



Waste Minimization & Recycling Program

Spring 2008

Airports generate a lot of trash. Portland International Airport (PDX) is no exception: it generates six to eight tons of trash and approximately two tons of recycling each day. PDX works hard to minimize its waste generation and increase its recycling.

PDX offers a centralized collection area for all trash and recycling generated by terminal tenants and passengers. The following materials are recycled:

- **Glass**
- **Paper**
- **Aluminum and Steel Cans**
- **Plastic Bottles & Tubs**
- **Cardboard**
- **Food Waste**
- **Batteries**
- **Pallets**
- **Rigid plastic (buckets)**

Reducing waste generation and hazardous materials use is one of the Port of Portland's Environmental Strategic Goals and Objectives. The Port has a commitment to responsible environmental stewardship, and also seeks to comply with local regulations requiring all businesses to recycle 50% of their waste (not including construction and demolition waste).

Project Highlights

Elements of the Waste Minimization Program include:

- **Public Area Recycling "Buddy System."** Public area trash receptacles are paired with recycling containers throughout the terminal.
- **Ongoing Education and Outreach to Tenants.** Airport tenants receive the tools they need to successfully participate in the recycling program. The Port provides tenants with labeled recycling bins to fit their space constraints, delivers training, and continues outreach at monthly meetings.
- **Spring and Fall Clean Up Events.** Tenants dispose of bulky, non-hazardous materials at bi-annual Spring and Fall Clean-Up Events. Staff stage items for reuse, dismantle materials for wood, metal and plastic recycling, and, as a last resort, properly dispose of the materials.
- **Periodicals for Reuse Program.** Newspapers and magazines from international flights are redistributed to local schools with German, Italian, or Spanish language programs.
- **Food Waste Diversion Program.** Beginning in April 2002, all food and beverage concessionaires segregate food waste (food scraps, coffee grounds, food-soiled napkins, wax-coated cardboard) into food waste collection bins that are transported to a composting facility. By partnering with local businesses, PDX has doubled the amount of food waste diverted from the landfill while sharing collection costs. Diverting food waste from landfills decreases methane production and creates a nutrient-rich soil amendment for local gardeners. PDX and Partners tipped their 1,000th ton of food waste in December 2007.
- **Deplaned Waste.** Passenger airlines are invited to use the centralized waste and recycling containers. PDX also provides waste sorts to passenger airlines interested in increasing their recycling capture rate on aircraft.

Next Steps

The following innovations continue to improve the Waste Minimization Program:

- **Public Area Liquid/Ice and Food Waste Collection.** PDX is piloting "Liquid/Ice" drains and public area "Food Waste" stations.
- **Security Checkpoint Liquid Drain Station.** Liquids are not allowed through the security checkpoints. Discarded bottles full of juice and water have been identified as an issue: not only are they heavy for the janitorial service, but the beverages contaminate the recycling. The PDX Recycles team is testing a "liquid station" that encourages travelers to "Drink or Drain" their beverage before passing through the security checkpoint.

Questions? Contact: Stan Jones, Aviation Environmental Compliance Manager, 503.460.4679.