Dirty Jobs at UMD: Waste Audit Coordinator

Matt Silverman
What is a waste audit?

• Overall goals:
  • Assessment of waste produced
  • Analysis of waste disposal habits
  • Determine effectiveness of waste management programs

• How it works:
  • Gather waste from desired building(s)
  • Sort through all of waste from each stream
    • Landfill, Recycling, Compost
    • Put waste into different categories (27 total)
  • Weigh amount in each category
  • Analyze efficiency of disposal and contents of waste
Responsibilities as Waste Audit Coordinator

• What I do:

  • Gather volunteers to participate in audits
  • Attend sustainability events to recruit
  • Set up and lead waste audits
  • Analyze data and observations
  • Create cumulative report similar to that of SCS Engineers
Final Waste Stream Analysis Report

- Previous reports completed in 2002, 2008, 2014
- First year of student-led audits
- Based on professional auditing company (SCS engineers)
- Included in the report:
  - Background and procedures
  - Summary of results
  - Comparison to past results
  - Current initiatives and future recommendations
  - Composting in residence halls
  - Program costs
Prince Frederick Hall (10/23)

- Analyzed about 50 pounds each of compost, recycling, landfill
- Almost half of all waste is paper towels and food
- Compost contained only 5% contamination
- Recycling contained 87% recyclable material

- About 2/3 of landfill could have been diverted
- Over 28% food
- 20% of waste is unclassified
  - Food wrappers
  - Not recyclable or compostable materials
  - Miscellaneous
Elkton Hall (11/17)

- Compost found in assigned toters and trash dumpster
  - 4% contamination in toters
  - 15% contamination in dumpsters
- 2/3 of waste in landfill could have been diverted
- Recycling efficiency is 59%
  - Liquids and plastic films contaminate
- Paper towels and food are most abundant
La Plata Hall (12/1)

- No composting program
- Analyzed all of recycling and landfill waste
- Large air filters, downspout piece, 34lb bag of pineapple in landfill

- 65% recycling efficiency
- Mostly cardboard and mixed paper
- Contamination from unclassified items, liquids, compost
- Most waste from paper towels, food
Spring 2018 Projects

• Low rise, apartment/suite style residence halls

• Dining hall audits
  • Recycling and landfill audited the same way
  • Clearing student’s plates into different food categories
  • Indicator for menu planning, food waste, dining hall programs

• Comparison to 2014 report

• Create waste stream analysis report for UMD

• Examine other programs and make recommendations
Thank you!

• Adrienne Small, Recycling Coordinator

• Cindy Felice, Associate Director of Residential Facilities

• Allison Tjaden, Assistant Director of New Initiatives, UMD Dining Services

• Andrew Muir, Communications Manager for the Office of Sustainability

• SustainableUMD for hosting events

• All volunteers who participated
Questions?