

## Waste Reduction Challenge

The purpose of this challenge is to educate employees and encourage them to reduce what they throw away by making small changes in their daily lives. Getting people to change their behavior takes time and a little bit of help. **This toolkit provides activities and communication pieces that will help get people engaged and in the habit of conserving, even if they don't do it for environmental reasons.**

Contact Alyssa Stephens at [astephens@fcgov.com](mailto:astephens@fcgov.com) or 970-416-2248 for assistance with planning your challenge.

### Materials:

Roadmap to Challenge Success (pg 2)  
Challenge Activity Outlines (pg 3-9)  
Email Templates (pg 10-11)  
Pre-and Post-campaign Surveys (pg 12-14)  
Resources and Links (pg 15)  
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## Roadmap to Challenge Success

### Plan for reporting

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You **must report** the number and percent of employees participating each month. This should include both:

- How many employees are participating in activities
- How many are receiving monthly emails

Other successes you could report in My ClimateWise include:

- Number of conservation actions completed (see tracking matrices on pg 6 and 8)
- Percent/amount reduction in waste
- Percent/amount increase in recycling/compost
- Percent who report increase in waste reduction behaviors (see surveys on )

### Set a timeline

*Example*

April 2—send out email announcing challenge (*and distribute recommended pre-challenge survey*)

April 7—launch challenge! Waste reduction tip

April 14—challenge reminder and weekly activity

April 21—challenge reminder and fun fact

April 28—reminder—last week participate in waste reduction challenge!

May 5 —announce winners and celebrate success

### Choose an activity

Activities like workplace audits and waste reduction bingo provide a more meaningful way for employees to engage with and learn about conservation than a simple email or newsletter. Remember, **you must incorporate at least one activity into your challenge.**

### Communicate, communicate, communicate!

Email templates and example promotional posters are included. Effective communication happens frequently and through multiple channels (emails, posters, staff meetings, newsletters, etc.)

*Optional: Schedule a Kickoff!*

Set the tone for a fun and exciting year of conservation with a kickoff event. ClimateWise staff may be available to speak or bring a fun, interactive activity for your kickoff event.

### Recognize success

An event at the end of the campaign is an excellent way to reward employees and celebrate success.

Prizes can also provide another incentive for employees to participate.

**Pro Tip:** Ask another local business to sponsor prizes for those who go above and beyond! You may be able to claim points in the waste badge for using local foods and prizes!

### Solicit feedback

An optional post-challenge survey is included (*see Appendix A*).

### Build on your success

Extension toolkits are available to provide brief monthly reminders on different waste reduction topics.

You could earn an additional **three points** towards your waste reduction badge using these toolkits!

## Challenge Activities

Activities are vital parts of your challenge. They make your challenge more successful, educational, meaningful, and FUN for all involved. **You must provide at least one activity during the challenge to increase education and engagement among your employees.** Adjust activities to fit your challenge and your workplace.

### Waste Audit

Employees audit their personal workspace, or group together to audit a common area to assess waste output (examples included). This can be done:

- 1) Once at the beginning of the challenge to help employees gain awareness of how many things in their office they are throwing away versus recycling.
- 2) Once near the end of the challenge to “test” how well they are doing with recycling (and compare to initial audit if completed)
- 3) Weekly to “test” how well they are doing with recycling and reusing (and compare to earlier weeks to encourage continual improvement).

If using personal workspace audits, employees can complete audits at their own pace, or during a designated time. Completed audits can be turned in to the challenge leader for an entry into a drawing, or used in conjunction with the BINGO activity below.

# Waste audit data sheet

Business/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Building: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

MATERIAL	WEIGHT (pounds)	VOLUME (gallons)	LOCATION	TOTAL LBS.	TOTAL GAL.	COMMENTS
<b>OFFICE PAPER</b>						
<b>COMMINGLED RECYCLABLES</b> plastic bottles & jars, metal cans, mixed paper						
<b>PLASTIC FILM</b> plastic bags, bubble wrap, shrink wrap						
<b>COMPOST</b> food scraps, food-soiled paper						
<b>TRASH</b> non-recyclable plastic, non- recyclable paper, other trash						
<b>REUSABLES</b> items still in working condition						
<b>GLASS</b> bottles and jars						
<b>TECHNO-WASTE</b> toner cartridges, media discs, cords and cables, etc.						
<b>OTHER</b>						

### **Bin of Confusion**

Set out a “Bin of Confusion” near the trash and recycling bins in common areas. When employees are unsure of whether an item can be recycled or not, they place it in the bin. After several days, everyone gathers together to go through the bin and discuss whether the items are recyclable or not.

### **Waste Reduction BINGO**

Employees receive BINGO cards with waste reduction activities in each box. Employees complete these actions to mark off spaces and get a BINGO. Each BINGO completed gives employees entry into a drawing for a prize. Employees cannot complete the same BINGO row/column more than two times throughout the challenge. An excel document to track overall office actions is available separately!

**Pro Tip:** Create your own BINGO card with actions that matter to your office! A template is included.

# Waste Reduction Bingo

<i>I recycled all possible items for two consecutive days</i>	<i>I used both sides of the printer paper for one full day</i>	<i>I used reusable dishes for my lunch.</i>	<a href="#"><u>I tested my recycling knowledge!</u></a>	<i>I used a reusable coffee mug</i>
<i>For one full day, I avoided printing and read/edited on-screen instead!</i>	<i>I avoided paper napkins and paper towels for one full day.</i>	<i>I recycled all possible items for one day</i>	<i>I publicly displayed my waste reduction pledge in my workspace</i>	<i>I ate a zero-waste lunch</i>
<i>I ate a zero-waste lunch</i>	<i>I added a line to my email signature encouraging people to avoid printing when possible</i>	<b>FREE SPACE</b>	<i>I recycled all possible items for a day</i>	<i>I used both sides of the printer paper for one full day</i>
<i>I used a reusable coffee mug.</i>	<i>I ate a zero-waste lunch</i>	<a href="#"><u>I tested my recycling knowledge!</u></a>	<i>For one full day, I avoided printing and read/edited on-screen instead!</i>	<i>I recycled all possible items for two consecutive days</i>
<i>I told someone about my new waste reduction habits!</i>	<i>I used a reusable coffee mug.</i>	<i>I attended a weekly activity</i>	<i>I avoided paper napkins and paper towels for one full day.</i>	<i>I conducted a waste audit at home</i>

# Waste Reduction Bingo

		<i>FREE SPACE</i>		

## Waste Reduction BINGO Recording Sheet

As employees complete their BINGO cards, keep track of how many employees take each action to report your successes to Climatewise and highlight your accomplishments internally!

Recycled for two days	Print on both sides	Fun fact in email signature	Test recycling knowledge	Attended a weekly activity	Avoided printing	Avoided paper napkins & paper towels	Zero waste lunch	Waste reduction pledge	Reusable coffee mug	Reusable lunch dishes	Told someone	Home/office waste audit

## Lunch and Learn

Educate your employees on ways they can make a difference during a short lunchtime presentation. Use, knowledgeable employees, or the TED Talks listed below to present information about waste reduction and the environment.

### *Presentation Ideas*

[Larimer County Master Gardeners](#)

[Composting Video](#)

E-Waste

### *TED Talks*

[“We can recycle plastic”:](#)

[“Tough truths about plastic pollution”](#)

[“Creative houses from reclaimed stuff”](#)

[“Turning trash into toys for learning”](#)

## Waste Reduction Self-Report

Send the table below out to employees and encourage them to keep track of the ways they are reducing waste every day for a week. Collect recording sheets at the end and consider raffling off a prize!

Recycled for two days	Print on both sides	Avoided printing	Avoided paper napkins & paper towels	Zero waste lunch	Reusable coffee mug	Reusable lunch dishes

## Challenge Email Templates

The following emails are based on a waste reduction challenge with one activity in the second week of the challenge. The yellow boxes are information that needs to be personalized to your timeline, activities, and workplace.

These provide a great starting place, but be sure to adapt to meet your employees' needs. Utilize other forms of communication (like incorporating information into staff meetings) if email is not a common communication channel.

**Pro Tip:** Challenge emails are a great place to highlight other actions that you are taking to achieve your waste badge, and other accomplishments you've made in this category!

### One Week Before Challenge

Subject: Coming soon...

Many of us at **insert business name** are passionate about protecting and enjoying the beautiful environment of Colorado. That's why we are partnering with ClimateWise and Fort Collins Utilities to help our office become more environmentally friendly in our day-to-day operations.

On **insert date** we will be launching a one month campaign to encourage behaviors that reduce waste and our carbon footprint. Each employee will have the opportunity to engage in fun activities surrounding waste reduction and learn about small actions you can take from using both sides of printer paper to bringing a reusable coffee mug—that can make a big difference for the environment.

**Participants will be eligible to win cool prizes like *insert example*.**

**We need your help to make this challenge a success! Please take five minutes to fill out our short survey on what you currently do to reduce waste, and what actions you think we should all be taking.**

Stay tuned for more information on challenge activities. If you have any questions, ask **insert contact name**.

### Week One

Subject: Let the challenge begin!

Today marks the beginning of the waste reduction challenge! For the next month, be thinking about the ways you can reduce, reuse, or recycle—whether through bringing your own water bottle, printing less, or recycling.

As part of our challenge, we will be **insert activity** on **insert date!** **Insert challenge directions/challenge time and location.** Don't forget to talk to **insert contact name** if you have any questions!

### Week Two

Subject: Starve your trash!

Did you know that 18% of methane emissions in the US come from landfills? According to a report by three environmental organizations, reducing the amount of waste going to landfills and incinerators would be equivalent to closing 21% of US coal-fired power plants!

We hope you've been enjoying finding small ways to change your daily routine to reduce the carbon footprint of the things you throw away.

Don't forget that this week we will be *insert activity* on *insert date!* *Insert challenge directions/challenge time and location.* Don't forget to talk to *insert contact name* if you have any questions!

### **Week Three**

Subject: Badge of Honor

Impress your fellow employees with your commitment to sustainability! Use this email to highlight a change that you've made in your workplace in the past few years to support the waste badge!

### **Week Four**

Subject: Last chance!

This is the last week of our waste reduction challenge, and we want to end it with a bang. We know you've been working hard to reduce, reuse, and recycle, but we would like to challenge you to find one more thing this week that you can change.

If you've been recording your efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle or participating in activities, please turn in those records to *insert contact name* to be recognized and entered into prize drawings. Drawings will happen on date, so don't delay!

### **One Week After Challenge**

Subject: Thank you!

Our first challenge of 2016 is done and I'd just like to say THANK YOU. We had     people participate in     actions/activities across two weeks! All those daily actions added up to big reductions in vehicle emissions!

We drew our prize winners this morning—*insert winner names*, it's your lucky day! Please stop by *insert contact name's* office to pick up your spoils!

On a final note, please take a minute and fill out this quick six-question survey letting us know what you liked and disliked about this project. We hope to be involved in many small challenges like this so share your ideas and know that things can only get even better from here!

## Pre- and Post-Challenge Survey

**Pre-challenge surveys** provide the opportunity to gather baseline data on participation AND improve your challenge through understanding barriers to participation and incorporating innovative ideas from employees. If you can, use free software like Survey Monkey or Survey Gizmo to reduce paper use!

**Post-challenge surveys** provide the opportunity to report back to ClimateWise, and to your employees. They also give employees the chance to share feedback about what went well, and what could be changed to make the challenge even more successful next year.

## Waste Reduction Pre-Challenge Survey

Please choose one answer for each of the following questions. Your name will not be attached to your answers!

About how often do you:	Always	More than half the time	About half the time	Less than half the time	Never
Recycle?					
Use a reusable cup/mug?					
Use reusable lunch dishes?					
Use double-sided printing?					

What is one thing that makes it easy to reduce, reuse, and recycle at work?

What is one thing that makes it hard to reduce, reuse, and recycle work?

## Waste Reduction Post-Challenge Survey

Please choose one answer for each of the following questions. Your name will not be attached to your answers!

About how often do you:	Always	More than half the time	About half the time	Less than half the time	Never
Recycle?					
Use a reusable cup/mug?					
Use reusable lunch dishes?					
Use double-sided printing?					

Did you take the survey before the start of the challenge?

**Yes**                      **No**                      **Not sure**

Did you participate in any activities offered during the challenge?

**Yes**                      **No**                      **Not sure**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The challenge was fun					
I learned something about energy conservation from the challenge					

What other challenges or activities should we do to be more environmentally friendly?

## Resources and Links

### City of Fort Collins Resources:

[Road to Zero Waste Report](#)

[E-waste Information](#)

[Recycling Drop Off](#)

[Composting](#)

# Promotional Posters



## CANS, BOTTLES & GLASS



## PLASTIC BOTTLES, TUBS, JUGS & JARS



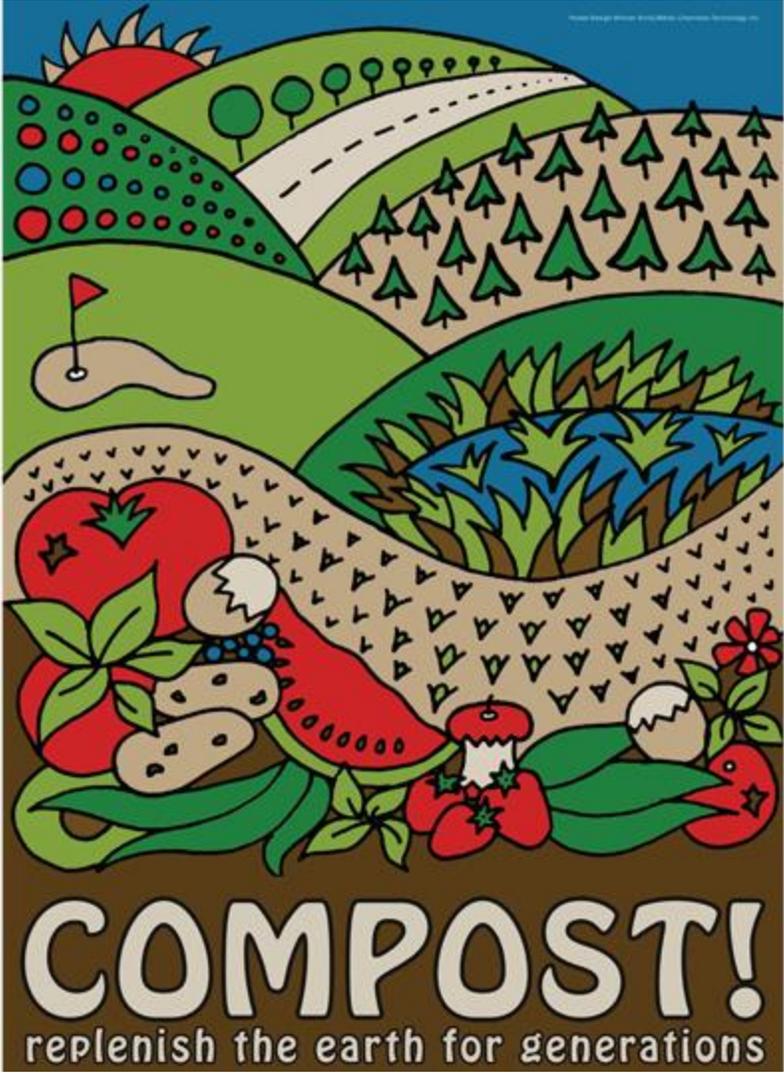
## CONTAINERS & CARTONS



## PAPER & CARDBOARD



All items must be empty and clean 



Did you know?

# RECYCLING SAVES ENERGY

EVERY TIME A NEW PRODUCT IS MADE FROM RAW MATERIALS, LARGE AMOUNTS OF ENERGY ARE CONSUMED. RECYCLING PRODUCTS DECREASES THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY IT TAKES TO PRODUCE THESE ITEMS.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?



Recycling uses LESS energy



so FEWER fossil fuels are burned



which REDUCES carbon dioxide in the atmosphere



and DECREASES greenhouse gases



which DECREASES global warming.



Using recycled scraps to make aluminum cans uses 95 percent **less** energy than making cans from raw materials.



It takes 75 percent **less** energy to make recycled steel than steel produced from raw materials.

ENERGY IS USED IN THE

4

STAGES OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

EXTRACTION OF RAW MATERIALS  
MANUFACTURE OF RAW MATERIALS INTO PRODUCTS  
PRODUCT USE BY CONSUMERS  
PRODUCT DISPOSAL

Energy plays a role in all 4 stages!  
Knock out one of these steps by recycling and you've saved energy.



For more recycling and energy-saving information, visit [www.recyclemorenc.org](http://www.recyclemorenc.org).