



The Ohio State University 2020 RecycleMania Case Study

Case Study Template

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2. Focus of Case study

Ohio State implemented a sustainability and zero waste certification training for facilities operations workers including custodial, maintenance, landscaping, and housekeeping staff.

3. Detailed description of campaign component:

Teamwork and collaboration are absolutely essential to achieving zero waste goals at a university. Extensive waste diversion infrastructure is only useful if the users of the system and the staff tasked with maintaining it understand why waste minimization programs are in place and how the system is designed to function. Ohio State recognized that education and collaboration amongst various departments would contribute to increasing the capture rate of recyclables while decreasing contamination, so a campus-wide effort was developed to certify all operations staff (which include custodial, housekeeping, maintenance, and landscaping workers) in sustainability and zero waste.

The main objectives of the certification were that staff who completed the course would be aware of the university's eight resource stewardship goals, learn how Ohio State defines zero waste, understand how to properly recycle, compost, and reduce waste on campus, and identify new simple habits which will help Ohio State achieve zero waste.

Key leadership which oversees the departments that house the operations staff gave support for this educational campaign. The Office of Sustainability and Strategic Services developed an interactive PowerPoint presentation to use during training sessions which included photos, Ohio State waste reduction statistics, quizzes, videos demonstrating the waste reduction programs and

operations on campus, and other information about how to properly use and maintain the indoor and outdoor systems designed to capture materials that will be diverted from landfills.

The Zero Waste Manager and Coordinator scheduled a series of training sessions with operations department managers and held twelve hour and a half long certification sessions, resulting in 247 operations staff earning a Sustainability and Zero Waste certification. All staff who participated were given a promotional gift of reusable silverware to thank them for their time and help them continue to support the zero waste efforts at Ohio State.

4. Planning steps & timeline to implement:

- Third quarter of 2019: The Office of Sustainability and Strategic Services received permission from Facilities Operations and Development to certify all operations staff by June 30, 2020.
- Third quarter of 2019: A PowerPoint presentation was prepared, a test was designed, and promotional items (reusable silverware kits) were ordered.
- January 2020: Facilities Operations Managers were notified about the initiative to certify all operations staff in Sustainability and Zero Waste.
- February 2020: Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification training was added to BuckeyeLearn, Ohio State's university-wide online training platform, which allows managers to assign training courses to staff and track which staff completed assigned trainings.
- February-March 2020: Twelve Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification training sessions were held to accommodate first, second, and third shift operations staff. Names of attendees were submitted to BuckeyeLearn so staff could get credit for passing the training.

5. Resources and stakeholders involved

Head leadership within Facilities Operations and Development (FOD) gave support for mandating Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification for all operations staff. The Office of Sustainability and Strategic Services was tasked with coordinating with FOD's Training Specialist and Zone Leaders to select times, dates, and locations that worked well for their staff to participate in the certification training. The Training Specialist and Zone Leaders ensured that the operations staff who work in their area would be available for approximately one and one half hours to complete the certification. After trainings were scheduled, the Training Specialist and Zone Leaders helped communicate with operations staff to ensure everyone was signed up to attend one of the sessions.

Custodial, Housekeeping, Landscaping, and Maintenance Managers in FOD supported this effort by adjusting the schedules of their staff to make room for the training while ensuring staff were still able to complete essential tasks. Additionally, managers of contracted custodial staff who work for the university through a private company were also instrumental in coordinating this training effort.

The Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification training initiative was completed with a budget of approximately \$1,200, which was financed through the Office of Sustainability and Strategic Services. The budget was allocated to purchasing promotional items which were given to each attendee who passed the training course as a way to thank them for their time and attention and congratulate them on passing the training. The promotional item selected was a reusable set of silverware in a neoprene zippered pouch that was branded with Ohio State's zero waste logo.

This particular promotional item was selected as a way to help participants reduce daily waste generated on campus and help make the choice to use reusable silverware instead of single use disposal silverware for each meal eaten at Ohio State.

The Zero Waste Manager and/or the Zero Waste Coordinator dedicated a total 2.5 hours per training session, or a total of approximately 30 hours to complete 12 certification trainings.

6. Describe the Results of this campaign component

- a. General results (*ex: attracted attention of campus president, campus paper did a news story on the event, etc.*)

In addition to the intended results, which were to educate operations staff about Ohio State's sustainability goals and zero waste programs, the training sessions also helped open a dialogue among the various FOD departments and the Office of Sustainability and Strategic Services. Program participants work in hundreds of buildings on campus, and were able to relay specific issues on how to further reduce waste in the buildings they champion. For example, after one training course, a maintenance worker notified the Zero Waste Coordinator that a greenhouse was regularly disposing plant matter and soil in the landfilling dumpster. The Zero Waste Coordinator had a composting bin delivered to the greenhouse and added the building to a routing sheet, so the materials are now being composted.

- b. Specific measurable impact figures, if applicable (*Ex: Reduced contamination rate 13%, Gathered 316 pledges to recycle more, etc., 250 people engaged, etc.*)

A total of 247 operations staff achieved Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification during the RecycleMania tournament. Each participant was shown a list of daily habits that support Ohio State's Zero Waste efforts. As part of certification, participants were asked to pledge one habit that supports zero waste, so this campaign also resulted in 247 zero waste pledges.

7. What would you do differently in the future?

Ohio State has a diverse workforce, with nearly 32,000 FTE staff on the main campus. The Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification training materials were developed in English. In the future, during the training schedule development with department managers, Training Specialists, and Zone Leaders, it would be beneficial to determine whether any staff needing to be certified need a translator or any other accommodations to successfully complete the training. There were two training sessions that had a high percentage of non-English speakers, which was not known until the day of the training. Fortunately, a translator volunteered to assist with both training sessions. This campaign will continue, as there is an ongoing need due to continuously gaining new staff. In the future, FOD will work with managers to ensure that appropriate measures are taken so that the information we wish to share during the certification course is accessible to all.

8. What advice would you give to another college that wanted to do a similar effort?

If another college would like to duplicate the program at Ohio State with mandatory participation that will be tracked, create attendance rosters ahead of time rather than using a sign in sheet. Signatures can be difficult to decipher which could result in some attendees not receiving credit for participation.

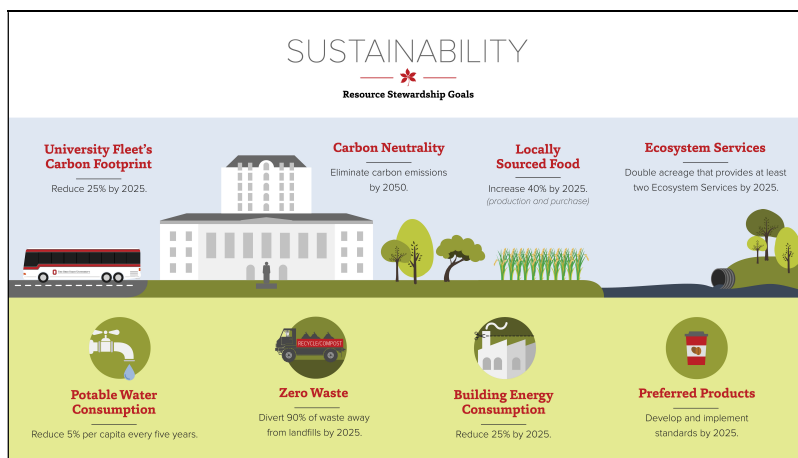
Additionally, make sure to reserve a few minutes at the end to have a discussion with attendees. Ohio State received extremely valuable feedback and information from frontline staff who perform boots-on-the-ground work in hundreds of buildings on campus. The training sessions were a wonderful opportunity to improve the visibility of the Office of Sustainability and Strategic Services, meet campus partners in person, network, and begin building more effective working relationships.

9. Photos and Graphics

The following photos show certification training participants pledging to help make Ohio State a zero waste campus.



The following photos are examples of slides in the Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification training PowerPoint presentation.



GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RECYCLING

 → 
Black Bags for Trash

 → 
Clear Bags for Recycling

 → 
No Liners in Desk-Side Recycling Bins

PLACE THESE BAGS IN THE TRASH
Inspect contents inside recycling (clear) bags. If contents are visible, the bag should be placed in the trash.

 **1.**
Liquid Moving Around

 **2.**
More than 25% of Bag Contents are Takeout Containers



OHIO STATE ZERO WASTE

Good	Better
Recycle plastic beverage bottles.	Carry a reusable mug or bottle.
Print double-sided.	Use electronics to reduce printing.
Compost paper towels.	Use hand dryers instead of paper towels.
Compost food scraps.	Clean your plate when you eat.
Compost biodegradable	Carry a reusable straw.

The photo below is an example of the promotional item that was given to staff who passed the Sustainability and Zero Waste Certification training. The zippered pouch includes a stainless steel pair of chopsticks, a fork, and a spoon.

