



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2025

A YEAR OF SUCCESS AND GROWTH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CET is proud to share the FY25 year-end report for **RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts** (RecyclingWorks), marking one of the most successful years yet, meeting or surpassing all key goals.

Indicators of Growth and Momentum:

- **57%** more businesses served through Tiered and Mini Technical Assistance than in FY24
- **11%** increase in hotline inquiries from FY24
- **New Instagram launch** reaching over 2,600 people
- **724 new subscribers** to our newsletter
- **Media coverage** at larger publications, including The New York Times and The Boston Globe
- **1,579 tons of waste diverted**, including 802 tons of wasted food, and 729 tons of recyclables

Tangible success. Real impact.

Beyond metrics, this year focused on impactful initiatives supporting **reuse, food donation, and environmental justice (EJ)**.

The Hybrid Spring Forum welcomed 85 participants to focus on surplus food donation and reusables. We also launched new guidance pages designed to help organizations easily and effectively establish donation programs.

The Best Management Practices for Reusable Takeout Containers, accompanied by an Implementation Guide, was a major focus this year. A series of six blog posts highlighted success stories showcasing the benefits of reusable foodware.

Efforts in **EJ communities** like Medford included in-person, culturally tailored technical assistance to promote equitable waste reduction.

Overall, this year demonstrated our growing impact and the rising momentum toward waste reduction and diversion practices throughout Massachusetts.



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FY25 IN NUMBERS



It's really about building relationships and trust within the community to make these programs successful

*Heather Billings
Sr. Waste Reduction Consultant*

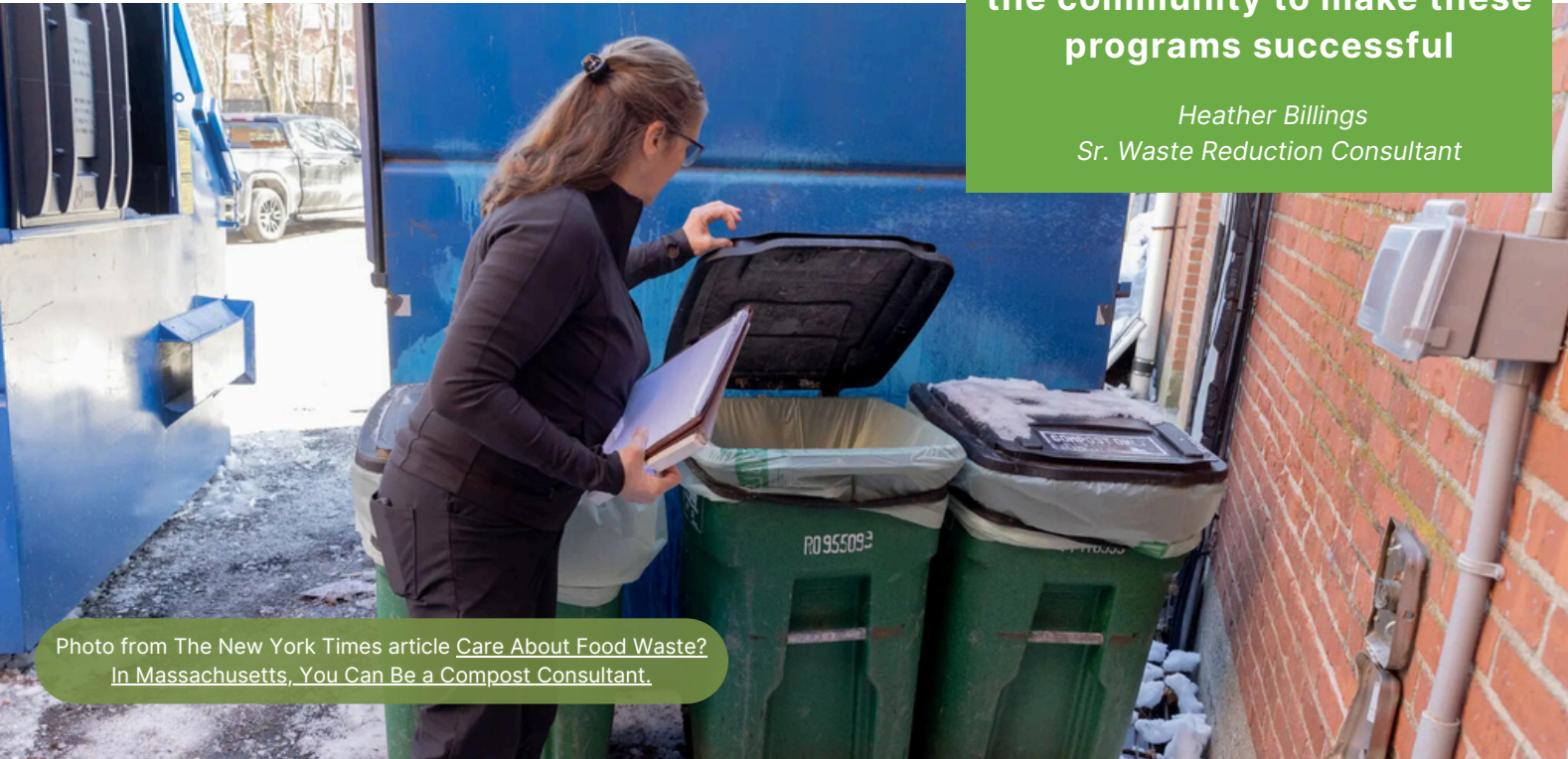


Photo from The New York Times article [Care About Food Waste? In Massachusetts, You Can Be a Compost Consultant.](#)



300+ businesses
served through TA or
Mini TA



~800 tons
of recyclables
diverted



~730 tons of
wasted food
diverted



40+ speaking
engagements
and/or events

RecyclingWorks is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and delivered under contract by CET. CET has implemented and strengthened waste reduction programs for businesses and institutions of all sizes across Massachusetts with a proven track record of success.

215,000

WEBSITE VIEWS

2,000+

HOTLINE INQUIRIES

~5,000

**TONS OF CARBON
EMISSIONS REDUCED**

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

IMPLEMENTING REUSABLES

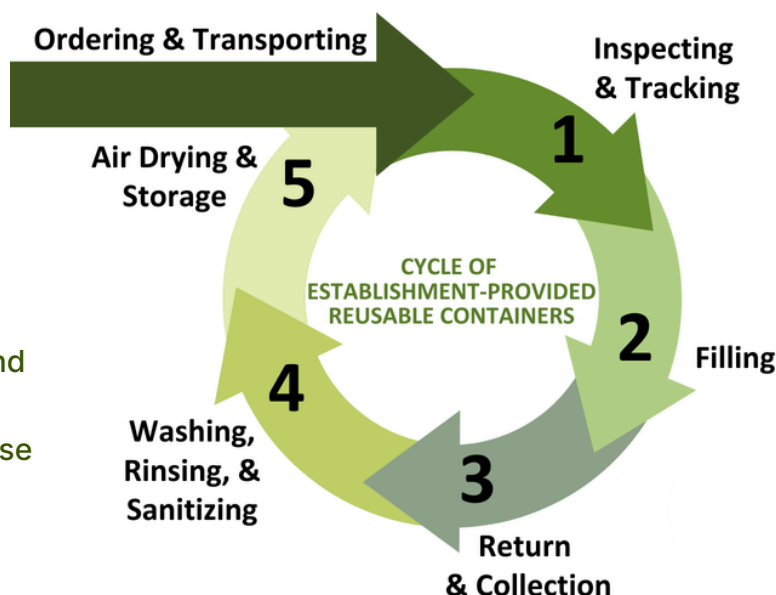
Reusable Food Serviceware & Takeout Containers

In November 2024, we published the [Best Management Practices for Reusable Takeout Containers](#) (BMP), which offers valuable tips and resources for Massachusetts-based food establishments interested in replacing single-use takeout containers with reusable serviceware.

RecyclingWorks collaborated with MassDEP Reduce and Reuse Working Group, state and local health officials, along with other stakeholders, to develop and vet these management practices.

We also created both a quick-start [Implementation Guide](#) and a [Reusables Resource List](#) for in-depth best management practices.

BMP promotion centered around the message that switching to reusable serviceware is simple and can lead to long-term savings through lower purchasing and disposal costs. A series of blogs was published, featuring stories that highlight specific aspects of reusable container programs.



Stories to Inspire:

BMP Blog Post Series

[Making the Switch: Reducing Takeout Waste with Reusables](#)

[Reusables on the Cape](#)

[Revolutionizing Reuse: Third-Party Warewashing](#)

[The Story of Fulfilled Goods](#)

[Boston University's Reuse Program](#)

[Zero Waste Arlington – Community Initiatives](#)



RECYCLINGWORKS SPRING FORUM



The **Spring 2025 Hybrid Forum** brought together stakeholders to explore best practices for **surplus food donation** and resources for transitioning to **reusable takeout containers**.

The forum was a great success, with the **highest turnout since 2020**. The **85 participants**, attending both in-person and online, included businesses, waste industry experts, and food donation organizations—all of whom are passionate about making a difference.

We also introduced our new **Food Donation Guidance** page (pictured right), which offers a practical roadmap for creating impactful food donation programs.

Photos, recordings, and presentations from the Spring Forum are found [here](#).

Thank you to all who spoke throughout the day:

Jennifer Lamy, Emerson College

Ashley Muspratt, CET

John Fischer, MassDEP

Keynote: Heather Latino, Harvard Food Law & Policy Clinic

Heather Billings, CET

Dena Ciampa, Kraft Sports + Entertainment

Kathryn Scott, Gillette Stadium

Laura Alves, City of Boston

Sonja Williams, CET

Caroline Vanderlip, Re:Dish

Stephen Ferrick, Pegasystems

A screenshot of a webpage titled "Food Donation —Let's Get Started." The page features a green header with the title and a sub-header: "Food donation can help your business comply with the Massachusetts Commercial Food Material Disposal Ban while reducing disposal costs and supporting people in need." Below this are two buttons: "Get Assistance" and "Best Management Practices". The main content area is titled "Who Can Donate?" and lists various organizations with icons: Events, Farms, K-12 Schools, Manufacturers, Restaurants, Supermarkets, Universities, and Wholesalers. At the bottom, a paragraph states: "This webpage provides guidance to organizations interested in establishing food donation programs by offering a broad overview of how successful food donation programs can be structured."



SERVING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES

We believe that fostering equity and inclusion is key to achieving our environmental mission.

One example of this value in practice is our assistance to businesses in Medford. Medford is considered an environmental justice community because its neighborhoods, with higher concentrations of vulnerable populations such as seniors, children, people with limited English proficiency, people of color, low-income residents, individuals with disabilities, or are otherwise impacted by systems of marginalization, are more likely to be negatively affected by climate hazards.

This year, RecyclingWorks provided hands-on technical assistance to 49 Medford businesses as they transitioned from city-paid waste services to direct-hauler contracts. We helped businesses understand new City waste and recycling requirements, assisted with rightsizing service levels based on increased recycling diversion opportunities, provided recycling resources, and offered food scrap diversion information.

RecyclingWorks also prioritized in-person communication to address language barriers and ensure equitable support for all business owners. Our approach was community-focused, valuing in-person visits. Building relationships was key to encouraging greater recycling participation and fostering a supportive environment for the changes. We followed up with opportunities to build on that success for more waste reduction (e.g., food scrap diversion) in the future.

We continue to offer accessible materials—including live translator services for hotlines and image captions in recommendation reports to demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.



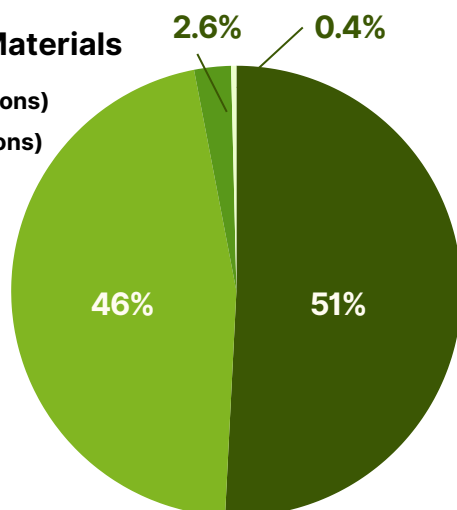
REDUCING WASTE?

RECYCLINGWORKS CAN HELP

FY25 Diverted Materials

- Food Scraps (802 tons)
- Recyclables (729 tons)
- Reuse/Reduced (41.6 tons)
- Food Donated (6 tons)

Total: 1,579 tons diverted*



*Numbers reflect only activity that could be quantified and confirmed; actual impact of RecyclingWorks is likely greater.

Hotline

Throughout FY25, CET staff answered **2,028 hotline inquiries, exceeding last year's amount of 1,896**. It is also the **highest number of hotline assistance in the past decade**. This could be

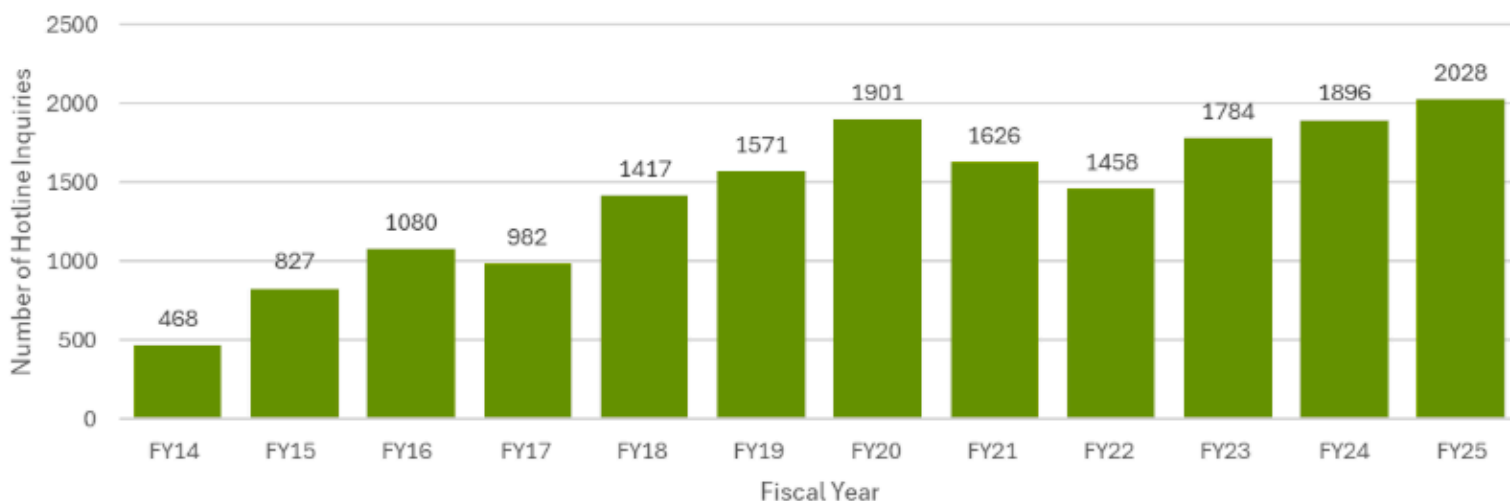
attributed to additional funding received mid-way through the year that led to extra opportunities and diversion.

Technical Assistance

RecyclingWorks provides direct Technical Assistance (TA) to businesses and institutions to help implement or improve waste prevention, recycling, and wasted food diversion programs. To provide this valuable service, each business receives customized recommendations for its operations.

As shown in the chart to the left, approximately **1,579 tons of material were directly diverted** due to combined hotline, Mini TA, and TA activities in FY25. Compared to the 503.5 tons diverted in FY24, the **amount of wasted food donated and diverted increased significantly**.

RecyclingWorks Hotline Assistance by Year



In FY25, we served 152 businesses through Tiered TA and 161 businesses through Mini TA!

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TRENDS & OBSERVATIONS



Positive Takeaways

- **Proactive outreach** delivered a higher quantity of quality leads, as incoming hotline leads were less common than those from networking at events, presentations, through community partners, and direct outreach.
- **RecyclingWorks' customized signage** and training continue to add value in supplementing hauler-provided resources, especially with tailored images and language translations.
- **Food donation infrastructure** and partnerships are increasing (e.g., Boston's Cold Storage and Food Hub and Food Rescue Collaborative)

Observations

- **Large businesses**, franchises, national accounts, and brokered accounts can face challenges authorizing or implementing changes.
- **Lingering COVID effects** on food establishments included prolonged pauses on diversion programs, entrenched habits, and knowledge gaps due to staff turnover.
- **Supply chain issues** exist for sourcing certified compostable products. Contamination risks occur when non-certified items are substituted.
- **Limiting agreements** or company policies result in challenges for donors to move all possible surplus food, particularly on weekends.



Customer-Noted Challenges:

- Staffing and labor hour limitations
- Limited dishwashing capacity or drying space affects reuse adoption
- Financial difficulties for smaller generators to add or expand new programs
- Inconsistent access to language translation for customers to communicate with service providers
- Space constraints hinder the placement of dumpsters or carts for separating additional streams
- Fixed price contracts pose challenges for customers to make changes

COMPOST SITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



To support food waste composting infrastructure in Massachusetts, RecyclingWorks continued to offer both Tier 1 and Tier 2 Compost Site Technical Assistance during FY25. CET renewed contracts with two composting industry experts who serve as consultants for the program. CET conducts outreach to compost sites that may be interested in accepting food scraps.

In FY25, RecyclingWorks provided:

- 2 sites Tier 1 Assistance
- 4 sites Tier 2 Assistance
- Compost Site Operators Practical Skills Workshop
 - Included a virtual pre-workshop lesson component with 19 virtual participants
 - In-person component at Black Earth Compost's Groton location with 29 in-person participants

[A recap and photos of the Workshop can be viewed here.](#)

CASE STUDY HYANNIS YACHT CLUB

In FY25, RecyclingWorks published a case study featuring **Hyannis Yacht Club**, a hospitality club in Cape Cod. The Club works to adopt zero-waste principles and sets a strong example for the boating community and food establishments alike. Through our technical assistance, this MA nautical hub expanded its waste diversion programs. [Read the case study](#) to learn more about their efforts.



A Broad Commitment to Sustainability: Hyannis Yacht Club Business Spotlight

Located in one of the nation's top places to sail, and surrounded by the beauty of Cape Cod, [Hyannis Yacht Club](#) (the Club) has a strong commitment to sustainability and to protecting local beaches from pollution. The Club engages a network of people who share a passion for boating, sailing, and the ocean lifestyle. Their commitments help preserve the health of the coastal environment that both guests and marine life depend on.

At A Glance

- Expanded recycling from just cardboard to single stream—diverting paper, plastics, bottles and more from the trash stream
- Implemented food scrap diversion with weekly collection, diverting 26 tons a year into nutrient-rich compost
- Utilizes durable and reusable tableware, significantly reducing single-use products
- Installed clearly labeled waste, recycling, and food scrap bin signage

info@recyclingworksma.com | recyclingworksma.com | (888) 254-5525

RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is a recycling assistance program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and delivered under contract by CET that helps businesses and institutions reduce waste and maximize recycling, reuse, and food recovery opportunities.



IN THE PRESS



RecyclingWorks had a banner year in the media, with articles in [The New York Times](#), [Boston Globe](#), [Climate XChange](#), and more. Below are some media highlights where RecyclingWorks was interviewed and featured.



Care About Food Waste? In Massachusetts, You Can Be a Compost Consultant

March 2025

"A state regulation requires businesses to keep food out of dumpsters. To help them comply, the state offers them a carrot, in the form of a chatty, practical, 63-year-old hand-holding food-waste reduction consultant named Heather Billings.

Which is how, on a frigid Wednesday morning, Ms. Billings found herself poking around the narrow kitchen of the Port Tavern, a sports bar in Newburyport, Mass."

[nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com)



Under the Radar with Callie Crossley: Podcast Panel Interview

August 2025

[GBH Radio](#)



Mass. is the Only State in the Nation to Significantly Cut Food waste. How Did it Do it?

December 2024

[bostonglobe.com](https://www.bostonglobe.com)



How Has One US State Cut Food Waste When Others Continue To Struggle?

December 2024

[cleantechnica.com](https://www.cleantechnica.com)

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



Monthly Newsletter

Every month (aside from breaks in January and July), RecyclingWorks sent a newsletter out to an **audience of 10,460 members**. Subscribers receive timely industry updates and valuable tools to enhance their waste reduction efforts, as well as recent resources, grant opportunities, and upcoming events. [Click here to view past issues and subscribe.](#)

Popular Issues



RecyclingWorks Newsletter | November 2024

888.254.5525 | recyclingworksmma.com | info@recyclingworksmma.com

Waste Fact of the Month

Massachusetts spends \$400,000 to throw away 4,000 tons of trash EACH DAY. By 2030, there will likely be no more landfill capacity in the state, unless the five existing landfills get approval to expand. In the meantime, we are already exporting more than two million tons of trash each year to other states—a very expensive practice that will only become more expensive over time!

Source: [Mass Recycle](#)

November 2024

Open Rate: 47%

Click Rate: 18%



Community Partners Webpage

Introduced this year, the [Community Partners](#) page invites **organizations connected to their local business community**—such as business associations and municipal programs—to help promote RecyclingWorks.

The page provides **ready-to-use outreach materials** and contact information so partners can share free technical assistance resources with businesses, encouraging them to reduce waste, donate food, and improve recycling practices.

Other Outreach Activity

- Leveraged partnerships and cross-promotion with CET and The Green Team
- Engaged businesses that received warning letters from MassDEP for disposal of waste ban materials: 102 letters were followed up with resulting in 7 TA and 6 hotline queries



RecyclingWorks Newsletter | April 2025

888.254.5525 | recyclingworksmma.com | info@recyclingworksmma.com

Waste Fact of the Month

"In the U.S., food is the *single* most common material sent to landfills, comprising 24.1% of municipal solid waste. When yard trimmings, wood and paper/paperboard are added to food, these organic materials comprise 51.4% of municipal solid waste in landfills." [Source](#)

April 2025
Open Rate: 47%
Click Rate: 17%

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



Presentations & Events

In FY25, RecyclingWorks participated in, organized, presented at, tabled, and/or attended a **total of 41 events**, reaching more than 4,000 attendees:

- **4 organized by CET:** *Compost Site Virtual Lesson and Workshop, Spring Forum, and one Reusable Takeout Containers BMP stakeholder meeting*
- **23 presentations** and/or tabling opportunities
- **14 meetings or working groups** (e.g. MassDEP SWAC and Subcommittees/Working Groups)

Highlighted FY25 events:

- MHOA
- MFAA 2024 Fall Conference and Expo*
- BECMA 2024 Mass Black Expo*
- Local Food Trade Show*
- MassRecycle Conference*
- New England Restaurant & Bar Show*

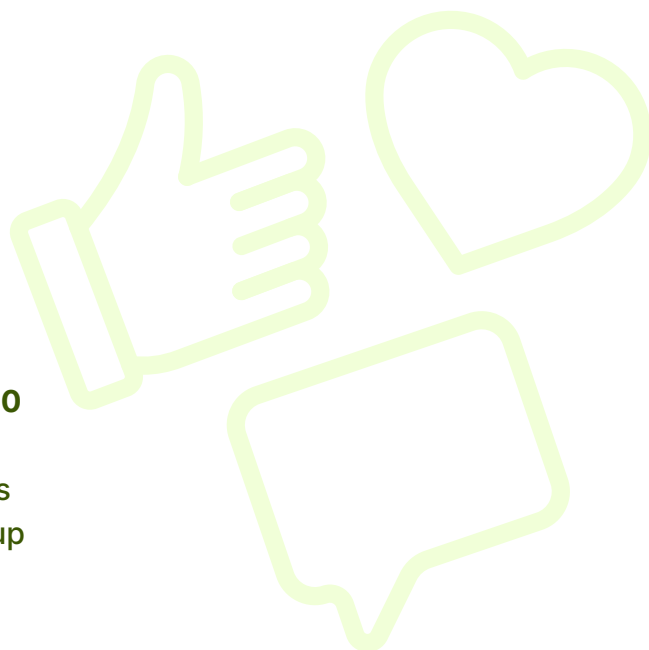
*denotes events that resulted in TA opportunities



Event Name	Date
Reusable Container BMP Stakeholder Meeting	8/6/24
2024 Compost Site Operators Virtual Lesson	9/19/24
Converting Food Waste to Concrete Discussion	10/8/24
Compost Site Operators Practical Skills Workshop	10/10/24
MFAA Fall Conference and Expo	10/23/24
BECMA Mass Black Exposition	10/25/24
MassDEP Solid Waste Advisory Committee Mtg.	11/7/24
MHOA Annual Conference	11/13/24
Take Care Fall Summit	11/21/24
MassRecycle Campus Collaborative Webinar	12/12/24
MA Food System Forum	12/17/24
Local Food Trade Show - Virtual Consultations	1/22/25
Local Food Trade Show - In-Person Event	1/28/25

Event Name	Date
NOFA Winter Conference	2/1/25
Greater Newburyport Chamber of Commerce	2/5/25
Springfield Public Schools Garden Summit	3/1/25
MEES Conference	3/12/25
MassRecycle Conference & Trade Show	3/18/25
New England Restaurant & Bar Show	3/30/25
Center for Environmental Health Presentation	4/2/25
RecyclingWorks Spring 2025 Forum	5/20/25
MRA ProStart Program Presentation	5/20/25
Healthy Kids, Healthy Programs Summit	5/21/25
NE Alliance Spring Regional Conference	5/22/25
Reuse Solutions Network	5/29/25
NE Entertainment Sustainability Group	6/2/25
Associated Industries MA	6/12/25

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY



As of October 2024, **RecyclingWorks** is officially on **Instagram!** Through the account, we have reached **over 2,600 users** and have also created collaborative posts with spotlighted businesses or partnered organizations, which has boosted reach. Follow RecyclingWorks on Instagram to stay up to date!



recyclingworksma Edit profile View archive

37 posts 106 followers 21 following

RecyclingWorks in MA
We help Massachusetts businesses and institutions maximize recycling, reuse, and food recovery opportunities.
DM for a free consultation!
@ recyclingworksma.com and 2 more

TOP POSTS



Reach: 1,275
Engagement: 104



Reach: 450
Engagement: 26



Reach: 1,715
Engagement: 5

RecyclingWorks continued to post on Facebook, where our audience saw modest **growth to 578 followers and a reach of 1,100 users**. Posts on X (formerly Twitter) saw a 3% decrease in followers from 762 to 741, with a reach of 3,479. This is aligned with past noted observations of declined engagement on the platform overall. X also requires Premium membership to view detailed profile analytics.

Follow us on Social Media!



WEBSITE UPDATES & ANALYTICS



12 New Blogposts

In addition to the 5 BMP blogs mentioned (page 4), RecyclingWorks published 12 new blogs, including spotlights featuring local businesses:



Marty's Local



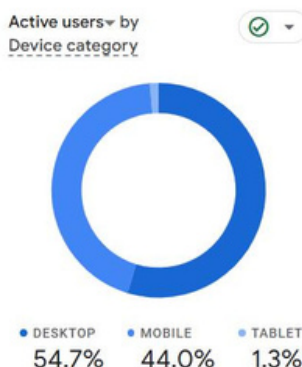
Bridgewater State University



Shakespeare and Company

Website Traffic and Trends

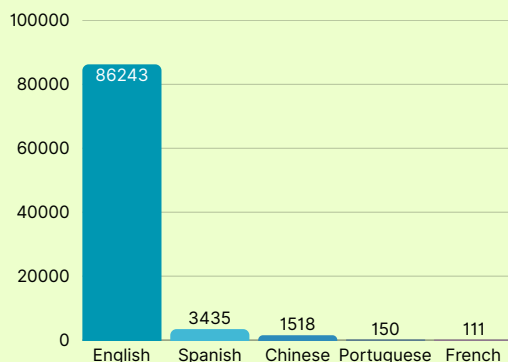
- **215,821 views**, nearly double from FY24
- **44% accessed the site via mobile phone**
- **96% users organically searched**, while **4% were from referrals**, including MA town sites and ChatGPT
- **Find-A-Recycler-Tool listings** in FY25 grew to 489 businesses and service providers
- **Translation plug-in** added to increase accessibility
- **Over 5,300 Non-English speaking users** accessed the website in different languages (totaling over 7,800 views)



Top 5 Blog Posts

1. CCF Compost Pilot Program: 200 Views
2. Organics Hauling Contract Data in 2023: 176 Views
3. 2024 Annual Report: 95 Views
4. Releasing the Reusables BMP: 86 Views
5. The 2024 Compost Workshops: 80 Views

Top 5 Languages of Users



Top 5 Web Pages

1. Home Page - 36,151 views
2. Find A Recycler Tool - 28,183 views
3. Mattress Recycling Guidance - 6,326 views
4. Textile Recycling Guidance - 4,919 views
5. Construction Materials Guidance - 4,523 views

CONCLUSIONS & CLOSING

CET is pleased to present the RecyclingWorks FY25 year-end report. This report demonstrates our continued commitment to waste diversion and highlights the significant progress made in the commercial and institutional sectors. As we reflect on the accomplishments of FY25, we recognize the importance of our partnerships with MassDEP and other stakeholders. We are excited to continue working collaboratively to meet the challenges ahead.

RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is a recycling assistance program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and delivered under contract by CET that helps businesses and institutions reduce waste and maximize recycling, reuse, and food recovery opportunities.

If you have any questions about this report or RecyclingWorks in general, please reach out to Program Manager [Steven Bandarra](#) or info@recyclingworksma.com

