



**MCLA**

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS

# **REDUCING FOOD WASTE ON CAMPUS**

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FALL 2020 WASTEWISE FORUM





## CAMPUS PROFILE

- Located in North Adams, MA
- 1,000 undergraduate students currently enrolled
- 3 residence areas – 52% of students live on campus (2020)
- Ranked a Top Ten College by U.S. News and World Report
- In-person classes with additional campus health and safety guidelines



# SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

[WWW.MCLA.EDU/GREEN](http://WWW.MCLA.EDU/GREEN)

- Formed in 2007
- Composed of staff, faculty, and student intern
- Monthly meetings to discuss campus programs and opportunities



# QUICK LOOK: WASTE DIVERSION

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- Single stream recycling
- Electronic waste
- Redeemable containers
- Organics
- “Donation Station” program at the end of the semester
- Mattress recycling



## SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING

### ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

- Mixture of centralized sorting stations and deskside containers
- Individual indoor recycling bins lined with bags
- Maintainers carry recycling bags by hand, then empty the bag contents into outdoor bins (bags reused when possible or placed in trash)
- 2-4 outdoor carts per building, some share





## SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING RESIDENCE HALLS

- Students bring materials to blue carts in 'trash rooms' in residence halls
- Maintainers bring material to central area by hand, wheel carts outside and empty bag contents in maroon carts (bags reused when possible or placed in trash)
- Townhouses – students bring trash and recycling outside themselves
- Carts emptied weekly



CONTAMINATION EXAMPLE





# ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

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- IT department & TV studio equipment collected in their respective buildings
  - 300-400 items picked up 1-2 times per year by CRT Recycling (free)
- Light bulb collection box located in all buildings, including residential halls
  - Full boxes taken to Facilities
  - 12-15 boxes per pickup (Veolia)
- Campus-wide battery collection initiated by Sustainability Committee (Veolia)
- Collaboration with Residential Programs and Services for “Donation Stations” program

# COLLECTING REDEEMABLES

- New program
- Partnership with Berkshire Family and Individual Resources (BFAIR)
- Containers placed in student housing areas
- BFAIR empties containers at least weekly





# STAFF TRAINING & FEEDBACK

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- Training provided when hired, verbal and shadowing
- Most maintainers are seasoned staff, with a few new hires recently
- Verbal training by supervisors or coworkers
- Considering opportunities for written guide, especially with expanding programs



# BIN AUDITS

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- Conducted by sustainability interns as they are available
- Focus on trash and recycling bins in academic and residential spaces
- Identify needs for additional equipment
- Saw the need for expanded and consistent labeling system on bins



# THE QUICK GUIDE TO SINGLE-STREAM RECYCLING



## Recycle

Flattened  
cardboard

Paper bags

Plastic bottles  
(trash the cap)

Uncrushed Cans  
Paper

Boxboard  
(i.e. cereal box)

Glass bottles and jars

Paper containers

Plastic containers

Newspaper and  
Magazines

(Remember to rinse containers before recycling!)

## Don't Recycle

Plastic bags

Styrofoam

To go cups and  
containers

Food or drinks

Soiled containers  
(i.e. greasy pizza box)

Straws

Plastic utensils  
and cups

Frozen food  
containers

Nonrecyclable glass

Hazardous and  
bio-hazardous waste

Pyrex

Dishes and ceramics

Plastics with no logo or  
number

For more information go to [mcla.edu/green](http://mcla.edu/green)



# SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING



## EMPTY BOTTLES & CONTAINERS

Plastic, metal, glass

Clean aluminum foil and tins



## PAPER & FLAT CARDBOARD

## DO NOT INCLUDE

Liquids, food soiled materials

Compostable containers

Plastic bags, utensils, straws

Chip bags, hot coffee cups

Tissues, napkins



Do not bag recyclables!



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## Townhouse Composting

**Throw all food scraps into  
the food waste bin**

Include cooked food items and animal  
products

Do not put non-food items in the bin

Remember to empty your bin frequently  
and close the lid properly to avoid odors

**The compost collection bin is located  
in the Phase II recycling area (next to  
T77).**

**Please empty your bin into the maroon  
container with the green lid labeled  
“Organic.”**



If you have any questions/comments, please contact  
Elena Traister at [elena.traister@mcla.edu](mailto:elena.traister@mcla.edu)

## TOWNHOUSE COMPOST PILOT PROGRAM

- Collaboration with Residential Programs & Services
- 6 townhouses recruited
- Overseen by Sustainability Intern
- Students bring material outside to Casella container
- Sawdust applied daily to reduce odor