



eco-cycle[®]

annual report 2014

Green Star Communities:
The New Zero Waste Frontier

Dear Friends and Supporters of Eco-Cycle—



2014 was a year of big change. Eric Lombardi handed over the reins after 23 years as Executive Director and now heads up our Eco-Cycle International project. Eco-Cycle moved to a new location at 6400 Arapahoe on “Recycle Row,” where we are co-housed with ReSource and just around the corner from the Boulder County Recycling Center and Western Disposal.

What hasn’t changed is the great work that Eco-Cycle is doing with your help! Eco-Cycle’s vision is to create model Zero Waste communities with best practices in each sector—neighborhoods, schools, businesses, events, governments—and sharing them throughout Colorado and around the world. Our “Green Star” programs spread Zero Waste practices and ethics throughout every aspect of our lives and society. This annual report highlights outstanding Green Star leadership in each of these sectors.



We know that Zero Waste is one of the quickest, easiest approaches a community can take to reduce its impact on global warming. That gives me hope, because it means each one of us can take action right now knowing that whether we champion Green Star Schools or start a Green Star Business or turn our neighborhood into a Green Star model, we’re changing the world for the better.

Thank you for supporting Eco-Cycle and everything you do for Zero Waste!

For a more sustainable future—

Suzanne “Zan” Jones



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Mission Statement

Eco-Cycle’s mission is to identify, explore and demonstrate the emerging frontiers of sustainable resource management and combat climate change by practicing Zero Waste. We believe in individual and community actions to transform society’s throw-away mindset into environmentally responsible stewardship. We are partnering with businesses, municipalities, schools, and individuals to create Zero Waste communities and provide a Zero Waste model for the world.

GREEN STAR SCHOOLS



Students at Eagle Crest Elementary in Longmont celebrate their Green Star status and tour the Boulder County Recycling Center, operated by Eco-Cycle.

Kids Love Zero Waste

Eco-Cycle's award-winning Green Star Schools program added four new schools during the 2014-2015 school year, bringing the total to 40 schools—nearly half of all K-12 schools in Boulder County!

All of the new Green Star Schools—Gold Hill Elementary, Hygiene Elementary, Mapleton Early Childhood Education Center, and Pioneer Elementary—got off to a great start.

The kids are really excited about the Green Star Schools program, which has become a real family-oriented affair with parents and community members helping out.

★ Doug Stahl, Teacher, Lyons Elementary

- At Gold Hill Elementary, a compost-hauling service was out of the question for the 27-student school tucked away in the mountains, but kids, parents and teachers plowed ahead with homemade worm bins, using red wiggler worms to break down rotting food scraps.

- Hygiene Elementary, a small school in St. Vrain Valley, reduced its trash by a whopping 50 percent with the teamwork of student council leaders, parents, and the head custodian.

- Mapleton Early Childhood Education Center in Boulder, the first Green Star preschool in the county, reduced school lunch waste by an impressive 35 percent thanks to its enthusiastic three- and four-year-old students.

- At Pioneer Elementary in Lafayette, which serves a large low-income and Hispanic community, students, parents, and teachers doubled the school's recycling rate in the program's first year.

These kids are making deep connections that they'll carry throughout their lives. As one fourth-grade girl shared with Eco-Cycle staff, "I don't use paper towels to dry my hands anymore, because that's using part of a tree."

GREEN STAR BUSINESSES

Oceans First staff accept their Green Star Business certificate from Eco-Cycle's Elizabeth Plumb. Oceans First is pioneering breakthroughs in sustainability, such as recycling neoprene scuba gear.



Local Businesses are Catalysts for Change

Businesses play a crucial role in building Zero Waste communities. To realize their potential, Eco-Cycle launched the Green Star Business (GSB) program last fall to turbo-charge local businesses that aspire to go beyond single-stream recycling and composting.

Eco-Cycle's GSB consulting helps businesses prevent and eliminate waste across-the-board, conserve water and energy, make their supply chains and purchasing practices greener, use more carbon-neutral, human-powered transportation, and embrace green building practices.

We joined the Green Star program because it leverages Eco-Cycle's longstanding expertise and leadership in this field. Right away, we're seeing the benefits of the employee training offered through the program. It's getting us all on board. Color-coded bins, monitoring phantom power, switching to LEDs – each step adds up. Green Star is making a real difference.

★ Bob Morehouse, Founder and CEO of Vermilion Design + Interactive

Our inaugural Green Star Businesses—Boulder Housing Partners, Boulder Brands, SanDisk, Shining Mountain Waldorf School, Ocean First, SparkFun Electronics, and Vermilion Design + Interactive—have especially big ambitions to reduce waste and increase recycling throughout their supply chains and make Zero Waste a cultural norm.

By delving into every aspect of their operations, these sustainability leaders are catalyzing notable changes, such as reducing plastic packaging and redesigning invoices to tell customers how to recycle or compost packaging and products.



GREEN STAR GOVERNMENT



Randy Moorman, Eco-Cycle's Campaigns Director, presents Lafayette Mayor Christine Berg with valentines from residents who spoke from their hearts when they asked city council for curbside composting.



Lafayette Champions Composting

The City of Lafayette has long been a Zero Waste trend-setter. In 2007, the city became one of the first in Colorado to adopt a pay-as-you-throw curbside collection program with recycling. Yet by 2009, the city's waste diversion rate had stalled at 28 percent.

"As Americans there's a much bigger disconnect between food and waste that needs to be addressed," Lafayette Mayor Christine Berg told the *Daily Camera*. "I think when people start throwing compostables away separately, they get a better feel for how much they're throwing away."

After an Eco-Cycle waste audit revealed that 40 percent of the city's garbage was compostable food and yard waste, the Lafayette Public Works Department, Mayor Berg and City Council members turned to composting to help solve the problem.

Lafayette residents, including Eco-Cycle staffers Kate and Mark Bailey and Denise Proctor, organized "Lafayette Composts," a grassroots campaign, to build citizen support. Under Eco-Cycle's leadership, the group collected hundreds of petition signatures and turned out dozens of supporters to public meetings.

In July 2014, the Lafayette City Council unanimously approved a new curbside composting service. Eco-Cycle was hired soon after to canvass residents to provide composting how-tos, answer questions, and explain how to save money with curbside composting, particularly in low-income and Latino neighborhoods.

By the time collection trucks hit the streets last winter, more than 200 residents (and counting) had downsized trash carts and added compost bins.

Curbside composting is now moving the city's Zero Waste efforts to a whole new level.

Change is challenging, and when we hit bumps in the road, Eco-Cycle was there to help. Today, residents are seeing reductions in their trash bills, and the amount of food waste going to the landfill is declining. Thanks to Eco-Cycle's education and outreach, Lafayette's program is a success.

★ Doug Short, Director, Lafayette Department of Public Works

GREEN STAR NEIGHBORHOOD

(from left) Cindy Jackson and Becky Nisttahuz, both residents at Kalmia Apartments, and Suzanne Jones, Eco-Cycle's Executive Director, celebrate residents' success in boosting recycling and composting.



A Multifamily Housing Win

"It didn't seem fair that we couldn't compost," said Linda Kinnamon, who lives with her family in Appleridge Park Condominiums in Boulder. "Why was it easy for people in single-family homes and hard for us?"

Appleridge Park was one of 16 complexes selected for Eco-Cycle's groundbreaking outreach program designed to increase recycling and composting among primarily low to middle income, Latino and elderly residents living in multifamily housing units.

Apartments and condos have the lowest waste diversion rate in the City of Boulder at 21 percent. With 20,000 individual apartment and condo units in the city, Eco-Cycle saw a huge opportunity to boost recycling and composting rates.

In partnership with the City of Boulder, Boulder County, Boulder Housing Partners, and Western Disposal, we set out to prove it could be done. The results were impressive. Recycling and composting rates climbed above the national average of 15 percent with the highest increase exceeding 50 percent.

The keys to success? Recruiting trusted volunteer residents ("Resident Champions") to encourage neighbors to recycle and compost, as well as adding compost service and making bins easy to access.

Kinnamon, along with 15 other volunteer Resident Champions, proved that a personal approach to bridge language and cultural differences makes all the difference.

For me, this was about my daughter's future. Recycling and composting are an easy way to make a difference and help ensure that I leave a healthy world for her. I'm thankful that Eco-Cycle gave us the tools, trainings, and advice to change our community for the better.

★ Cindy Jackson, a Resident Champion at Kalmia Apartments

GREEN STAR EVENTS



The sun sets behind the Flatirons as New Belgium Brewing Company's *Clips Beer and Film Tour* gets underway in Boulder last year. With Eco-Cycle's support, almost all of the waste generated at this Zero Waste event was recycled or composted.

All the Fun Without the Trash

If you live in Boulder County, chances are good that you've been to events run by Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Event staff and a cadre of dedicated volunteers. From the Lafayette Peach Festival to Longmont's River Fest and Boulder's Success 3.0 Summit, Eco-Cycle has provided Zero Waste services for hundreds of events, and do-it-yourself party kits for many more. In 2014, we rocked nearly 50 community events!

One 2014 standout: New Belgium Brewing Company's "Clips Beer and Film Tour," which stopped at Boulder's Twenty Ninth Street Mall. Eco-Cycle and New Belgium have partnered for five years to make the brewery's popular beer-tasting, indie-film-loving, traveling show an exemplary Zero Waste event, and the 2014 event was no different – 96 percent of all the discards generated were recycled or composted in carefully placed Zero Waste Stations. It was the most waste diverted by any event in the entire season!



New Belgium has always focused on sustainability, whether it's reducing how much water we use to make beer, or diverting waste at the brewery and our events. The Clips Beer and Film Tour partners with a local non-profit in all 21 cities that we have an event. In Boulder, the Clips and Beer Film Tour partnered with Eco-Cycle, which had the expertise and resources to help us achieve a 96 percent diversion rate.

★ Joanna Laubscher, Operations Coordinator, New Belgium Brewing Company

ECO-CYCLE INTERNATIONAL



Eco-Cycle International works with groups like the East-West Center to take Zero Waste initiatives developed here in Boulder County to communities around the world.

Spreading the Zero Waste Model Around the World

Eco-Cycle International received a tremendous boost in 2014 with a financial commitment from its first founding partner, WhiteWave Foods.

With this funding, Eco-Cycle International supercharged its efforts to spread Zero Waste solutions around the globe. For example, it continued its mentor role with WasteCap Nebraska, helping to create Zero Waste plans and programs in five Nebraska communities, and providing six webinars for the project. Eric Lombardi, the director of Eco-Cycle International, was the keynote speaker at the WasteCap Sustainability Summit and Eco-Cycle International created and conducted a half-day workshop on Zero Waste community planning for 40 participants throughout Nebraska.

Eco-Cycle International staff also provided advising services both near and far. Here in Colorado, the team

provided a communications consult for Vail, Colorado to increase recycling, and consulting for Region 8 EPA on job and economic opportunities in the Tribal & Reservation Recycling Programs.

Heading abroad, our staff consulted on a joint Israeli/Palestinian Kindron Valley recycling project and a recycling business development project in Russia, as well as provided a keynote address at the first Pacific Island Conference on Zero Waste and at the Zero Waste International Alliance conference.

It's not just our staff and our model programs making their way around the world; our publications are spreading as well. Our 2014 paper, "What is the best disposal option for the 'Leftovers' on the way to Zero Waste?" was translated into Romanian.

[CHaRM] Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials



2014 RECYCLING PROCESSING NUMBERS

electronics



908,234 pounds recycled

scrap metal



1.1 million pounds recycled

block foam



38 trailers of compacted
foam recycled

plastic bags/ pallet wrap



74,605 pounds recycled

porcelain toilets & sinks



57,000 pounds recycled

paper from unusable books



331,000 pounds recycled

bike tires



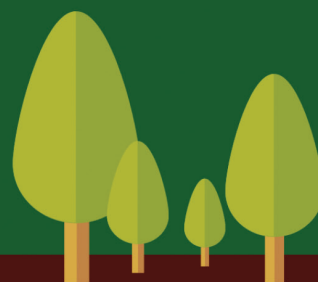
9,000 tires recycled



TOTAL CLIMATE BENEFIT

What's the total
climate benefit of all
this CHaRM recycling?

5,200 metric tons of
greenhouse gases kept
out of the air, the
equivalent of taking
1,095 passenger
vehicles off the road
for a year.



ABOUT THE CHaRM



The CHaRM is the first drop-off facility of its kind in the nation, accepting unusual materials for recycling and reuse. Eco-Cycle works with local recyclers whenever possible and always recycles electronics responsibly.

Learn more and see our extensive list of items accepted, guidelines and fees: www.ecocycle.org/charm

eco-cycle® 2014 CLIMATE IMPACTS

When we practice Zero Waste in our daily lives, we are taking direct action to combat climate change and conserve natural resources. Zero Waste practices, such as making sustainable purchases, recycling and composting, are among the quickest, most cost-effective ways to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that are warming our planet to dangerous levels. According to the EPA, "Approximately 42 percent of U.S. GHG emissions are associated with the energy used to produce, process, transport, and dispose of the food we eat and the goods we use." Here's how some of our Green Star programs made notable reductions in local GHG emissions last year.

BY THE NUMBERS



BOULDER COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER

(operated by Eco-Cycle)



RECYCLED

46,000 tons

including aluminum, paper, glass and plastics



ZERO WASTE BUSINESS SERVICES



RECYCLED

4,300 tons



COMPOSTED

3,800 tons

SCHOOLS PROGRAM



RECYCLED

450 tons

from all 82 public schools



COMPOSTED

184 tons

from 40 Green Star Schools



ZERO WASTE EVENT SERVICES



RECYCLED

17 tons



COMPOSTED



**TOTAL
CLIMATE
IMPACT:**

124,132 metric tons of greenhouse gases kept out of the air, the equivalent of taking 23,662 cars off the road for a year.

eco-cycle® 2014 COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Education and public outreach are core components of Eco-Cycle's work, informing and motivating behavioral changes and a cultural shift toward a Zero Waste ethic. Eco-Cycle is teaching our community how to embrace a Zero Waste lifestyle. In doing so, we're not only fighting climate change, but we're also protecting natural resources and wildlife habitat, conserving energy and water, and reducing pollution.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS



ZERO WASTE EDUCATION

Eco-Cycle educated 10,000 people, mostly Boulder County residents, about recycling and Zero Waste through tours, presentations, and our popular hotline.



COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

Eco-Cycle provided Zero Waste education (guidelines, signage, trainings, and more) to 16 apartment and condo complexes in Boulder, 11 of which are low-income public housing communities, and helped increase their recycling and composting by 29-41 percent.



SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Eco-Cycle staff gave 1,600 presentations to K-12th grade students in Boulder County on waste reduction, litter prevention, household hazardous waste, indoor air quality, forest ecology, energy conservation and more. They also sorted and distributed more than 13,500 used children's books (collected at the CHaRM facility) to at-risk, low-income and underserved children of all ages and other populations in need throughout Boulder County and beyond.



EVENTS PROGRAM

Eco-Cycle helped make 48 community events in Boulder County Zero Waste, impacting 200,000 event participants, vendors and volunteers at large marathon races, art festivals, weekend yoga retreats and more. We also helped 182 individuals throw waste-free gatherings with our Zero Waste Event Kit.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Revenues, gains and other support			
Recyclable materials	\$300,706		\$300,706
Hard-to-recycle materials	\$225,574		\$225,574
Services	\$1,521,855		\$1,521,855
Government and commercial contracts	\$819,987		\$819,987
Grants	\$70,500		\$70,500
Reimbursement from Boulder County	\$3,390,962		\$3,390,962
Donations	\$52,708		\$52,708
Other revenue	\$46,771		\$46,771
Interest income	\$34,023		\$34,023
Net realized and unrealized gain on investments	\$146,890		\$146,890
Contribution revenue		\$95,364	\$95,364
Net assets released from restrictions	\$18,543	(\$18,543)	\$0
Gain on disposal of assets			\$0
Total revenues, gains and other support	\$6,628,519	\$76,821	\$6,705,340
Expenses and Losses			
Direct labor and benefits	\$3,821,218		\$3,821,218
Materials and other recycling costs	\$726,459		\$726,459
Freight	\$299,400		\$299,400
Facilities cost and repair	\$238,995		\$238,995
Equipment expense	\$528,372		\$528,372
Depreciation	\$145,393		\$145,393
Vehicle expense	\$405,413		\$405,413
Insurance	\$114,758		\$114,758
Management and administrative	\$611,216		\$611,216
Fundraising	\$11,869		\$11,869
Total expenses	\$6,903,093		\$6,903,093
Loss on disposal of assets	\$9,463		\$9,463
Total expenses and losses	\$6,912,556		\$6,912,556
Decrease in Net Assets	(\$284,037)	\$76,821	(\$207,216)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$3,556,639		\$3,556,639
Net Assets, End of Year	\$3,272,602	\$76,821	\$3,349,423