USGBC ZW Presentation
Recycling Refinement
July 26, 2017
Atlanta, GA

The Epsten Group
Recycling Refinement

Moving beyond landfill diversion ...

Recycling Integrity:
Maintaining maximum Material Value With Minimal Energy Expended

Contamination:
an expensive trip to the landfill
Source-Separated Materials

- Identify highest value, largest quantity materials.
- Source-separate with mini or regular size baler.
- Sell directly to manufacturers as raw material or within the commodities market.
- Aluminum, cardboard | other fibers & certain plastics are generally the highest value items.
Plastic Film Recycling

- Contaminant in single-stream recycling.
- Value often exceeds OCC.

If it was easy, it would already be done!
Plastic Film Recycling

Concord Mills, a Simon Mall

- *Sustainable Food Court Initiative Shopping Mall Pilot*
- *First mall plastic film recycling pilot in nation.*
- *ACC Plastic Film Recycling Group Case Study.*
FreshPoint Atlanta

- Nation’s largest produce distributor.
- Shrink wrap on incoming & outgoing pallets.
- Returned shrink wrap used for customer deliveries.
- Ei film on pilot.
- Shared with ATL & GWCC
Plastic Milk Jug Recycling

HMSHost

- *Starbucks* - City’s largest generator of plastic one-gallon jugs – highly recyclable yet most go to landfill.
- HMSHost operated 9 ATL Starbucks in 2011.
- 2600 milk jugs recycled PER WEEK.
- *Program broke even to made some $$$$.*
- *Mini baler in back of ATL Starbucks.*
- ATL Starbucks achieved 90% zero waste.
Zero Waste Zones

- Launched in 2009 at the GWCC.
- THE nation’s forerunner for the commercial collection of food waste for compost.
- 2009 MPI lunch for 1200 FIRST event where ALL food was consumed, donated or collected for compost!
- CNN prime-time story; NY Times front page article
Food Waste

Zero Waste Zones

- Perfected back-of-the-house prep food waste collection practices.
- Hyatt Regency quote: This is EASY, why wouldn’t everyone separate kitchen food waste?!!
Post-Consumer Food Waste

Atlanta Airport

- Sustainable Food Court Initiative Airport Pilot.
- Compostable food & beverage packaging provision in 2011 concessionaire contract.
- Set the stage for legally binding (vs. regulatory) zero waste compliance.
- Compostable Packaging Info Packet
- 2011 Greening Airport Award
Post-Consumer Food Waste

GWCC | Georgia Dome

- Sustainable Food Court Initiative Event Venue Pilot.
- Levy Restaurants shifted to reusable serviceware in suites & compostable packaging for concessions.
- Post-Falcons game food waste collection pilots.
- Compostable F&B Packaging Education session.
Source-Separated Materials Recycling Template

- Contamination is a mistake!
- Source-separated material is baled via mini-balers.
- Bales collected to common recycling center, baled into standard sized bales, stored until accumulate trailer load, sold in local or commodities market, rebates distributed to participants.
- Begin with high value / volume material.
- Community-based program.
Source-Separate Materials Recycling Template

**S-SMRT City-Wide Template**

- *Georgia Dome served as base generator.*
- *Orwak donated a multi-bin mini-baler for pilot.*
- *Atlanta Penitentiary in partnership with UNICOR served as the recycling center.*
Total Materials Management Approach

- Evaluating the entire materials stream in one cost / revenue center.
- Begin with high value / high quantity material.
- Create a recycling profit center.
- Use profits from high value items (aluminum, plastics, paper / fiber) to offsets costs associated with challenging materials (food waste, glass)
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