



2016-2017 annual report



IN 1976, ECO-CYCLE WAS FOUNDED.

Forty years ago, Eco-Cycle was born. Our first movement forward was no baby step - it was to launch Boulder's first curbside recycling collections — in a repurposed school bus. We made our community one of the first in the nation to have curbside recycling. As one of the nation's oldest and largest recyclers, we're now expanding our work statewide to encourage recycling and composting, promote waste reduction, and advance Colorado's progress toward Zero Waste.

In 1976, Eco-Cycle founders Pete Grogan and Roy Young used old school buses to collect newspapers and other recyclables in Boulder neighborhoods.





OUR MISSION

Identify, explore, and demonstrate the **EMERGING FRONTIERS** of sustainable resource management and climate change solutions through the concepts and practices of **ZERO WASTE**.

We believe in personal & community action to **TRANSFORM** society's throw-away ethic into environmentally responsible **STEWARDSHIP**.



eco-cycle®
Building Zero Waste Communities



ZERO WASTE SOLUTIONS

COMMUNITIES
LEADING THE
WAY

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER. SOLVING THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME—CLIMATE CHANGE, ECOSYSTEM COLLAPSE, POVERTY—STARTS AT HOME, ON OUR STREET, IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD, IN OUR TOWN.

THAT'S WHERE WE PUT OUR BEST ZERO WASTE IDEAS INTO ACTION FIRST.

THE ZERO WASTE FUTURE WE WANT STARTS AT HOME

Earlier this summer, President Trump announced that he was withdrawing the United States from the Paris Climate Accord, leaving the rest of the world to deal with the catastrophic reality of climate change. Fortunately, the 194 other countries that signed the accord are marching ahead, along with thousands of cities and towns across America that have redoubled their pledges to reduce the massive greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change.

As you may know, one of the quickest and most cost-effective ways to slash the carbon emissions fueling global warming is by recycling, composting, and adopting other Zero Waste practices. And the good news is that these decisions are in the hands of local and state decision-makers. Here in Colorado, communities are taking action right now. In partnership with Eco-Cycle or with support from our Eco-Cycle Solutions Hub, local communities are starting new or expanding existing recycling and composting programs.

For example, Colorado recently adopted statewide recycling goals for the first time ever. Denver is poised to expand recycling and composting citywide. In Boulder County, Longmont started curbside composting this year, the City of Boulder is implementing its Universal Zero Waste Ordinance, and the Town of Lyons is working towards Zero Waste. Yes, the entire town is going for Zero Waste, creating a national model for other small towns.

This gives me tremendous hope for the future even in the midst of the current obstacles we face. The best way to nurture hope is to take action. I trust that the results and stories that Eco-Cycle shares in this report will encourage you, too. Together, we can create the Zero Waste future we want. We already are.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allyn Feinberg', written over the printed name.

Allyn Feinberg
Board Chair

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ZERO WASTE STARTS AT HOME!

Eco-Cycle's education and outreach programs help every sector of every community in Boulder County—local governments, businesses, neighborhoods, schools, and events—increase recycling and composting and achieve their Zero Waste goals. We educate and provide tools to communities that result in decreased waste, cleaner materials sent to be recycled, and increased recycling rates.

**ZERO WASTE SOLUTIONS:
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES LEADING THE WAY**

COMPOST



eco-cycle

2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Worked with apartments, condos, and other housing complexes to help residents access recycling and composting services.
- Helped the City of Longmont establish a curbside composting program.
- Launched Zero Waste Lyons Project with the goal of making Lyons a Zero Waste model for other small towns. The community is working towards diverting 90% of its waste from the landfill by reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting.

Photo: Youth playing sorting game and handing out kitchen compost caddies to neighbors at an apartment complex in Boulder.

APARTMENTS AND CONDOS GET SOME ZERO WASTE LOVE

Eco-Cycle and the City of Boulder teamed up again last year to help thousands of apartment and condo dwellers boost their recycling and composting rates. As part of the city's Universal Zero Waste Ordinance, everyone in town is required to have basic recycling and composting services. But for folks who live in multi-family complexes, such as apartments and condos, getting and using those services can be especially challenging.

Over the years, Eco-Cycle has developed and field-tested strategies for effectively dealing with those challenges, which include: high tenant turn-over rates, cultural and language barriers, and lack of infrastructure, such as insufficient quantities or the wrong types of bins for the neighborhood.

Eco-Cycle's canvassers immediately got to work last fall recruiting tenants to be Eco-Leaders, getting kids involved, and hosting games and parties to tackle recycling challenges through a pilot program that worked with nine multi-family complexes.

By late spring, all nine housing complexes significantly boosted their recycling and composting rates. Many residents, understanding the environmental importance of their efforts, began composting for the very first time!



DEVELOPING LOCAL YOUTH LEADERS

Eco-Cycle is working with pre-K through 12th grade students in public schools throughout Boulder County to make Zero Waste the way of life for the next generation. Through the comprehensive Green Star Schools program, we are making Zero Waste an integral part of the daily school routine by increasing environmental literacy, providing infrastructure, and changing behavior. We're teaching our future citizens — and their families — to live more sustainably.

Photo: Sydney Adams (left) and Logan Kuskie (right), both juniors at Lyons Middle/Senior High School, take a break from collecting surveys about recycling and composting habits in their community to play with a friendly neighborhood cat.

2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Enrolled three additional schools, including Lyons Middle/Senior, Nevin Platt Middle School (Boulder), and Monarch K-8 (Louisville), into our award-winning Green Star Schools program.
- Supported Zero Waste as a way of life for 46 public schools in Boulder Valley and St. Vrain School Districts.
- Educated 20,150 students and 2,245 staff on Zero Waste practices and sustainable living.

BOULDER COUNTY'S NEWEST GREEN STAR SCHOOLS

In 2016-2017, six Boulder County schools joined Eco-Cycle's award-winning Green Star Schools program: Indian Peaks Elementary, Louisville Middle School, Centennial Middle School, Lyons Middle Senior High School, Monarch K-8, and Nevin Platt Middle School.

Lyons Middle/Senior High School is playing an important role in the Eco-Cycle/Town of Lyons joint effort to make Lyons the first Green Star Zero Waste Community in the nation, funded through a grant issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. Working with Eco-Cycle, students and faculty are making all school events Zero Waste, and student interns canvassed businesses throughout the spring and summer to help the Town of Lyons on its path to becoming a Zero Waste model for small, rural towns across America.

Monarch K-8 in Louisville, which has the largest student enrollment of any Green Star School, had a special kick-off assembly featuring an original environmental rap performance that really got kids fired up about Zero Waste. And, with the addition of Nevin Platt Middle School in 2017, ALL of the public middle schools, as well as elementary schools in Boulder, are now Green Star Schools!

Thank you to our core Green Star Schools funders!





COLORADO COMMUNITIES AIM FOR ZERO WASTE

Eco-Cycle's advocacy creates a broad culture of sustainability and a voting demographic that supports new Zero Waste policies. Recent successes include Boulder County's sustainability tax to fund Zero Waste and other sustainability efforts, Boulder's Universal Zero Waste Ordinance, enhanced curbside recycling and composting contracts in Lafayette and Louisville, and new curbside composting service in Longmont.

2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Advocated for Colorado to set first ever statewide recycling goals which would increase the state's current recycling rate of 12% to 45% by 2036.
- Released "Recycling in Denver: How to Make the City a Sustainable Leader" with COPIRG. The report raised awareness about the need to improve Denver's poor recycling rate of just 20%.
- Worked with 600 Eco-Cycle activists in Longmont to pass a new city policy to provide voluntary curbside composting to residents. Longmont is the fourth city in Boulder County and the sixth city in the state to offer curbside composting.

Photo: Family of climate change activists at the April 2017 Climate March in Denver advocating for Zero Waste as a viable climate change solution.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING FOR ALL

Eco-Cycle is helping to transform Denver from one of the most wasteful cities in the nation — recycling only 20% of its waste — to a recycling leader. To succeed in this goal, Latino residents must have a voice in the policy process. Eco-Cycle is committed to supporting Denver's Latino community to ensure that the city's recycling and composting policies are responsive to the diverse needs and concerns of residents.

Nearly 30 percent of Denver's population is Latino, many of whom are keenly interested in climate change and other public health and environmental issues. However, Latinos are often underrepresented in policy-making processes. With support from the Environmental Affinity Group of the Denver Foundation, Eco-Cycle coached aspiring leaders from Green Valley Ranch, Montbello, Westwood, and other Denver neighborhoods with large Latino populations to empower them to be effective policy advocates. Here's what one budding leader had to say about her experience:

"Personally, I feel that it's important that Latinos have a voice in efforts to raise environmental awareness in metro Denver because we love the area we live in and we need to take care of it and keep it clean. I really learned a lot from Eco-Cycle about recycling and what we need to do to keep our environment clean. We need to advocate for our environment and let our decision-makers know to be more cautious and aware about the recycling-climate change connection."

A special thank you to



ENVIRONMENTAL AFFINITY GROUP

THE DENVER FOUNDATION

A photograph of a recycling facility with workers in hard hats and safety vests sorting through a large pile of waste. The scene is industrial with yellow railings and large metal structures.

CULTIVATING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES

Eco-Cycle is an educator in the community, as well as a hauler. More than 700 Boulder and Broomfield County businesses and organizations choose Eco-Cycle to recycle, compost, and process their hard-to-recycle materials such as electronics and plastic wrap. We actively train our business customers on how to properly recycle and how to engage employees. We also conduct waste audits to help businesses review and improve their own Zero Waste practices.

2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Created a model to help business parks and shopping centers comply with Boulder's Universal Zero Waste Ordinance. This model is now a framework used by the City of Boulder.
- Worked with more than 700 businesses and organizations to increase recycling and composting rates in Boulder and Broomfield counties.
- Initiated pilot program with clothing retailers in Boulder to reduce and recycle plastic packaging materials that previously went to landfill.

BUSINESSES GOING BEYOND RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING: GREEN STAR BUSINESSES



For businesses that want to go beyond recycling to achieve larger sustainability and Zero Waste goals, Eco-Cycle's Green Star Business program provides sustainability consulting and training services. We're honored to work with the following Green Star Business members who are committed to sustainable Zero Waste practices:



The background image shows two men in a workshop. The man on the left is wearing a dark blue hoodie and safety glasses. The man on the right is also wearing a dark blue hoodie, safety glasses, and is holding a tool connected to a blue coiled air hose. They are standing in front of a workbench cluttered with various electronic components, tools like a hammer and screwdriver, and a partially disassembled metal device. A whiteboard with a grid is visible on the wall behind them.

CHaRM: CATALYST FOR NEW MARKETS AND JOBS

Eco-Cycle, with support from the City of Boulder, created the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) in 2001 — the first facility of its kind in the nation. The CHaRM accepts dozens of items — plastic bags, toilets, mattresses — that can be recycled or repurposed but for which the infrastructure and markets necessary to do so on a large scale do not yet exist. CHaRM partners with local entrepreneurs, businesses, and nonprofits who turn these hard-to-recycle materials into useful products, creating local jobs at the same time.

2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Launched partnership with Blue Star Recyclers to increase electronics recycling, maintain the highest environmental and security standards, and create new jobs.
- Helped over 35,000 people keep their hard-to-recycle items out of the landfill.
- Hosted “U-Fix-It Clinics” in partnership with Boulder Public Library’s maker space and other local maker spaces. These clinics utilize volunteer coaches to help participants learn how to fix their broken household items and gain new insights into their purchasing habits.

Photo: Blue Star Recyclers employees disassemble electronics at Eco-Cycle’s Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM), a joint partnership to process e-waste and create jobs.

RECYCLING ELECTRONICS; EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Eco-Cycle and Blue Star Recyclers, both nonprofit social enterprises, launched an innovative new partnership in 2016, addressing two vexing challenges: how to responsibly recycle more electronics, the fastest growing segment of the global waste stream; and how to create local jobs for people with autism and other disabilities.

With a refurbish of our warehouse, Eco-Cycle brought Blue Star employees into CHaRM to disassemble electronics on-site. “This is a great example of how social enterprises work,” said Dan Matsch, Director of the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials. “We’re helping people by creating good local jobs, and helping the planet by recycling electronics and preventing toxic materials from polluting our water and soils.”

In addition, Matsch noted that revenues generated by recycling electronics, as well as other hard-to-recycle items collected at the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder CHaRM, are reinvested in Zero Waste education, outreach, and advocacy programs throughout Boulder County.

So next time you have old electronics to get rid of, get on over to the CHaRM. The Blue Star/Eco-Cycle Team will be glad to see you!

This partnership was made possible by the support of the Boulder Rotary Club, and a generous grant from the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County’s Millennial Trust.



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
BOULDER COUNTY**

INSPIRING IDEAS. IGNITING ACTION.™

IRE
GUISHERS

YOGA
MATS

YES	Plastic Foam	NO	Soft
	Rubber Foam		
	Jute Yoga Mats		

ACCELERATING ZERO WASTE SOLUTIONS

As one of the leading Zero Waste organizations in the nation, Eco-Cycle has a responsibility to spread the Zero Waste solution as far and as fast as possible in our race against climate change. Zero Waste practices can help build local jobs and economies, generate healthy soils and food, prevent pollution, and protect natural resources. We accomplish all this and more through our Eco-Cycle Solutions program.



2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Built a national partnership network to develop a national campaign for Zero Waste as a climate solution.
- Partnered with the National Student Zero Waste organization to use campus actions to ignite community change.
- Improved curbside recycling and composting options for residents along the Front Range by supporting cities with strategic planning on Zero Waste policies.
- Implemented a carbon sequestration pilot to highlight the critical role compost can play in reducing carbon emissions and building healthy soils.

Photo: Kate Bailey, Eco-Cycle Solutions Director, teaches a delegation of Russian environmentalists about Eco-Cycle's Hard-to-Recycle programs at the CHaRM.

SHARING ZERO WASTE EXPERTISE AND INNOVATION

Eco-Cycle is one of only a few organizations in the country dedicated to helping communities implement Zero Waste programs and championing Zero Waste as a critical climate solution. Through our Eco-Cycle Solutions program, we touted the climate benefits of Zero Waste through local, regional, and national conferences in Arkansas, Utah, Nevada, New England, Maine, and Wyoming. We are helping a sister nonprofit in Missoula, MT write the first Zero Waste plan in the state, and a statewide Nebraska nonprofit working with four cities to improve recycling and set Zero Waste goals. We led a workshop with citizen climate activists in Maine to prioritize recycling strategies in their climate action plan, and we have partnered with the largest student-led Zero Waste movement to ignite change on campuses around the U.S.

Our efforts reach around the globe as well. In collaboration with the U.S. State Department, we hosted a group of Russian environmentalists, including recycling/waste business owners and government officials, to learn more about how we collect, process and market recyclables. Through Eco-cycle's expertise, they were able to gain a better understanding of how governments and nonprofits can engage communities with ecological programs at the municipal and local levels.

Eco-Cycle Solutions is supported by the generosity of





ECO-CYCLE CELEBRATES 40!

FORTY YEARS OF ZERO WASTE IN BOULDER COUNTY

In 1976, Eco-Cycle was founded by local Boulder visionaries who helped start the recycling revolution, making Boulder one of the first cities in the nation to offer curbside recycling. In the past 40 years, Eco-Cycle's work has advanced Boulder County's Zero Waste goals.

Fast forward to TODAY. Eco-Cycle is one of the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit recyclers. We operate the Boulder County Recycling Center, the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM), and the Green Star Schools program — a nationally recognized environmental education program in Boulder and Broomfield County schools.

Eco-Cycle plays a unique and critical role as a social enterprise that partners with every sector of the community — schools, businesses, neighborhoods, local governments, and public events — to make Zero Waste accessible and affordable for all. Downstream solutions to our waste woes—recycling and composting—are priorities, as are upstream efforts to prevent waste and replace our society's throw-away habits with ones that are sustainable.



Above: Pete Grogan, Eco-Cycle's co-founder, began the organization while in graduate school.



Eco-Cycle started curbside recycling in Boulder in 1976, making the city one of the first in the nation to offer curbside recycling.



1976

Eco-Cycle launches one of the very first curbside recycling programs in the nation. Old school buses were used to pick up recyclables.

Volunteers, boy scouts, girl scouts, and community groups jump on the bus to collect materials from the community.

1979

Eco-Cycle grandmother Kay Shapley begins outreach efforts and starts the Block Leader Network to educate Boulder residents about why, how, what, and when to recycle.

The Block Leader Network was a HUGE success! Recycling rates go up exponentially. Now called the Eco-Leader Network, it is vital in educating Boulder County residents about Zero Waste.

1979

Grand opening of the first post-consumer, multi-material recycling facility in Colorado. The facility is the result of a partnership among the City of Boulder, Boulder County, and Eco-Cycle. From left to right: Boulder Mayor Ruth Correll and Colorado's U.S. Senators Tim Wirth and Gary Hart.

1984

Eco-Cycle expands! The Longmont community opens the doors to their new Eco-Cycle facility. We start running buses for collection and processing materials on city-owned property.

1984

Eco-Cycle creates one of the first school recycling education programs, beginning a long-standing partnership with the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley School Districts.

ECO-CYCLE FIRSTS

Over our 40 year history, Eco-Cycle has established several Zero Waste "Firsts" in Boulder County, including the state's first comingled recycling system, the nation's most comprehensive Zero Waste Schools program, and the first Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) facility in the U.S.



1991

FIRST elevated paper sorting system is created to sort office papers.

Eco-Cycle helps design the University of Colorado's first materials recovery facility.



1992

Eco-Cycle develops and constructs the first commingled container sorting system in the state. The new sorting technology allows residents to mix their containers together at the curb.

1994

Eco-Cycle looks toward the next frontier: electronics recycling! We host community collections across the county, the first of their kind in the state.

2001

In partnership with the City of Boulder, we created the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM), the first facility of its kind in the nation, taking more types of materials than any other. The model of the CHaRM has since been replicated in other communities.

2015

Eco-Cycle helps pass the City of Boulder's new Universal Zero Waste Ordinance. The measure requires that all businesses, restaurants, grocery stores, apartments and condos, have and use recycling and composting services. Boulder becomes the 3rd city in the nation to mandate recycling and composting citywide.

2016

Eco-Cycle and Blue Star Recyclers team up to provide electronics recycling, while creating jobs for people with autism and disabilities.

THANK YOU TO OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY SPONSORS!

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SILVER SPONSORS



BIRTHDAY BASH JULY 16, 2016



40th ANNIVERSARY GALA
SEPTEMBER 8, 2016



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SPECIAL THANK YOU TO



BIRTHDAY BASH SPONSORS





what is a

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE?

A social enterprise uses traditional business strategies and principles to meet a social or environmental mission.

Eco-Cycle is a nonprofit social enterprise that fills a community need for Zero Waste services and programs using mission-based business activities. These activities include hauling recyclable and compostable materials from businesses, and innovating and operating Zero Waste facilities, specifically the Boulder County Recycling Center (BCRC) and the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM). We then use any revenues in excess of expenses from these activities to fund our Zero Waste operations, education, outreach, and advocacy work in the community. To fully support our community programs, Eco-Cycle also relies on the generosity of donors, foundations, and local businesses.

ECO-CYCLE'S SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MODEL GIVES BACK TO THE BOULDER COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER AND SUPPORTS BOULDER COUNTY'S ZERO WASTE GOALS.





THE CLIMATE BENEFITS OF RECYCLING

Recycling, composting, and other Zero Waste practices are among the quickest and most effective ways for communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change. In fact, Zero Waste has emerged as a top-tier climate solution.

In FY 2016-17, Eco-Cycle collected and processed 52,000 tons of traditional recyclables – paper, aluminum, cardboard, and plastic containers – as operator of the Boulder County Recycling Center. We also collected another 3 million pounds of materials at the CHaRM (Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials), which Eco-Cycle founded and operates with support from the City of Boulder.



ALUMINUM

**1,134,884 LBS
RECYCLED**



**PLASTIC
CONTAINERS**

**5,650,412 LBS
RECYCLED**



PAPER

**38.5 MILLION LBS
RECYCLED**



**CORRUGATED
CARDBOARD**

**32.9 MILLION LBS
RECYCLED**



STEEL

**1,134,884 LBS
RECYCLED**



GLASS

**20.4 MILLION LBS
RECYCLED**

ECO-CYCLE RECYCLING THROUGH THE BOULDER COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER

OUR RECYCLING EFFORTS HAVE KEPT NEARLY **56,852** METRIC TONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES OUT OF THE AIR,

THE EQUIVALENT OF TAKING NEARLY **36,000** CARS OFF THE ROAD FOR A YEAR...



ELECTRONICS
1,088,481 LBS
RECYCLED



PAPER
FROM
UNUSABLE BOOKS

321,026 LBS
RECYCLED



SCRAP
METAL
2,005,485 LBS
RECYCLED



BIKE TIRES
10,180 LBS
RECYCLED



PLASTIC
BAGS &
PALLET WRAP
76,462 LBS
RECYCLED



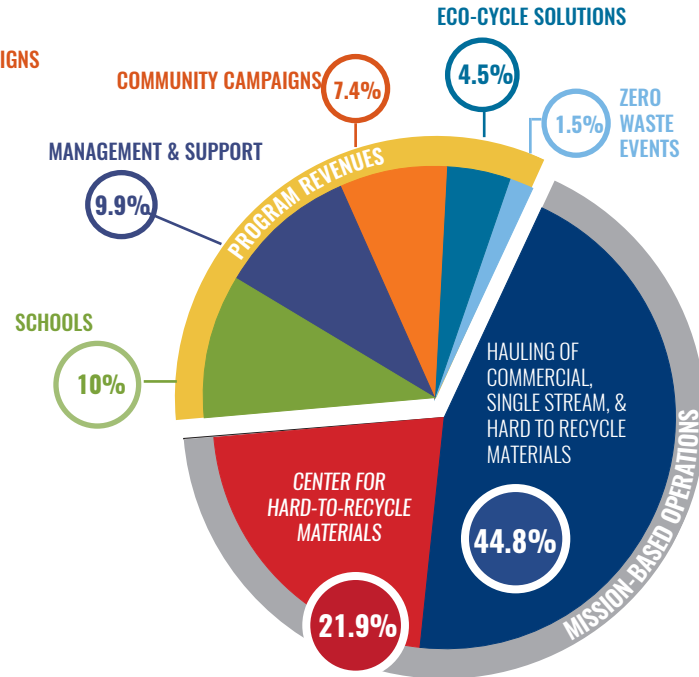
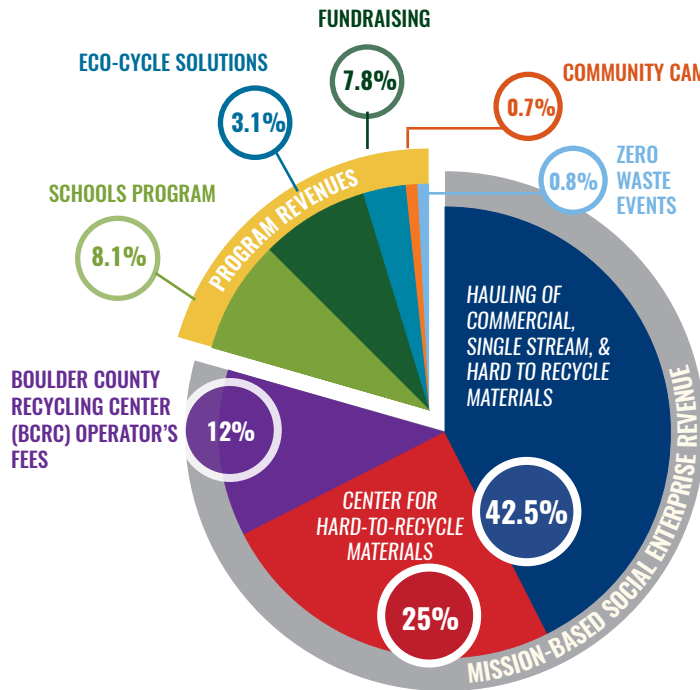
BLOCK
FOAM
52,236 LBS
RECYCLED



HOUSEHOLD
PROCELAIN
166,040 LBS
RECYCLED

ECO-CYCLE RECYCLING THROUGH THE CENTER FOR HARD-TO-RECYCLE MATERIALS (CHaRM)

FINANCIAL SUMMARY FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017*



*Eco-Cycle's fiscal year runs from July 1, 2016 - June30, 2017.

Eco-Cycle is a non-profit social enterprise, which means we conduct mission-based business activities (such as hauling and operation of the Boulder County Recycling Center and CHaRM), and use the revenue to fund our Zero Waste operations, education, outreach and advocacy work.

REVENUES

Hauling of Commercial, Single Stream, & Hard-to-Recycle Materials	\$1,635,584
Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials	\$ 961,042
BCRC Operator's Fee	\$ 483,581
Zero Waste Schools Program	\$ 313,482
Eco-Cycle Solutions	\$ 119,053
Fundraising	\$ 256,229
Communications & Campaigns	\$ 75,431
Zero Waste Events	\$ 30,996

ECO-CYCLE TOTAL	\$3,875,398
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BCRC revenues*	\$3,000,000
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EXPENSES

Hauling of Commercial, Single Stream, & Hard-to-Recycle Materials	\$ 1,567,822
Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials	\$ 783,511
Zero Waste Schools Program	\$ 311,332
Management & Support Services	\$ 507,106
Community Campaigns	\$ 295,775
Communications	\$205,763
Eco-Cycle Solutions	\$ 153,853
Zero Waste Events	\$ 44,098

ECO-CYCLE TOTAL	\$3,869,260
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BCRC expenses*	\$3,000,000
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* Eco-Cycle is contracted to operate the BCRC for Boulder County. All BCRC revenues and expenses are passed through to Boulder County.







Since 1976

eco·cycle·
Building Zero Waste Communities