



Maintenance and Grounds Manager Al King

Right-sizing the trash can

ENHANCING THE CAMPUS-WIDE DESKSIDE RECYCLING PROGRAM

Quick quiz: What's yellow, black, or blue and can be found all over campus?

They are the new bins that accompany UBC's deskside recycling program. In early 2013, in an effort to reduce the total amount of garbage generated on campus and to make it easier for faculty, staff, and students to recycle, office and workstation garbage cans across UBC's Okanagan campus were replaced by containers. Along with the much smaller black garbage bins, workstations are now equipped with large blue recycling bins and yellow compost stations located in common areas across campus.

The deskside recycling program is just one initiative the campus has undertaken in response to three waste audits in 2008, 2010, and 2012. The biennial waste audits provide an enormous amount of information about the composition and volume of waste generated on campus as well as detailed recommendations to reduce and divert waste (see sidebar story).

Al King, manager of maintenance and grounds, explains that the new bins are the latest enhancement to UBC's deskside recycling program, a joint initiative between Facilities Management and the Okanagan Sustainability Office. The aim is to reach a near-zero waste goal; in this case by dramatically improving office waste reduction on the Okanagan campus.

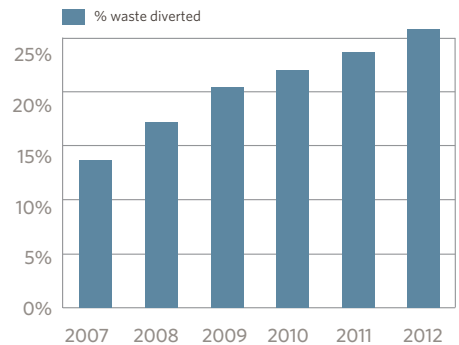
"Our objective is to create a new level of awareness about using the proper waste streams—we call this initiative My Waste, My Responsibility," says King. "The new, smaller garbage bins attach to the side of existing blue recycling buckets in each office. They complement the existing blue bins for recycling and yellow compost bins, to help direct all compostable and recyclable materials into the correct handling systems."

Campus waste diversion data demonstrates a consistent improvement in waste diverted from landfill since 2007 through various campus recycling programs. For example, the proportion of waste diverted from the landfill increased from 14 per cent in 2007 to nearly 26 per cent in 2012.

"That's a tremendous improvement," says King. "It's clear that we are moving in the right direction in overall diversion of waste generated, but there is lots of room for improvement in getting more recyclables and organics out of the garbage and into the recycling and composting bins."

Now that the new smaller bins are in place, the user of each workstation is responsible for disposing of blue bin recycling and the black garbage bin contents at the central collection stations located in corridors and foyers of each building. ●

% WASTE DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL



Did you know...?

SAVE-A-CUP SAVES YOU MONEY

Food service outlets on campus including Tim Hortons, Starbucks, and Aramark will give you a discount off your beverage if you bring your own cup.

NO LINERS SAVES US MONEY

The new office garbage bins don't have liner bags. The cost savings on liner bags alone is expected to pay for the cost of the new bins in their first year.

REVENUE FROM RECYCLING FUNDS COMPOSTING PROGRAM

UBC now receives payment for recyclable materials, and revenue from recycling pays for the Okanagan campus's composting program—which helps keep the Okanagan campus one of the world's most beautiful university environments. In 2012, on-site composting resulted in approximately 40,000 kgs of organic waste diverted from the landfill.

REDUCING THE PRODUCTION OF WASTE IS THE BIG AUDACIOUS GOAL

The goal of deskside recycling is to reduce the creation of waste wherever possible. It also aims to ensure that recyclable material gets to the correct collection point, not into the landfill.