

Culver City Hall goes Zero Waste!

In recognition of 2019 Earth Day, the City of Culver City launched a new Zero Waste Program at City Hall. Staff no longer has to go far to compost their left-over banana peel because each deskside refuse container was replaced with a deskside green organics container. Now instead of reuse and recycling, each employee has organics and recycling deskside containers. Three streams (organics, recycling, and trash) communal containers were placed in conference rooms and kitchenettes.

To prepare City Hall staff for the new program, the Environmental Programs and Operations (EPO) staff initiated an extensive outreach campaign. EPO staff first met with each division to introduce the program and provide an opportunity to address concerns, ideas, and provide educational materials. In addition, workshops, lunch, and learning events were offered. All-user e-mails were sent about the new program that included outreach on what items could be placed into each container.

To further encourage waste prevention, the City purchased reusable dishware and utensils for conference rooms to be used in lieu of single-use items. The City is currently working on installing dishwashers to provide an additional incentive to bring and use reusable dishware to the office.

A month after the launch of the City Hall's Zero Waste program, "Zero Waste Ambassadors" met with each city hall employee to check in on their overall understanding of the program, while observing items discarded in their deskside recycling and organics containers. Employees that placed the correct items in each deskside container received an "Awesome" card in recognition of their efforts. Employees that placed non-acceptable items into either the recycling or organics containers received an "Oops" card. The "Oops" card listed the items placed into the wrong containers and provided information on which would be the correct container. Staff that received "Oops" cards were encouraged to attend the Zero Waste Workshop held on the following day.

Through these zero waste efforts, the City Hall Zero Waste Program has been a huge success. The City established a green team that meets quarterly to discuss current program and additional ways to reduce waste within the City and overall garbage has been reduced by 33 percent. We could not have reached these achievements without the conscientious and collaborative efforts amongst Culver City's employees and janitorial staff.

It is anticipated that the Zero Waste Program will expand from City Hall to all City Satellite offices soon. Should you need additional information or have any questions, please reach out to the Culver City Environmental Programs and Operations at 310.253.6400 or via CulverCity.org.