In January 2014, Simon Fraser University (SFU) launched its Zero Waste Initiative, a university-wide program with the aim of diverting 70% of waste from landfill, while doubling the amount recycled or composted. This goal was adopted in the SFU Sustainability Strategic Plan (2013-16) and has strong administrative support.

**WHAT WE DID**

- Implemented a standardized, 4-stream Zero Waste system uniformly across all campuses, each of which lies in a different municipality.
- Developed a regional standard for public space waste management that extends beyond SFU’s campuses and is benefiting other institutions, businesses, and municipalities, and is transferable regardless of geography.
- Utilized cross-departmental governance, with a well-established Zero Waste Committee made up of major departments and groups on campus that regularly reviews progress and sets priorities.
- Closely monitor progress through comprehensive waste data, waste audits, and regular feedback from the university community, including an annual survey. This allows for tailored program enhancements.
- Developed a comprehensive, multi-media communications strategy that makes use of innovative and creative print, online, and in-person communication and outreach strategies to improve awareness and encourage behaviour change.
- Closely monitor progress through comprehensive waste data, waste audits, and regular feedback from the university community, including an annual survey. This allows for tailored program enhancements.
- Provide tools and services to individuals and groups to build capacity and skills, and enable the community to apply innovations to their area of work or study, and engage in meaningful learning experiences.

**RESULTS**

- Diverted 1,219 tonnes of operational waste from the landfill, saving approximately $146,300 (CDN) in landfill disposal fees* and avoiding large volumes of CO2 and methane emissions (landfills are responsible for 35% of Canada’s methane emissions). When the additional waste streams of construction and demolition are included, this figure rises to 3,476 tonnes and $417,000 (CDN).
- Landfill waste has decreased by 10%, despite a growing university population.
- Increased operational efficiencies and enhanced sustainability education have also been realised.

*Note: this figure does not account for disposal fees/rebates for other material streams.

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