

Project title: Waste-free Lunches

Goal: Reduce the amount of waste disposed of from sack lunches and snacks; students learn to make packaging choices that reduce waste and conserve natural resources.

Brief description: Packaging and food waste from school lunches makes up a huge amount of the waste stream in schools. By implementing this project, students will become more aware of the waste that is created because of their lunch choices and will learn to pack a lunch that makes less garbage. Students who sign a pledge form with their parents will receive a "waste-free lunch" kit to use for packing their school lunch. School staff and students will do measure garbage amounts before and after the project and take photos to document the results the project.

Procedure:

- 1) Identify who will be involved and what their roles/responsibilities will be.
 - Project coordinator
 - Other staff involvement
 - Students

- 2) Measure lunchroom garbage before giving out no-waste lunch kits. (Call Metro for assistance with waste audits.)
 - Measure every day for one week, so you can get an average. (pounds/day)
 - Have students sort garbage as they throw it away; school lunch garbage in one area, sack lunch garbage in another. This way, you'll be able to measure changes in the amount of lunch sack garbage that is created before and after the project.
 - Weigh the garbage from sack lunches; sort and document items thrown away
 - Use waste audit form to document results.
 - Take photos of students/staff measuring/sorting lunch garbage
 - Option: Measure the amount and type of snack waste from classrooms

- 3) Purchase materials for lunch kits. (Examples of suppliers follows project procedures)
Possible items to include:
 - reusable lunch sack
 - reusable sandwich container
 - reusable drink container
 - cloth napkin
 - metal silverware

- 4) Promote the project to staff, students, parents
 - Write and send home letter and pledge form to parents explaining the project.
 - Copy no waste lunch examples on the back of letter. (see example letter)
 - Write an article about the project in school newsletter.
 - Option: Call Metro and ask for a presentation.

- 5) Distribute kits to students.
 - Parent and child must sign pledge to make waste-free lunch to receive a kit.
 - 100 kits - first 100 students to sign pledge receive a kit.

- 6) Document results of project
 - Take photos of students using their lunch kits.
 - Measure garbage from lunchroom after distributing kits; use same procedure as in step #2. Measure the garbage:

- 2 weeks after giving out kits for immediate results and
- 2-4 months after giving out kits for long-term results

7) Write up a summary of the project and return to Metro. (see Summary format)

Examples of suppliers (feel free to do your own web search too!):

Lunch bags

The Bag Connection, 800-622-2448 (They are local and will do a special minimum order: 100 bags with printed logo for \$2.39 ea. 7/03)

Weisenbach Specialty Printing: www.Weisenbach.com

Pricehot.com

Amazingrecycled products.com

Sandwich containers

You can buy multi-packs of lightweight reusable containers in the aluminum foil/baggie section of grocery stores.

Napkins

Hotel-Motel Sales, Inc., 503-235-7100

Thrift stores sell new and used napkins

Have a volunteer make napkins

Silk screen school name on colored scarves/napkins

Metro support staff:

Elementary school presentations and resources:

Freda Sherburne, 503-797-1522, sherburnef@metro.dst.or.us

Middle and high school presentations and resources:

Amy Wilson, 503-797-1521, wilsona@metro.dst.or.us

Help with waste assessments:

503-797-1670

School Waste Sort Form

School name: _____ Date of sort: _____

People involved in sort: _____

Where the waste came from: (circle one)

sack lunches

school lunches

classrooms

staff room

Item	# of items	Weight (pounds)	Volume (gallons)	
Paper bags				
Paper napkins				
Plastic baggies				
Milk cartons				
Aluminum cans				
Plastic bottles				
Other drink containers list types:				
Food waste list types:				
Fruit/pudding/jello cups				
Snack/candy wrappers				
Plastic silverware				
"Lunchable"-type boxes				
Recyclable paper				
Other misc. items list:				
TOTALS	-----			

WASTE SORT TIPS:

Don't sort waste from the bathrooms or health room

Use gloves

Dump garbage bags out on a plastic tarp and sort in to buckets (easy to weigh and estimate volume - subtract the weight of the bucket)

Recycle items that can be recycled!

Borrow a waste sort kit from Metro. Kit includes scale, tarp, bucket. Call 503-797-1670.

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parents:

We're proud of our efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle at X School, and are always looking for ways to improve our program. This year we applied for and received a waste reduction education grant from Metro. With our grant funds, we will do a Waste-free Lunch project. Our goal is to reduce the amount of waste that is created in the school lunchroom by learning how we can pack "waste-free" lunches.

We have purchased 100 waste-free lunch kits and will give them to the first 100 students who sign and return the pledge form below. The kit includes a lunch bag, a sandwich container and a cloth napkin.

Students who receive a waste-free lunch kit will commit to packing their lunch in reusable and/or recyclable containers and will take home any waste that may be left over from their lunch.

See the back of this letter for tips on creating a waste free lunch.

Thanks for your participation,

School principal
School recycling coordinator

X School Waste-free Lunch Pledge

My child and I would like to be a part of the voluntary X School Waste-free Lunch program. We will use the free lunch kit to help our environment by packing waste free lunches. We agree to use reusable or recyclable containers for food and drinks and will remember: "pack it in – pack it out."

Student _____

Parent _____

Date _____

(for reverse of parent letter)
Create a Waste-free lunch!

When you pack a waste-free lunch, you help conserve energy and natural resources, protect habitats and save money!

Pack your lunch:

In a reusable lunch box or bag

Choose to reuse:

- containers for sandwiches, yogurt, pudding, nuts, raisins, chips, etc.
- plastic bottle or thermos for drinks
- baggies for sandwiches, veggies, cookies and chips
- cloth napkins
- metal forks and spoons

Buy in bulk:

- Choose large bags of chips and pack single servings in reusable containers.
- Make jello or pudding at home, and pack single servings in reusable containers

Share your peelings:

- Bring home fruit and vegetable waste for composting

Close the loop:

- Choose items that come in packages that can be recycled when possible.

GRANT SUMMARY FORMAT

Due: May 14, 2004

Continued funding of this grant program depends on documentation of results from school projects. Help us help other schools by completing your grant summary. Include the following information:

School name and address
Project Coordinator
Contact info (phone number, email)

Description of project

- 1) Statement of the problem
 - What were the original project goals?
 - What were the roles of students, staff and/or community members?
- 2) Outreach/education efforts to support your project.
 - How did you let others know about your project?
 - What seemed to work or not work with your outreach efforts?
 - How were project activities integrated into curriculum? (if applicable)
- 3) Assessment
 - What steps did you take to measure the ongoing progress of your project?
 - How often did you conduct these assessments?
- 4) Materials purchased
 - What materials and/or services did you purchase with the grant funds?
- 5) Monitoring
 - What steps did you take to monitor the ongoing success of your project?
 - What problems and/or challenges did you encounter during your project period?
- 6) Results
 - What activities were completed?
 - What were the total amounts of materials diverted from the waste stream?
 - What were the estimated savings to the school (services, materials, garbage bills, etc.)?
 - How many hours of instruction about waste reduction resulted from this grant?
 - How many people directly benefitted from this grant?
- 7) Sustainability
 - How will your school maintain the project?
 - If applicable, how will the project be maintained over the summer?
 - How will the project be sustained or improved in the future?

Be sure to include:

- ♦ Visual aids such as photos and/or graphs or charts that document your project
- ♦ Fun or inspiring stories or quotes from project participants
- ♦ Advice for others implementing similar projects
- ♦ List of organizations and/or resources to recommend to others with similar goals

Send completed summaries to:

Middle/high school: Amy Wilson, Metro, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232

Elementary school: Freda Sherburne, Metro, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232