

Tips for Reducing Office Lunchtime Waste



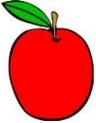
Eliminate Take-Out and Pack Your Lunch Using Reusable Containers

Reduce packaging waste while saving money. Waste free lunches cost almost 40% less than lunches packed with pre-packaged foods.



Be Healthy and Reduce Food Waste

Packing your own healthy lunch helps you watch your calories and reduce food waste. It is estimated that the total food disposed of per day in the US amounted to over 49,000,000 pounds in full-service restaurants and over 85,000,000 pounds in fast food restaurants.



Give Yourself a Raise!

The average worker spends around \$37 a week on bought lunch, which is equivalent to up to \$2,000 a year.



Keep Durable Dishes at Your Desk

Store a reusable plate, bowl, cup, mug, utensils, cloth napkin, and to-go containers at your desk.



Use Durable Dishware for Office Parties

If your office has a breakroom with a sink, stock it up with durable dishware for use during lunch or for office parties.



Don't Forget the To-go Container

Bring a reusable, to-go container with you to take home leftovers when you go out to lunch.



Use a Durable Lunch Box or Bag

Use a reusable lunch box to pack your lunch. Extend the life of your shopping bags by using them to pack your lunch. Or, get rid of disposable bags all together and use only durable bags.



Plan Your Menu for the Week

Before you shop, make a list of all the food you will need for the week. Buy only what you need, eat everything that you buy.



Reduce Wasteful Packaging

Bring your own reusable containers and shop in the bulk food section



Buy Large, Pack Small

Choosing to purchase large containers of food and packing it in smaller containers for lunch reduces your waste and saves money.



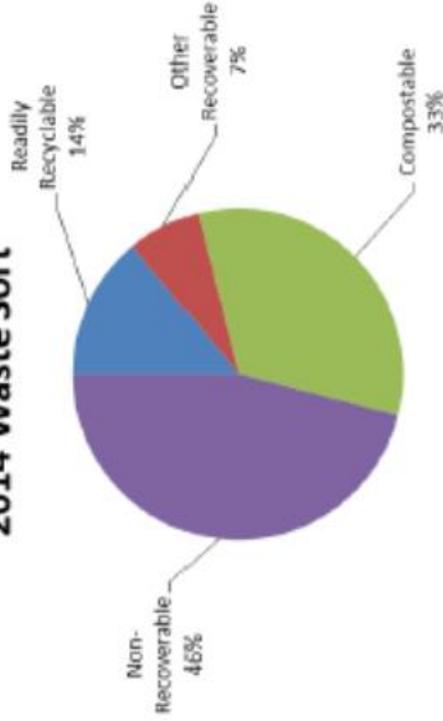
Buy Local

Shop at local farmers markets or produce stands and support business in your community. Locally grown produce looks and tastes better because it's picked at its peak. Buying local also reduces the harmful environmental impacts of long distance shipping.



In 2014 Washington County contracted with Portland State University Community Environmental Services to conduct an audit of the garbage generated at several County buildings. Both recyclable and non-recyclable items were found in the landfill-bound waste. Here's a breakdown (by weight) of the garbage found at one site:

2014 Waste Sort



The sort categories included:

- Readily Recyclable**
 - Cardboard
 - Paper
 - Plastic bottles & tubs
 - Metals
 - Glass bottles & jars
- Other Recoverable**
 - Electronics
 - Reuse items
 - Plastic film
 - Block foam
- Compostable**
 - Food scraps
 - Intact food
- Non-Recoverable**
 - Restroom waste
 - True waste
 - Single-use drink cups
 - Single-use food service ware
 - Food-soiled fibers
 - Liquids

Tips for Reducing Waste at the Office

We can all do more to help reduce the amount of garbage that we're generating at the office. Here are a few things you can do to help make Washington County sustainable.

Easy Steps

- o Use your desk side or break room containers to recycle all cardboard, paper, magazines, sticky notes, plastic bottles and tubs, glass bottles and jars, aluminum foil and metal cans
- o Bring lunches in washable, reusable containers instead of getting take-out or eating frozen meals
- o Only use one paper towel when drying your hands
- o Use a durable mug for coffee and other drinks
- o Send any e-waste or non-used office supplies through the County's surplus and ReUse Store programs
- o Buy in bulk and bag small quantities for lunches and snacks, instead of buying individual serving pack food

Challenge Yourself

- o Keep a personal coffee mug, water bottle and shopping bag at work so you can avoid disposables. Don't forget to use them!
- o Use only durable dishware at the office
- o Use personal cloth napkins instead of disposables
- o Send or post documents electronically, rather than generating printouts for review, meeting agendas, signature routing, etc.
- o Buy more fresh produce at the County Farmers Market each Thursday instead of buying packaged items at the store

Be a Sustainability Hero

- o Use washable rags to clean work areas instead of disposable wipes and paper towels
- o Keep a personal hand towel at work for drying your hands
- o Try not to put anything in your desk side garbage can (to reduce you use of non-recyclables) or give up your can altogether
- o Green your meetings by eliminating printouts, providing drinking water in pitchers instead of individual bottles, allowing off-site participants to phone in and taking notes on a laptop