



ZERO WASTE CHALLENGE

The Missouri State Recycling Program is coordinating a Zero Waste Challenge for this year's Earth Day event and we need your help.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

- 1. Materials accepted for recycling include:** mixed office paper, cardboard (including paperboard such as cracker and cereal boxes), aluminum cans, steel cans, and #1 and #2 plastic bottles.
- 2. Recyclable materials placed in trash containers will be taken to a landfill.** Please encourage students to place recyclable materials in the proper recycling container.
- 3. Consider ways to reduce the amount of food and packaging that is thrown away.** For example, instead of each student having a brown bag lunch, could lunch be served buffet-style by having a box of sandwiches, a box of apples, a box of drinks, etc.? Can reusable containers be utilized?
- 4. Using the Zero Waste Challenge measures listed above, Earth Day participants are being challenged to generate less waste this year.** This will require each student, teacher and state employee to do their part to reduce the amount of trash and recyclable materials generated. Consider the importance of reducing first, reusing second, and finally recycling.

Earth Day participants are encouraged to ...

- Pack lunches that students will eat.
- Prevent food contamination of recyclable materials.
- “Pre-cycle” by only purchasing #1 and #2 type plastic bottle containers.(Avoid #3 - #7 plastics.)

All waste (trash and recyclables) will be audited and weighed. We are challenging this year's participants to reduce the amount of waste (trash and recyclables) as compared to last year. One of the long term goals of the Zero Waste Challenge is to encourage Earth Day participants to strive for zero waste.

Visit wastefreelunch.com/teacher-resources for more information.

Results From Previous Years

| Zero Waste Challenge Measures | Trash in pounds | Material Recycled in pounds | Waste trash + material recycled | Percentage of Waste Recycled | Headcount number registered | Per Capita Waste Generation in pounds |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2013 | 134.6 | 62.0 | 196.6 | 31.5% | 1042 | 0.19 |
| 2014 | 137.6 | 160.6 | 298.2 | 53.9% | 1563 | 0.19 |
| 2015 | 110.0 | 90.7 | 200.7 | 45.2% | 1163 | 0.17 |

OBSERVATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EARTH DAY WASTE AUDITS

1. A considerable amount of unopened food containers such as bananas and milk were found in the trash.
2. A significant amount of paperboard packaging from lunches could not be recycled due to food contamination.
3. A significant amount of plastic containers from lunches could not be recycled because they were not #1 or #2 type plastic.