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Zero Waste Zones Director

GREEN Real Estate Summit | BOMA
Atlanta, GA
March 8-9, 2012
Elemental Impact

Sustainability in ACTION

A National Non-Profit in collaboration with the National Restaurant Association

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Initiatives

ZERO WASTE ZONES

POWER

*Perishable Organic Waste to Energy Recycling*

SFCI

*Sustainable Food Court Initiative*

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Zero Waste Zones

- Atlanta’s response to losing a 2008 convention as client perceived another city as “greener”
- Launched in February, 2009 in an acclaimed press conference led by the Acting Regional EPA Director
- Four additional zones launched in Atlanta
- Ready for national expansion

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Zero Waste Zones

Criteria:

- Spent grease collected for production of biofuel
- Common recycling practices in place
- Excess food meeting the Good Samaritan Donation Act donated
- Other excess food and kitchen scraps collected for composting or other approved organics solutions

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Media LOVES the ZWZ:

- ZWZ is a WIN story to tell
- 2009 media amazing: CNN, NY Times, Earth911.com
- 2011 Media momentum building – Fortune.com
Mission:

To explore and evaluate the highest good collection, recycling and use of perishable organics and make recommendations for deployment of economically viable projects within a defined geographic region area.
Sustainable Food Court Initiative

An Ei Task Force in Partnership with the NRA
Mission:

To bring zero waste initiatives to food courts and develop industry, sustainable best practices for Back-of-the-House and Front-of-the-House operations.
Food Court Challenges:

- Common property waste & recycling contracts
- Landlord | Tenant Relationships
- Franchisee | Franchisor Relationships
- Consumer Disposal of FOH Packaging
- Third Party Contracts Brought to Food Court
- Multiple Packaging Products Used
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

All food vendors must use compostable serviceware and consumer-facing packaging and source-separate organics for composting collection.

Provision in new airport concessions RFP
2011 Going Green Airports Award:

Sustainable Food Court Initiative
Atlanta Airport Pilot.

Michael Cheyne accepted award on October 31
Additional Pilots:
- Simon Properties | HMSHost Mall
- Event Venue
- Office Complex
- Government Center
- College | University
According to the EPA, 31.8 million tons of food waste is generated per year, with 97.5% going to landfills.

Organic matter in landfills is the number one source of man-made methane gas, which is 20-25 times more potent than naturally occurring carbon dioxide.

The GHG impact of 31 million tons of food waste sent to landfills annually is the equivalent of taking 5.2 million cars off the road for one year.
The WHY Overview

Compost:

- Filters storm water ~ keeps pollutants out of surface water (rivers, streams, lakes)
- Restores soil ecology so it may produce food naturally filled with vitamins, minerals and other nutrients
- Increases water retention ~ generally, soil mixed with compost requires 30% less irrigation
- Assists in erosion control

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The WHY Overview

Sediment is the #1 source of water pollution

Costs approx. $44 billion per year
The HOW Overview

Organics Collection:

- Determine organic generators in building
  - Restaurant | cafeteria operations
  - Tenants with in-house foodservice operations
  - Catered events

- Assess baselines of back-of-the-house vs front-of-the-house food residuals

- Contact organics hauling company – must have route density

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The HOW Overview

- Establish an implementation plan with several phases – baby steps are best
  - BOH
    - If numerous outlets, start with those most enthusiastic
  - FOH
    - Will be the same for seated dining
    - Shifts may be necessary in foodservice packaging
    - Collection bin design with clear signage; optimum placement is critical
    - Multiple-unit and food courts have additional challenges

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Create or participate in a metrics tracking system

Consider joining ZWZ or similar organization to gain support
Contact Information

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