



State Capitol Complex Recycling Upgrades

Overview of Activities and Enhancements

What's changing in 2016?

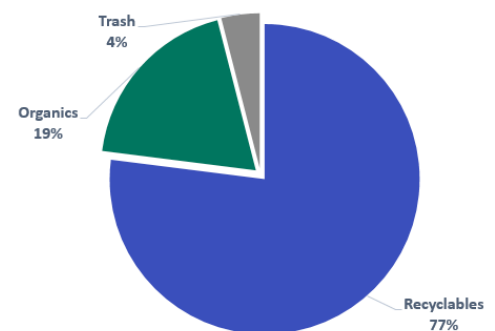
Admin has partnered with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce's Waste Wise Foundation to implement big changes for the Capitol Complex recycling program in 2016. Here's what we're doing:

- Introducing organics recycling—also known as commercial composting.
- Deploying new consolidated, color-coded collection stations in optimal locations and supporting them with easy-to-understand signage and instructions.
- Phasing out desk-side trash collection and giving employees desk-side recycling containers and small trash bins that they will be responsible for emptying at the central collection stations.
- Providing training and education to ensure all employees understand the upgrades and maximize their recycling potential.

Why are we making changes?

The Capitol Complex discarded 3.7 million pounds of solid waste in calendar year 2014. We recycled about 2.6 million pounds or 70 percent of it. Here's why we can and need to do better:

- In 2014, the legislature updated state government's recycling goals, requiring all state agencies in the Twin Cities Metro Area to achieve a recycling rate of 75 percent or higher by the year 2030 (Minnesota Statutes 115A.551, Subd. 2a).
- Over 60 percent of the material that was thrown in the trash on the Capitol Complex in 2014 was compostable and about 18 percent was recyclable. Ultimately, only about 10 to 15 percent of all the Capitol Complex's trash should have been thrown away and sent to the landfill.
 - What's more, a startling amount of the Capitol's waste was made up of empty or near-empty garbage bags from desk-side trash cans. In total, these bags made up more than 3,250 pounds of waste and accounted for a cost of about \$16,000 per year.



The steps we're taking to improve our recycling rate are proven and evidence-based, inspired by other organizations' best practices and what we learned studying the Capitol's trash stream.

The pie graph above shows the Capitol Complex's recycling potential. We believe over 90 percent of our waste could be recycled or composted. Upgrading our recycling programs positions us to get there—meeting and surpassing legislative goals and making progress toward becoming a zero-waste workplace.

Why is recycling important?

Increasing the recycling rate on the Capitol Complex is the right thing to do. It not only follows the spirit of the law, but also has positive economic, environmental and operational benefits. Here are just a few of them:

- **Recycling enhances our quality of life and protects the environment for future generations.**
 - It saves energy and offsets greenhouse gas emissions. Attaining a recycling rate of 90 percent on the Capitol Complex would save enough energy to heat, cool, and power 48 households for a year, which is equal to 42,772 gallons of gasoline.
 - It also keeps our Capitol Complex beautiful. Our composted organics will be used as mulch and fertilizer on the State Capitol grounds.
- **Recycling creates jobs and saves money.**
 - A study by the MPCA found that approximately 60,000 jobs in Minnesota are directly and indirectly supported by the recycling industry. These jobs pay an estimated \$3.4 billion in wages and add nearly \$15.7 billion in sales to Minnesota's economy.
 - The state hopes to save over \$33,000 annually in trash disposal costs with these upgrades, all while exhibiting the state's commitment to sustainable operations.

How can employees support the effort?

It's going to take support from all employees to reach our recycling goals. Here's how everyone can maximize their recycling potential:

- **Take advantage of the new central collection stations. Everything goes here: paper, plastic, trash, and for the first time, organics.**
 - Over 60 percent of what we throw away at the Capitol Complex can be recycled with organics. Recycle all your food, including meat and dairy, non-recyclable paper (like napkins and paper plates), and compostable plastics. Our cafeterias will now be using compostable silverware, cups, plates and bowls—look for a compostable label and place those items in the organics bin.
 - Recycle all your plastics. Not just beverage bottles, but yogurt containers, milk, soup cartons, and other packaging too!
- **Leverage your new desk-side recycling container and small trash bin.**
 - It's up to you to empty these at a central collection station. Stretch those legs—getting up a few times a day to drop things off supports our recycling goals and your health and wellness.
- **Get in the spirit of recycling teamwork! Talk to your coworkers and work together.**
 - Not sure if something is recyclable? Ask around and never default to trash.
 - If you're responsible for ordering office supplies or planning events, consider buying recyclable materials. Do what you can to ensure your workspace and events are zero-waste too.

Where can I find more information?

More information about the Capitol Complex Recycling Upgrades can be found on Admin's website at mn.gov/admin/recycling. If you have questions or need help, you can email Capitol.Recycling@state.mn.us.