

## REDUCING & RECYCLING WASTE: UNIVERSITY OF IL & CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

Since 2010, the Urbana-Champaign campus has taken several steps toward achieving zero waste. The [2015 Illinois Climate Action Plan \(iCAP\)](#) includes the goal of increasing diversion of [Municipal Solid Waste \(MSW\)](#) from landfill to 45% by FY20, 60% by FY25, and 80% by FY35, while also increasing the total diversion rate to 90% by FY20 and 95% by FY25. Achieving these goals will require a decrease in the use of non-durable goods, and increases in reuse and recycling of materials. This guide will help you answer the question “What can I do to reduce and recycle waste on campus and in the broader community?”

### REDUCE

Waste generation is a huge problem, but we all have the power to help prevent and reduce it by making simple changes in our individual decisions. Start by thinking about ways to reduce waste before it is generated. A waste characterization of four campus buildings conducted by the [Illinois Sustainable Technology Center \(ISTC\)](#) in the fall of 2015, in which 5385 pounds of waste was sorted into 23 material categories over a 15 day sampling period, revealed that non-food service paper comprised 9.6 % of the waste stream. Plastic beverage containers were 2.9% of the waste. Other plastic containers were 5.5%. The largest components of the campus waste stream were food scraps (22%) and paper towels (14.1%).

To reduce these and other types of waste, **take a reusable coffee mug** to your favorite café—many offer discounts if you bring your own mug. **Take reusable cloth bags with you to the grocery store**; if you don’t have tote bags already, most retailers have reusable bags available for purchase near checkout lanes so you can buy some along with your other items and have them for your next visit. **Carry a refillable water bottle**, and avoid buying water in single-use plastic bottles. Bottled water is often purified tap water. **Print**

**documents only when essential**; review drafts electronically. **When you need to print, make sure your printer is set to double-sided printing**. When eating at dining halls, buffets, or other restaurants, **carefully consider the amount of food you take and ask about portion sizes when ordering**; people have a tendency to take more food than they will actually eat. If you can’t eat all your food, **take the leftovers home**, or to your dorm room for later consumption. Check your supplies before grocery shopping, and **only buy perishable food in bulk if you’re sure you’ll use it before spoiling**. **Use reusable containers and service ware as much as possible** when packing your lunch or eating at home.

Additional Resources:

- **ISTC Zero Waste Guide: Waste-Free Lunches:** [http://www.istc.illinois.edu/info/library\\_docs/TN/Waste-Free-Lunches.pdf](http://www.istc.illinois.edu/info/library_docs/TN/Waste-Free-Lunches.pdf)
- **US EPA--Reducing Wasted Food at Home:** <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home>
- **The ULS (Use Less Stuff) Report:** <http://www.use-less-stuff.com/index.htm>

*This guide was created in conjunction with campus building waste audits conducted by ISTC’s Zero Waste Illinois program, with funding from the [UI Student Sustainability Committee](#).*



*Water bottle filling stations on the 1<sup>st</sup> & lower levels of the Illini Union can help you avoid buying bottled water.*



## REUSE

Consumers often look at product labels for percentage of recycled content and other factors to feel they're buying the most environmentally friendly option. But the "greenest" product you'll ever use is one that has already been manufactured and is currently in use by you or someone else. Consider all the resources (energy, water, human labor, etc.) to obtain (through mining, logging, harvesting, etc.) and distribute materials to manufacturing facilities, and all the resources that go into the actual manufacturing process (to run machinery, light a factory, etc.). If we keep a product that has already been manufactured in useful service for as long as possible, we will get the most out of that investment of resources. You can reduce waste by **repairing things you already own rather than replacing them, giving away or selling items that you no longer need or want, buying used items, and buying refurbished items** (items that have been used but have been returned to "like new" condition by a manufacturer or retailer so they function according to original specifications; these almost always are sold at much a cheaper price than a completely new product).



*Reduction & reuse are more preferable than recycling in the US EPA Waste Management Hierarchy.*



In addition to the tips on the previous page about replacing single use items with reusable options, you can **reuse paper that has been printed on one side for scratch paper or to print drafts** (if you load the paper into your printer correctly). **Donate clothing, housewares, etc. to local charities, and buy used items from charity resale and consignment shops.** More and more **retailers are making it easier to search for refurbished electronics on their web sites** (e.g. Dell and Best Buy). Campus staff can **check with the [University Surplus Equipment Warehouse](#)** to obtain items no longer needed by other departments, before purchasing new items. **Students, staff, and faculty can get assistance with repairing electronics and devices with electronic components at the Illini Gadget Garage**, a collaborative repair space run by student volunteers. More information on hours, location, and pop-up clinics around campus is available at <http://www.sustainelectronics.illinois.edu/research/gadgetgarage.cfm> or <https://www.facebook.com/IlliniGadgetGarage/>. And of course, students should continue the fine tradition of **buying used textbooks and selling them back at the end of a semester!** Check with the [Illini Union Bookstore](#), [T.I.S.](#), the [Illini Book Exchange](#), and other local retailers for details.

**The following organizations, programs, and businesses accept items for reuse (\*), sell used items (†), or both.** Check listed web sites or call for full details on items accepted, locations, and store or sale hours, as well as whether items are accepted for donation or bought from consumers for cash or store credit. **This list is NOT comprehensive;** search the Internet for additional local options! List is for informational purposes only and does not constitute endorsement.

- **All Things Kids** \*† 217-359-5300; <http://allthingskidsinc.com/>
- **Champaign Public Library** \*† 217-403-2070; <http://www.champaign.org/>
- **Classic Home Consignment** \*† 217-239-1169; <http://www.classichomecu.com/>
- **Courage Connection** \*† 217-384-2158; <http://courageconnection.org/>
- **Crisis Nursery** \* 217-337-2731; <https://www.crisisnursery.net/GivingOpportunities/NeedsWishList.aspx>
- **Dandelion** † 217-954-0555; <http://www.dandelionretro.com/>
- **Furniture Lounge** † 217-418-5388; <http://www.furniturelounge.net/index.html>
- **Goodwill/Land of Lincoln Goodwill Industries, Inc.** \*† 217-789-0400; <http://www.llgi.org/contact-us/>
- **Habitat for Humanity Restore** \*† 217-359-0507 or 217-819-5118; <http://cuhabitat.org/re-store/>
- **The IDEA Store** \*† 217-352-7878; <http://the-idea-store.org/>



- Jane Addams Book Shop \*† 217-356-2555; <http://www.janeaddamsbooks.com/>
- Karen's Kloset \*† 217-355-9395; <http://karenskloset.com/>
- Plato's Closet \*† 217-366-8200; <http://www.platosclosetchampaign.com/>
- Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA) \*† 217-359-7222; <http://pacacc.org/>
- Ragstock † 217-344-2549; <http://ragstock.com/stores/champaign/>
- University YMCA Dump and Run (for material collection during student move out) \*† 217-337-1500; [http://www.universityymca.org/dump\\_and\\_run/](http://www.universityymca.org/dump_and_run/)
- Urbana Free Library \*† 217-367-4057; <http://urbanafreelibrary.org/>
- Several food donation options exist; explore these links
  - o [http://www.feedingillinois.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=43](http://www.feedingillinois.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=43)
  - o <http://ampleharvest.org/find-pantry/>
  - o <http://www.illinoisfoodbanks.org/sites.asp>
  - o <https://www.zeropercent.us/>

## RECYCLE

The [UI Waste Transfer Station](#) recycles or diverts from landfills nearly 50% of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign waste. **Campus currently recycles office paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, and plastic bottles with resin codes #1 and #2.** Recycling bins may vary in terms of appearance across the various buildings in campus, but an effort is being made to use [consistent bin labels](#), [downloadable from the Facilities and Services web site](#), to clarify which items

are acceptable and which are not (see example to the right). Recommendations related to expansion of the types of materials accepted for recycling on campus have been made by the [Sustainability Working Advisory Team \(SWATeam\)](#) [on Purchasing, Waste, and Recycling](#), and new recycling programs are being added over time, such as those recycling [nitrile gloves](#) and [expanded polystyrene foam \(Styrofoam\) packaging](#). **Waste haulers in Champaign offer curbside recycling programs for their clients and the City of Urbana has a municipal curbside recycling program.** Use the following links to learn more about recycling options available to you for responsible management of products at the end of their useful life.



- UI Facilities & Services Waste Management & Recycling <http://www.fs.illinois.edu/services/waste-management-and-recycling>
- Champaign Residential Recycling Programs <http://ci.champaign.il.us/departments/public-works/residents/recycling/>
- Urbana Residential Recycling (U-Cycle) <http://urbanailinois.us/U-cycle>
- Electronics Recycling (includes info on countywide collection events & local businesses that accept devices) <http://ci.champaign.il.us/departments/public-works/residents/recycling/electronics-recycling/>
- Where Do I Recycle It? (info on a wide variety of common items from the City of Urbana) <http://urbanailinois.us/residents/recycling-program-u-cycle/where-do-i-take-it>
- City of Champaign Recycling Guide <http://ci.champaign.il.us/cms/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Recycle-guide1.pdf>
- Landscape Recycling Center <http://www.landscaperecyclingcenter.org/>
- Commercial food scrap composting is **NOT** currently available in the C-U community. Information on backyard compost piles and vermicomposting (with worms) is available on the [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#) web site ([illinoiscomposts.org](http://illinoiscomposts.org)) under "Resources" on the "Residential" page. This site also provides information for businesses, institutions, schools, restaurants, and local governments.

