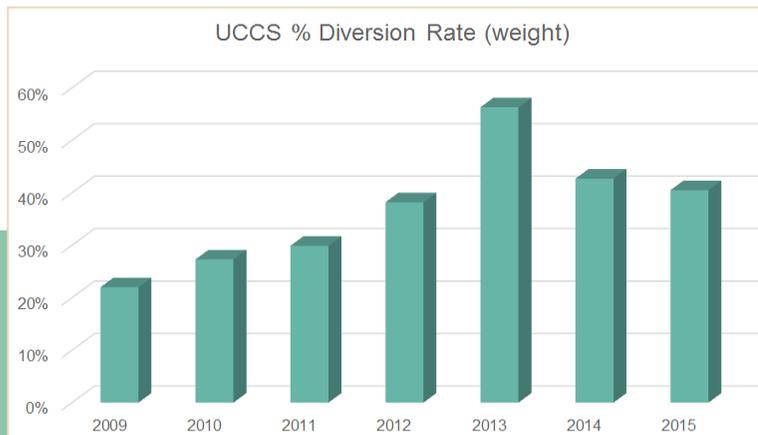
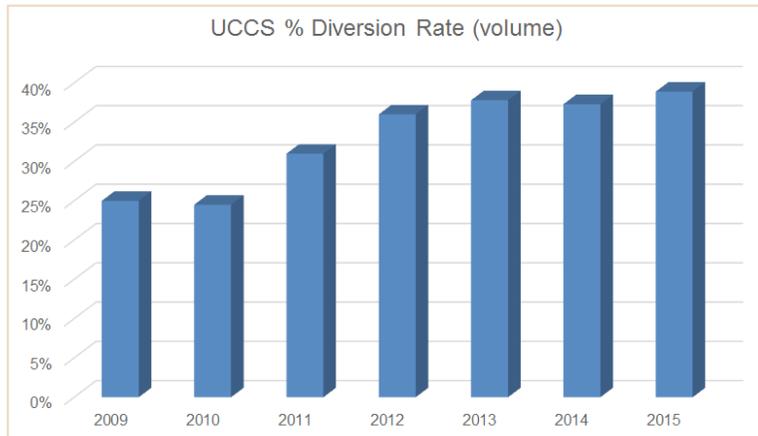
ZERO WASTE INITIATIVES & EVENTS CONT.

The Office of Sustainability committed to making all home basketball games a zero waste event. We provide staff and volunteers to support these efforts to help 'zero-waste goalie' and educate the spectators along with encouraging them to bring their own water bottles since the University no longer sells plastic bottled water, as of 2013. Along with basketball games, the office supports events services and catering by providing zero waste services at any event on campus with 100+ attendees. In 2014-15, we hosted and/or provided zero wasting at 26 basketball games, 19 internal events, and ~50+ campus events. Our ultimate goal is to educate our campus community so that we are no longer needed to guide material into the correct streams.



WASTE DIVERSION - FY 2014-15

For FY14-15, UCCS diverted 38.9% (measured in volume) of our waste stream from the landfill. This is a 1.6% increase in diversion rate from the previous fiscal year. In comparison to our baseline year of 2009, the fiscal year 2015 diversion rate saw an increase by 13.9%. UCCS' diverts 27.9% more than the state of Colorado and 4.9% more than the national average. UCCS averages 1.4 pounds of landfill waste, .52 pounds of recycling, and .43 pounds of composting per person per week. The total waste generation for the year was 1,036,539 pounds equating to 16,120 yards.





Goal 1: Diversion Rates

40% by 2016

50% by 2018

60% by 2024

70% by 2030

Goal 2: 25% of all campus-wide events and/or 100 campus-wide events are considered zero waste

With these reduction goals in mind, UCCS is helping Colorado reach their 2021 goals to reduce individual waste disposal to 3.5 pounds/person-day and increase diversion to 66% by weight. As an Office, we will continue to provide education and engagement to the campus community.

OUR FUTURE FOOTPRINT