

Waste Prevention Strategic Planning Initiative

Commercial Customers



Seattle Public Utilities



We each have a role in taking care of our community and our planet. Seattle is recognized as a global sustainability leader thanks to businesses like yours. As we face increasing environmental pressures, it is important that we continue reducing our waste footprint and creating a more resilient city for everyone.

What is Waste Prevention?

From repairing broken electronics and furniture to sharing surplus food with community members, many businesses have embraced waste prevention. Simply put, waste prevention means stopping waste before it is created. You might already be participating in waste prevention, even if you do not use the phrase. Repairing, reusing, donating, and salvaging are examples of waste prevention.

Seattle Public Utilities' Role in Waste Prevention

Instead of simply helping our customers dispose of waste through garbage, recycling, and composting collection, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) wants to help prevent waste. Over the next two years, SPU will be talking with businesses, residents, and community-based organizations across the city about waste prevention. We hope to learn how your business currently operates, how you are already preventing waste, and where there might be opportunities to do even more. We also want to better understand how to support you in these efforts. The information we gather will help shape our [Waste Prevention Strategic Plan](#). This plan will define meaningful waste prevention goals, SPU's role in waste prevention, and how to measure success.

Why are We Prioritizing Waste Prevention?

Some waste prevention benefits include:

Saving customers money

Buying only what you need, buying second hand, sharing, and repairing broken items are great ways to save money.

Creating new economic opportunities

Waste prevention stimulates innovation. From reuse to repair and remanufacturing to sharing, waste prevention can inspire new types of businesses, services, and employment opportunities.

Building healthier communities

By preventing waste, your business will use fewer natural resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and minimize pollution—paving the way for a healthier community, region, and planet. Everybody can benefit from your actions!



Woodland Park Zoo trains their employees on the Zoo's transition away from single-use water bottles.

How are businesses like yours preventing waste?

- Making waste prevention a priority across departments
- Cutting back on the amount of material you use to package and ship products
- Purchasing items that will last longer and not have to be replaced as often
- Buying uniforms that can be reused and donated
- Designing and making products that last longer
- Donating or reselling used or surplus items
- Providing bulk sections for customers to refill products
- Using dynamic pricing to discount food nearing its expiration date
- Encouraging customers to use reusable bags and containers

Questions? Contact Veronica Fincher at SPU_PreventWaste@seattle.gov or (206) 615-1405

AUG-2023

Waste Prevention Strategic Planning Initiative

Roadmap



Key Deliverables

From 2022–2025, Seattle Public Utilities will work with community members, residents, businesses, and other partners to understand how to prevent waste citywide. Throughout the process, we will engage businesses like yours who have unique opportunities to make a difference. We will also collaborate with waste prevention experts from other governmental agencies and City of Seattle staff.

Our Process

SPU recognizes that solutions that do not directly address environmental injustice and racial inequity will not succeed. We commit to a race and social justice focus to establish equitable planning efforts and outcomes. Throughout all aspects of our outreach, we are prioritizing engagement with those who experience the most environmental injustice. This will allow us to produce solutions that meet the needs of everyone.

Learn More

seattle.gov/utilities/WastePreventionPlan

This process will produce:

A Strategic Plan (2024)

Defines meaningful waste prevention goals, SPU's role in waste prevention, and measurable metrics.

Criteria (2024)

Focuses SPU's waste prevention priorities and resources.

An Implementation Plan (2025)

Identifies:

- Priority waste prevention programs
- Policies for implementation
- Models and tools for measuring progress towards achieving waste prevention goals and metrics

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