

Zero Waste Program - Case Study



ILLINOIS SUSTAINABLE
TECHNOLOGY CENTER
PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

GAMEDAY RECYCLING CHALLENGE



In Fall 2014, the University of Illinois participated in the Gameday Recycling Challenge for the first time. The Gameday Recycling Challenge is a friendly competition for colleges and universities to promote waste reduction at their home football games. The Challenge occurred on October 25th for the homecoming football game against the University of Minnesota. During the game, efforts were implemented to reduce waste by composting and recycling. At the end of the game, all the waste

streams were sorted and weighed, and the results were tabulated. Result categories included waste minimization, diversion rate, greenhouse gas reduction, recycling, and organics reduction. Each participating game's data is used to rank and determine the Challenge winners. University of Illinois achieved a diversion rate of 60% by improving source separation of compostable and recyclable materials. The University will use this year's diversion rate as a baseline to improve efforts going forward in upcoming years.

EXECUTION

Three-bin stations for compost, recycling, and landfill materials were set up throughout Memorial Stadium. Volunteers acted as a critical component of the competition because they spread the word during the event and informed fans on how they could participate. Each volunteer was assigned a station to guide fans on what materials belonged in each bin. Waste from premium seating areas of the stadium is managed differently than common areas of the stadium. To ensure that all areas of the stadium were accounted for in the challenge, all of the food waste and recycling items from the premium seating area was sorted by volunteers. The U of I marching band, The Marching Illini, participated at halftime by marching into a recycling logo to raise awareness of the event.



CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

Key Stats



8790 pounds of mixed recycling



9787 pounds of compost



15 MTCO₂E avoided



150 volunteers



44,437 fans in attendance



60% diversion rate

SPONSORS



Block I Recycling Logo



Block I also participated by displaying a recycling logo and the game day recycling challenge logo as one of their card tricks during the game.

THREE BIN STATIONS



Each three bin station has at least one volunteer helping fans participate in the zero waste effort.

ABOUT THE GAMEDAY RECYCLING CHALLENGE

Nationwide, the Game Day Recycling Challenge is a partnership of the College and University Recycling Coalition (CURC), RecycleMania and Keep America Beautiful (KAB), and is supported by EPA's WasteWise program.

The national competition is divided up by conference and division. University of Illinois competes against their Big 10 rivals.

Find out more at:
www.gamedaychallenge.org

WASTE REDUCTION

COMPOST

The compost collected during the game was hauled by Midwest Fiber to their compost facility in Peoria, IL located approximately 90 miles away. Composting the waste was the largest and one of the only costs of the competition. ISTC worked with concession staff in advance of the game to source compostable containers during the game to help increase the diversion rate. Compostable bags were placed in bathrooms to collect the paper towel waste. Items accepted in the compost bins consisted of food waste and contaminated paper products, napkins, paper plates, popcorn containers, paper food boats, hot cups, compostable lids, pressed paper serving trays, and disposable forks.

RECYCLE

The recyclable material collected at the event was transported and processed by the University's own waste transfer station. The University did not accept the plastic #5 souvenir cups. Instead of disposing of these in the landfill, a research group on campus is using the plastic cups in their research. Items accepted in the recycling bins were plastic bottles, plastic cups (#5), paper board boxes, and programs.

LANDFILL

All material that could not be composted or recycled was placed in the landfill bins. Items in the landfill bins were condiment packages, all other serving containers, plastic film, metallic wrappers, plastic cup lids, small plastic containers, and straws.

THE GAMEDAY RECYCLING CHALLENGE WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST RECYCLING EVENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS HISTORY.

