



10 Steps To a Waste Free Business

Check the waste reduction steps your business would be willing to implement

Company Name:

Owner:

Contact Info:

Date:

1. Take Action on Single-Use Plastic Bags

- Implement an “ask first” policy – require cashiers to ask customers if they need a bag instead of automatically putting items into one+
- Provide a discount or “points” to customers who bringing their own reusable bags.
- Charge for single-use bags – even a 5-cent charge can result in significant reductions in the number of single-use bags used (60-90%!)
- Offer reusable bags at a price point that disincentives customers using them like disposable bags (at least \$3 dollars/bag).
- Sign-on to the letter from local businesses asking Edmonton City Council to take action to address single use plastic

2. Encourage Customers to Bring Reusable Containers

- You can encourage customers to bring their own containers for bulk and ready-made items by:
 - a) advertising in-store that you allow customers to bring their own containers;
 - b) making it easy for customers to do it (e.g. train staff in how to handle reusable requests, including understanding how to subtract the weight of the container from the price); and
 - c) providing a discount or “points” to customers for bringing their own containers.

3. Re-think Packaging

- Choose suppliers who provide items with no or reduced packaging.
- Request that suppliers reduce the amount of packaging they use, and let them know that you are basing your purchasing decision, in-part, on the amount of packaging they use.

4. Go Paperless (e-receipts, emails, [Micro Receipts](#), etc)

5. Recycle, Reduce, Reuse, REPEAT

- Ensure waste streams are properly sorted.
- Recycle paper, bottles/cans and ink cartridges. For other waste, choose disposal services that direct items, such as plastics and electronics, to recycling facilities instead of the landfill.
- Reuse packing materials and cardboard boxes.
- Use double-sided printing when possible.
- Eliminate disposable cups, plates, and utensils in the break room., and replace with permanent dishware.
- Ensure that food waste is sent to a compost facility (or compost on site if feasible!).
- Switch to rechargeable batteries.
- Use eco-friendly cleaning products that are biodegradable and non-toxic.

6. Switch to energy saving appliances and fixtures

- Shop, secondhand where possible, and buy new products that are sustainably made
- Use energy efficient light bulbs and LED lights.
- Opt for devices with built-in, energy-saving features.

7. Turn off equipment when not in use

- Unplug small electronics and appliances.
- Use a power strip for various devices, and simply flip the power strip switch.

8. Turn off equipment when not in use

- Change your air filter regularly.
- Tune up your HVAC equipment yearly.
- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Seal your heating and cooling ducts.

9. Shop and support other local and sustainable businesses

10. Once you've begun to practice sustainability, don't keep it a secret. Show your new green initiative to customers, staff and even vendors

- Tag & follow us @wastefreeyeg, to share your green practices and procedures



Why do we need to address single use plastics (SUP's)?

1. They are bad for the environment

SUPs are an environmentally damaging, and easily preventable, source of litter, greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. They can become airborne even when properly disposed, ending up littering our urban landscape, and our river valley. They also pose a serious threat to riparian and marine environments and wildlife. 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals - whales, seals and turtles - die from ingestion of, or entanglement in, plastics every year.

2. They are bad for our health

Even when they are no longer obvious to the naked eye, plastic degrades into tiny micro-plastic particles that absorb toxins and contaminate our food chain as well as our water, air and soil. Microplastics have been found in salt, honey, bottled and tap water, shellfish and beer. You are essentially eating and drinking those plastic bags!

3. They cost you money

The costs of these one-time use products are passed on in the form of higher prices and increased taxes required for the clean-up and disposal of these items.

4. They waste valuable resources

SUPs are made from a limited supply of non-renewable petroleum sources. You could drive a mile on 14 plastic bags! It is also estimated that [plastics will account for 20% of total oil consumption by 2050](#).

5. SUPs laws work

Bans and surcharges have both been proven to be an incredibly effective mechanism to reduce the consumption of SUPs (e.g. a 60-90% reduction for plastic bags).