

Recycling Cost Analysis

A recycling cost analysis is conducted to determine the financial effects of starting a recycling program at your school, to evaluate new recycling options, or to determine how changing recycling and consumption patterns can affect the school's budget.

Time: 1 hour

Supplies:

Completed School-wide Audit Analysis sheet
Cost Analysis worksheet
Calculator
Pencil or pen

Instructions

1. Student need to find out how much the mainstream waste disposal costs per year at their school. Students should gather enough information to determine the cost to the school for each garbage pickup and approximately how much waste is collected each time (i.e. One dumpster full of garbage is collected how many times per week?).
2. If your school has a recycling program, students will speak to school officials to determine how much the current recycling program costs per year at their school. Students should gather enough information to determine the cost to the school for each pickup of recycling and approximately how much waste is collected each time.
3. If your school does not have a recycling program or is looking to change their existing program, make sure students have completed the "Vendor Information" activity. Then use the audit to decide what could have been recycled instead of being put in garbage.
4. Individually or in groups, students should compare the costs of mainstream waste disposal to recycling. They should refer to the school audit to estimate the change in costs if the school alters its recycling program. Refer to the Cost Analysis worksheet for guidance in your analysis.
5. If this is the first year conducting the audit, work as a class to design a graph that charts the recycling and mainstream waste expenditures of the school annually. If this is not the first year of the audit, add this year's expenditures to the graph to chart long term trends.