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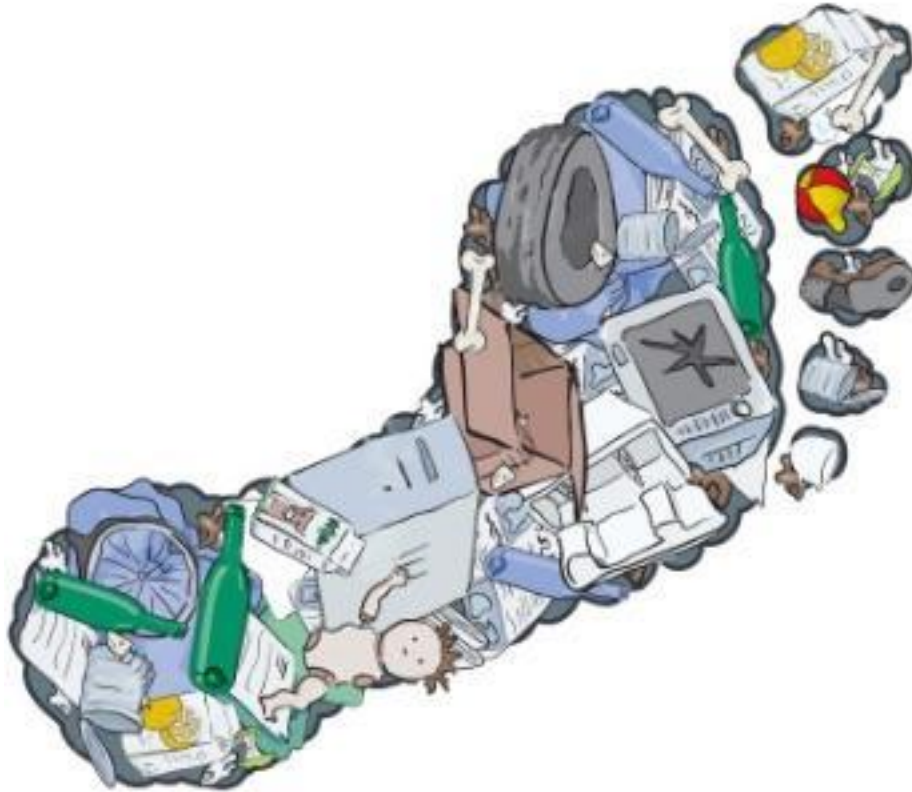
Zero Waste Applied Learning Lab



Connecting higher education with the sustainable materials management in

- Additions to the Resource Center
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Here's Whats New with the Resource Center



It is well known that greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels greatly contribute to global climate change, but what is lesser known is the impact that waste can have on climate change as well. Sending trash to the landfill rather than recycling or composting is, on its own, a major issue. However, products consumed on a daily basis contribute heavily to greenhouse gas emissions, not only during use and disposal, but also throughout their entire lifecycles. The manufacturing, processing, shipment and disposal of products all emit greenhouse gasses, which is why it is so important to understand the magnitude of energy-intensive inputs involved throughout the lifecycle of a product. It is up to us to compost, recycle, buy green and reduce waste, as well as the responsibility of large corporations to strive to reduce wastes in every step involved in the process of initial production to final shipment.

The Environmental Center's zero waste website has great resources on how to reduce your everyday waste, on our [Live Zero Waste](#) page as well as additional information compiled by this semester's interns about how [excess waste is contributing to climate change](#).

Speakers and Tours



Looking for a way to change up your usual classroom setting? Student interns have compiled a [list of local facilities](#) you can take students on a tour of, such as Western Disposal, Eco-Cycle, and Boulder County Recycling. These recycling facilities are a great way to give students a more hands on, demonstrative understanding of zero waste systems! Want to bring an expert into your classroom? Check out our [list of guest speakers](#), including information on what topics they cover, availability, and contact information for local and national speakers.

Zero Waste Internship

The Zero Waste Research Internship advances a multi-year project to create better linkages between higher education and the sustainable materials management (SMM) industry- which broadly consists of reuse, recycling, composting companies and organizations.

Interns will work a total of 150 hours (or approximately twelve hours per week) expanding a national resource center for Zero Waste as well as participate in applied projects locally. Specific duties will range from researching and cataloging resources and best practices, conducting professional level communication with organizations and individuals, and updating databases and websites. Students will enhance, or be introduced to, website development, survey instruments, database management, marketing tools, and/or outreach skills through campus training resources. [Click here to apply!](#)



The University of Colorado with the help of the National Recycling Coalition connects higher education with the sustainable material management (SMM) industry. The industry is facing many challenges and needs solution. It's been observed that

students are having an increasing interest in this sustainability field. Currently, we have identified and summarized about twenty schools all across the United States. These school are involved in research for non-profit, government, and commercial clients nationally. One school that represents the midwest is Michigan State University. They “maintain close ties to the packaging industry numerous ways, including the School of Packaging Industry Advisory Council, the Packaging Alumni Association, Packaging Executive forums, company visits, etc.” The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh has an Environmental Research Innovation Center. At their center they focus on research and testing of the environmental health. They are currenting work on compost testing. In the western sector, the University of California-Berkley has been working to transform their recycling and waste systems to create a zerowaste outcome. Portland State University – Institute for Sustainable solutions had created a “vibrant urban living laboratory.” They have green buildings, environmental efficient transportation, and are testing new innovate solutions. Connecticut College – Office of Sustainability, in the northeast, supports and engages the surrounding community, increases educational opportunities, and expands projects relating to environmental stewardship. The southeast sector contains the University of Florida’s Systems Consortium; which assists the state in the development and implementation of an environmentally compatible, sustainable, and efficient energy strategic planning. If you're a school doing research in this area, please take the following [survey](#).

Course Materials



The University of Colorado Environmental Center also includes a collection of comprehensive resources for potential course development, readily available to faculty and staff. These resources include:

1. Course Descriptions - synopses and syllabuses of many diverse courses taking place at fellow universities interested in zero waste, including Introduction to Recycling, Sustainable Operations, Sustainable Resource Management, Waste Management and Recycling,
2. Quizzes and Tests - a growing selection of full length quizzes and tests relating to zero waste lifestyles.
- 3. Fundraising Opportunities** - a database of websites and articles designed to help organizations and individuals learn how to get started raising money to fund a zero waste programs.
- 4. Instructor Qualifications** - a list of potential qualifications and prerequisites for organizations to follow when training or searching for prospective course instructors.

As well as a multitude of other training programs reflective of other Universities and corporations interested in zero waste.



Research exploring the viability of opening a zero waste store is being led by Elizabeth Biniashvili, a CU Boulder undergraduate. Three goals have been set for this project:

Combating Plastic Waste

The first strategy explored is to divert reusable items from landfill during freshman move-out toward affordable resale. The second is to create an online trade-or-sell platform for off-campus students. The third is to collaborate with vendors who practice zero waste.

Providing Food Security While Tackling Food Waste

The first strategy explored is to collaborate with local kitchens and food rescues to create affordable meal boxes for students. Second, perishable foods near their expiry may be donated to students. Last, workshop dinners may be hosted to offer students another meal option while learning to live sustainably.

Aiding Students with Living Costs

CU Boulder collaborates with PIPS, an app company that affords students points,

which can be redeemed toward lowering tuition costs, for making environmentally conscious choices. The app has potential to be applied to purchases made in the store. A second initiative explored is whether a percentage of the store's revenue can be applied toward assisting students with basic living costs in collaboration with the university's Office of Financial Aid.

The ongoing academic work of the intern will continue into the remainder of 2019. The project is on trajectory to launch a pilot program in the Spring of 2020. Currently, a case study survey is being held to assess how institutions with similar programs have succeeded. To participate, please click the following

link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/cuboulderzerowastestore>

If you would like to learn more, you may network with us by reaching out to the following email: zerowaste@colorado.edu





**University of Colorado Boulder
Environmental Center - Zero Waste Lab**

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