

ZERO WASTE CHALLENGE

The Missouri State Recycling Program is coordinating a Zero Waste Challenge for this year's Earth Day event and we need your help.

Earth Day participants are encouraged to ...

- Keep recyclables as clean as possible. Paper or plastic with food stuck to it cannot be recycled unless it is cleaned.
- "Pre-cycle" by only purchasing #1 and #2 type plastic bottle containers. (Avoid #3 - #7 plastics, foam containers, plastic baggies, and other non-recyclable packaging.)

All waste (trash and recyclables) will be weighed. We are challenging this year's participants to reduce the amount of waste as compared to last year. One of the long term goals of the Zero Waste Challenge is to encourage Earth Day participants to strive for zero waste.

Results From Previous Years

Zero Waste Challenge Measures	Trash in pounds	Material Recycled in pounds	Waste trash + material recycled	Percentage of Waste Recycled	Headcount number registered	Per Capita Waste Generation in pounds
2017	107.6	122.0	229.6	53.1%	1300	0.18
2016	139.3	90.8	230.1	39.5%	1500	0.15
2015	110	90.7	200.7	45.20%	1163	0.17

OBSERVATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EARTH DAY WASTE AUDITS

1. A considerable amount of unopened food containers such as bananas and milk were found in the trash.
2. A significant amount of paperboard packaging from lunches could not be recycled due to food contamination.
3. A significant amount of plastic containers from lunches could not be recycled because they were not #1 or #2 type plastic.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

1. Materials accepted for recycling include: mixed office paper, cardboard (including paperboard such as cracker and cereal boxes), aluminum cans, steel cans, and #1 and #2 plastic bottles.
2. Recyclable materials placed in trash containers will be taken to a landfill. Please encourage students to place recyclable materials in the proper recycling container.
3. Consider ways to reduce the amount of food and packaging that is thrown away. Can reusable containers be utilized?
4. Using the Zero Waste Challenge measures (left), Earth Day participants are being challenged to generate less waste this year. This will require each student, teacher and state employee to do their part to reduce the amount of trash generated. Consider the importance of reducing first, reusing second, and finally recycling.