About
The University of Iowa is working to achieve a 60% waste diversion rate on campus. This is one of the UI’s seven sustainability targets, established by President Mason.

To enhance this team effort, this newsletter seeks to recognize and illustrate progress being made across campus.

Join the pursuit!

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Progress: Looking Back, Moving Forward

The bins for single-stream recycling continue to roll-out. Plastic, metal, flattened cardboard, and paper—it all goes in the same recycling bin! The UI has new containers at docks, blue bins in public spaces, and desk-side bins. This effort establishes the physical capacity to accept more recyclables under the single-stream program.

The other ongoing effort is about connections. People are working hard across campus to make recycling work in their buildings. We want to recognize these efforts and connect people and ideas across campus in order to continually improve our system and strive for 60% waste diversion.

4,500 freshmen build relationships and pride to start the year out right.

The IOWA Challenge
At the beginning of the year, 4,500 freshmen were oriented to the university community and the potential for great success ahead. The IOWA Challenge is comprised of five expectations for students that will enable them to identify opportunities and overcome challenges along the way: Excel, Choose, Stretch, Engage, and Serve.

The IOWA Challenge speaks to students and alumni that will be or have been transformed by their experiences at Iowa—but its relevance doesn’t stop there. Our campus’s goal of 60% waste diversion is also a tough but achievable goal, and we expect students, staff, and faculty and operations on campus to be transformed by this journey. These next stories put The IOWA Challenge in the context of waste diversion and highlight some exceptional, unique efforts underway across campus.

Click here to more about the IOWA Challenge.
Excel, Choose, Stretch, Engage, and Serve

**Excel: Set high standards.**

*On Iowa (Convocation, Block Party, and Kickoff at Kinnick)*

4,500 freshmen achieved amazing waste diversion rates within their first few days on campus. The On Iowa orientation program included Convocation on the Pentacrest, the President’s Block Party, and Kickoff at Kinnick.

Each event had waste reduction embedded into the process. These were great, collaborative efforts made possible by the On Iowa Committee, UI Housing, and volunteers from more than six UI organizations: Biology, Engineers for a Sustainable World, ECO Hawk, University of Iowa Environmental Coalition, and ITS.

Waste diversion success: 87%! On Iowa!

**Choose: Make decisions that support your goals.**

*Hillcrest Market Place*

Choosing new technologies and sophisticated processes, Hillcrest’s dedicated dining team went tray-less, installed a new, highly efficient dishwasher, and bought a food pulper which allows them to compost food scraps. Waste diversion has been enhanced, a goal that supports Hillcrest’s other goals. It even made the dishwashing experience more enjoyable.

Funding for the project was supported by a SWAP Grant from Iowa DNR (click here to learn more). With help of the pulper, roughly 2,800lbs of food scraps are being composted per week and taken to the Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center. Waterwaste is also being reduced through their new dishwasher. It uses 1/8 of the water and, as a result, decreases the use of cleaning chemicals in a big way.

**Stretch: Learn from diverse people, ideas, and experiences.**

*Division of World Languages, Literature, and Cultures*

A growing Green Team of students, staff, and faculty are stretching beyond single-stream in Phillips Hall. They’re composting, recycling glass, and building sustainability duties into a full-time position description. Their Green Team has established several goals for the 2012-13 academic year (to name a few): Expand compost program, create a recycling video and storyboard, install a hydration station, and conduct audits for waste AND energy.

The Division is also reaching across cultures as they develop a plan to use multiple languages and cultural perspectives to discuss sustainability and recycling practices, as described by Green Team member and Professor and Associate Director of the Division, “…working in different languages and cultures is an important part of the stretching of minds and experiences that the Division pursues for UI students.”

Stay tuned to this team as the year goes continues.

Interested in desk-side recycling bins for your department? Contact recycle@uiowa.edu
Excel, Choose, Stretch, Engage, and Serve

Engage: Get involved and be a leader.
College of Dentistry

Check out their recycling and waste trends on the right. That represents an engaged community, not just individuals.

The engagement started with awareness. Since the college conducted its first waste audit in 2008, which had a broad and high range of leadership involved, these Hawkeyes have decreased waste every year, increased recycling, and have even found a way to reuse and recycle those blue dental gowns we know our dentists to wear.

Serve: Contribute to a community that’s a great place to live and learn.
Delta Tau Delta

“Lead Your Legacy” is their motto. It’s an active endeavor. This group of leaders is serving their community and organization’s best interests. Leading the Iowa Recycling Team efforts at Kinnick game days, you’ve probably seen these recycling cheer-champs help Hawkeye fans (and others) put their cans and bottles in the correct container.

Delta Tau Delta has had a large volunteer presence at each game this year. James Proehl, President of Delta Tau Delta, has played an integral part in initiating and continuing the effort.

"The fans really appreciate our recycling effort. They see that we care and they see how easy it is to make an impact just by choosing the appropriate bin to throw an item into. We are proud to be a part of this program and some of the highest diversion rates Kinnick Stadium has seen." Many thanks to a legacy well underway, Delta Tau Delta.

Recycling: Know the Basics, Share the Basics

Single-stream recycling: You can put all recyclable materials into one bin: paper, plastic, metal, and flattened cardboard.

- Not included: Glass, styrofoam, bags or wrappers, and food.
- Rule of thumb for plastic: If it is molded or rigid, you can recycle it. If it is not (i.e. bags or wrappers), you can’t.
- Recycling Station setup: Central, public areas should have a blue recycling bin on wheels paired with a smaller trash can. Recycling bin should have a single-stream “Recycling Made Easy” poster.
- Dialogue is critical: Feedback and inquiries are important. Talk to your building coordinator or custodial supervisor or email recycle@uiowa.edu. Bin setup and changes affect many people. Talk to ‘em!
- Calculating waste diversion: Waste diversion = (recycling+compost) / (recycling+compost+landfilled waste). Reduction and reuse are more challenging to calculate, but they do impact diversion, and they are GOOD THINGS TO DO!
Green is Gold: Kinnick Nears 60% Diversion

The Hawkeye community has come together to recycle and compost at Kinnick Stadium. Results are impressive, promising, and leave room for more success to come.

So many partners to name! Let’s try: Athletics, Aramark, City High School, West High School, Delta Tau Delta, Eco Hawk, Office of Sustainability, and many more student groups and individuals.

Many variables affect diversion. Colder weather means less water is sold in concessions, which means less recycled plastic. These diversion rates only include Kinnick’s gates, concessions, concourse, and bleachers. The parking lots will be a great undertaking someday, but first we need to improve our stadium efforts. Though, the $0.05 price for cans and bottles does a good job of keeping those materials out of the parking lots.

If you’re going to a game, recycling will meet you with a smiling face.

If you want to be that smiling face (volunteer), contact recycle@uiowa.edu.

Creating a Robust Recycling Program

Moving forward is the creation of the campus’s comprehensive recycling program. While the bins continue to roll-out and create the physical capacity to handle more recycling on campus with the single-stream system, the recycling program will primarily address these areas in order to facilitate our pursuit of 60% waste diversion:

- Recycling Station setup: We will create a consistent, recognizable recycling station setup across campus, so people are offered consistent choices with bins, signage, and the opportunity to recycle.
- Safety: We will ensure safety and minimal risk for those recycling and transporting recycling.
- Outreach: How can education, awareness, and opportunities to take action enhance recycling efforts in your building or department? How can we enhance existing and unique efforts and facilitate new efforts across campus?
- Roles and relationships: If you see opportunities or issues in your building or department, what is the best approach? What stakeholders should you involve? How do you take personal responsibility for waste diversion?
- Performance: How do we standardize and continually measure waste diversion performance in buildings?
My name is Eric Holthaus, and I join the University of Iowa as the Recycling Coordinator in enthusiastic pursuit of waste diversion. My enthusiasm started here, as a student at the University of Iowa, studying geography, serving in the Environmental Coalition, and interning for the Office of Sustainability. It grew at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, earning my graduate degree in urban planning. It continued at Luther College, working as the Energy and Waste Steward in the Office of Sustainability. It continues here.

Waste diversion is one of several pursuits in sustainability, and I find great opportunities in these pursuits: Curiosity, conversation, commitment, collaboration, community—you’ve got your “C” words. These are values that are not new to anybody. They are all explicitly related to sustainability, though, and that’s an idea worth sharing.

At the University of Iowa, we all play an important role in the pursuit of seven sustainability targets to be achieved by 2020. These will all take a community that cares, includes others, and innovates. We’ll have to learn from each other. We’ll have to invent and persist. We’ll have to engage in a liberal arts pursuit, just like the students on campus, making important connections across disciplines and grappling with our meaning in our community and our increasingly connected world.

What an opportunity. I am dedicated to the 60% waste diversion goal by 2020. It is my goal, but it’s not mine alone. When a student gets involved out of curiosity and crafts a plan for more recycling bins in Anne Cleary Walkway (potential exists), that is her achievement to own and leverage; it just so happens we all benefit. When a faculty member describes how to recycle appropriately in a syllabus or designs a class project for students to create recycling signs for bins in multiple languages, that’s a pat on the back for him, but we can all pat ourselves on the back for it, too. When a custodian works with building occupants to gain feedback, assess recycling setup, and implement a plan for waste diversion, that is a process that guarantees a strong outcome. As a result, you and I will have better opportunities to make responsible decisions and divert waste. We are part of a great team effort that is less about the outcome but more about the enriching process—the many little steps—that gets us there.

We are not at 60% waste diversion, and we do not know exactly what it will look like, but we can be clear that the opportunity is rich and waiting to be pursued by more and more. Luckily, this pursuit of sustainability will not run dry, the opportunities will only grow, and we can be sure that the legacy we build will continue to grow.

Your Opportunity

There is a great opportunity on campus to connect and enrich each other through our pursuit of waste diversion and the seven sustainability targets on campus.

Start a conversation, and spread the excitement. Assistance is available if you need it.

• Your department needs desk-side recycling bins?
• You want to recycle at Kinnick?
• Your department wants to learn more and improve recycling?

You’re ready. Let’s go! Recycle@uiowa.edu

Recycling—it’s a great look.