



THINK ZERO LLC CASE STUDY

Cushman & Wakefield

Client Profile: A 1.45 million square foot commercial office tower managed by C&W with 40 floors, multiple tenants, and about 2,000 occupants.

CHALLENGE:

Cushman & Wakefield (C&W) came to Think Zero LLC (TZLLC) for assistance becoming compliant with New York City's new commercial recycling rules. Tenants had limited awareness of the recycling program and most people were not recycling in the building.

SOLUTION:

Think Zero LLC designed and executed the following tailored approach:

- 1) Determined a baseline of C&W's current waste practices for compliance review and gap analysis.** TZLLC conducted a walkthrough of the building to assess signage and bin placement and current tenant behaviors, as well as a waste audit to determine waste composition and contamination rates.
- 2) Developed a set of recommendations and communication materials for the building management to use with tenants.** We developed a custom waste management plan that provided specific actions for tenants and the building manager, including bin and label recommendations, loading dock recommendations, cleaning staff training and a behavior change plan for the tenants.
- 3) Engaged with tenants and cleaning staff via on-site training and communications plan.** TZLLC worked with janitorial staff to devise new procedures that would prevent incorrectly labeled trash and recycle bins from entering the loading dock and contaminating the compactors.

Statistics:

1,158 Lbs. of waste audited	17% Increase in recycling	83% Potential diversion rate	928 Lbs. of waste diverted from landfill per day	0 City and state violations
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Avenues School in NYC

Client Profile: Private grade school with 1,620 students and 361 faculty and staff.

CHALLENGE:

Avenues approached Sarah Currie-Halpern of TZLLC with a mission to become a zero waste facility by 2021. The overarching goals included reduced environmental impact, educational opportunities for students, public relations opportunities, and corporate social responsibility. Our role was to design a plan that would encompass all waste sources and assist in implementing zero waste practices.

SOLUTION:

In our first year with Avenues we chose to focus on three major waste streams: textiles, food, and paper towels:

- 1) Textiles - Improve and grow the school's existing uniform swap and develop Avenues' first Halloween Costume Swap.** The bi-annual uniform swap allows parents and students to trade uniforms that did not fit or were no longer wanted. Once the drive was finished, all remaining clothes were sent to local charities for reuse, such as St. Clemens.
- 2) Food - TZLLC developed a partnership with Flik, the school's food provider, to donate excess food to hungry New Yorkers.** In 2017, our food donation program provided hungry New Yorkers with about 5 tons of nutritious food each month, and in six months the amount of food waste sent to composting dropped by 23%. **For inedible food and food scraps we facilitated a partnership with Royal Waste to implement a composting program,** which diverts about 14.5 tons of food from landfill and incineration each month.
- 3) Paper Towels - To eliminate paper towel waste we assisted the school in replacing towel dispensers with high-efficiency Dyson hand dryers.** The Dyson dryers were installed during the summer to avoid disturbance while classes were in session. By reducing reliance on both procurement and disposal of paper products, the school reduced its CO2 emissions by 4-8 tons per year and saved an estimated \$34,636 per year.

Statistics:

1,530 Lbs. textiles diverted from landfill	5 Tons of food rescued each month	40 Tons CO ₂ emissions saved from paper towels	\$34,636 Annual savings in paper towels	14.5 Tons of food composted each month
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AIANY

Client Profile: The American Institute of Architects New York (AIANY) is an organization of architects, allied professionals, and students dedicated to design excellence, public outreach, and professional development.

CHALLENGE:

AIANY came to Think Zero LLC (TZLLC) to develop a program that would engage and educate member firms in reducing waste generation in the workplace.

SOLUTION:

Think Zero LLC designed and hosted a Zero Waste Challenge, in which 26 architectural firms competed in a 3-month challenge to reduce and divert as much waste as possible:

Each firm conducted 4 waste audits—one as a baseline and three subsequent audits—to track their monthly waste generation, contamination rate of recyclables, donated items, compost, and special streams. The firms recorded their findings on Think Zero LLC's custom waste audit spreadsheets. In addition, each firm created its own waste management plan to outline a unique strategy for reducing waste at the office.

TZLLC hosted multiple conference calls for participants to share ideas, raise questions, receive referrals and advice, and learn about best practices for waste reduction.

At the end of the challenge, 10 firms were recognized as winners and runners-up in highest average diversion rate, greatest percent increase in diversion rate, largest total waste reduction, and most innovative strategy.

A zero waste challenge is an effective way to incentivize behavioral change, promote learning, foster innovation, and open opportunities for collaboration.

Statistics:

138,397 Lbs. of Waste diverted during the challenge	17,719 Lbs. of landfill waste eliminated per month	6,383 Lbs. total waste eliminated per month	11,336 Lbs. of waste diverted per month	76% Average diversion rate on final assessment
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