



Johnson County Community College 2022 Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study

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Focus of Case study:

Reduction of mixed office waste and surplus from office moves and retirements.

Detailed description of campaign or effort:

Easy Office Cleanout (EOC) Bins were introduced by the Center for Sustainability to provide low effort decision making to staff and faculty during campus moves, storage cleanouts, and retirements. We found that when housekeeping handled these situations they had two choices, either put everything into a recycling compactor, or everything into a trash compactor no matter what the contents were. By providing a 50-gallon container to put everything that is no longer needed into it, not only are we getting an 85% waste reduction on these materials, but we are able to monetize paper and textbooks that are sent to us in the bins and keep our Reusable Office Supply Exchange (ROSE Store) well stocked. Containers are delivered, picked up and sorted by student interns that can return items to campus for reuse, send them for donation, turn them over to the warehouse for auction if they have high value, or properly disassemble items and sort correctly for recycling. The marketing and visibility of the bins have created a larger culture of reuse and recycling among staff and faculty to the point where most departments will now call and ask what they should do with items they would have thrown away in the past such as sports equipment and uniforms, or small broken electronics like fans and keyboards. Student interns learn the finer points of recycling and creative reuse by sorting through bins, scanning books for value, preparing loads for vendor pickups and working with non-profits to collect things they need, or find homes for items we have.

Planning steps & timeline to implement:

- *2016 Purchase small number of bins (5) to pilot program and use some existing containers available*
 - *Create signage for bins*
 - *Market the service to staff and faculty through inner office listserv and infohub*
 - *Setup sorting area in open office space*
 - *Purchase another 12 bins to fulfill requests*
- *2017 Work with facilities campus coordinator who coordinates moves on campus, and campus interior decorator who coordinates paint and carpet to get lists of people who are moving.*
 - *Check board packet announcements for retirements and email retirees directly*
 - *Create system for tracking bins (too many to keep track of in our heads anymore)*
- *2018 purchase 5 more bins to keep up with demand*

- Takeover 700 sq ft space at warehouse for sorting volume of materials now over 10 tons
- 2022 purchase 5 more bins to keep up with demand

Resources and stakeholders involved

Bin costs were \$1800 spread out over several years and paid through the Center for Sustainability's budget, Signage was provided by document services. Campus facilities such as housekeeping and the campus coordinator help identify staff and faculty that are moving or retiring, administrative professionals make a large portion of the requests for people in their departments. The warehouse helps to move bins back and forth between two off campus locations on a weekly basis. Sustainability interns deliver and retrieve the bins, then sort them at our sorting facility. They identify reusable items and restock the ROSE store, and facilitate surplus deliveries when items are claimed through the listserv.

Describe the Results of this campaign component

The Easy Office Cleanout bin program has increased our outreach across campus and made it common knowledge that there is a Center for Sustainability and familiarity with the work we are doing. Marketing the bins as an easy alternative to having to decide what to do with various items yourself has been very popular. The visibility of rehoming items back onto campus through our listserv and ROSE store has furthered the culture of reuse to the point where regular staff and student staff will often check to see if materials are available for reuse or repurpose before buying new.

Specific measurable impact figures:

From the tons of materials that were being handled improperly, we are now able to recover approximately 85% of them for reuse, donation, or recycling. The average bin weighs 135 lbs. and we average 185 bin deliveries a year, so we are now sorting between 10 and 12 tons a year. In 2021 we recovered and sold \$7600 in books, donated 5200 lbs. of reusable materials not including furniture, recycled 7.25 tons of paper for a \$630 rebate, and placed 320 items such as laptop bags and monitor arms back onto campus for reuse. The ROSE store is self-serve, and we don't keep track of the materials that we rehome through that system, but it's restocked weekly, and we have an ongoing list of requests for items we are always trying to fill. All proceeds from recycling go into a student scholarship fund available for any student with need, we are approaching \$450k put into the scholarship since 2011.

What would you do differently in the future?

Figure out a way to keep track of bins that's less labor intensive, we are still doing it manually through Xcel, and number your bins so you can figure out if one goes missing, we didn't do that until after the second year.

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

Tag your bins with the persons name and date, we often find them abandoned in the hallways and must decide if they are finished with them or not. Be prepared for the wide variety of items you will get and how much room it takes to sort and store them, and the ebb and flow of requests based on the time of year.

Photos and Graphics

Easy Office Cleanout Bin

Order yours at Recycle@jccc.edu



**Moving
Retiring
Organizing**

You fill it up
We sort it out
It's easy!

Dollars made from recycling go to student scholarships



**JOHNSON COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
CENTER FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Office Cleanout

you fill it up, sustainability interns sort it out

All paper products office paper, catalogs, magazines, notebooks, boxes, shredded paper (boxed, bagged), cardboard, phone books etc.

We cannot handle confidential documents, please email Warehouse@jccc.edu for shredding with contact info, location and # of boxes for pickup

Books (textbook boxes can be provided if needed)

Office Supplies files, pens, clips, binders etc.

Packaging Materials

packing peanuts (boxed / bagged), bubble wrap, plastic bags

Small Electronics + Accessories

cables, cords, mouse, keyboards, cell phones, batteries, power strips, CD's, VHS Tapes, ink and toner cartridges

Misc. anything you are unsure of, anything metal, decor, coffee mugs, things that can be donated to charity.

Contact x4929 or email Recycle@jccc.edu for bin pickup
or return this tub and contents to CSB 165

