

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

Anyone on your staff who loves archeology – or garbology – will love this activity. You'll get some real evidence of what goes on at your workplace and what you can do to change it. You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

Objective: a clear snapshot of what is leaving your building each week and how you can become more effective at reducing the amount of waste going to the landfills.

Name of activity: Dumpster Dive

Time: three hours

What you need: support from management, email announcement, incentive prizes, team of Dumpster Divers, posters (sample ahead)



STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Secure support from management.
2. Announce the project at a staff meeting or via email.
3. Purchase incentive prizes (or secure donations from neighbouring businesses – a great conversation starter!). Great prize ideas: movie tickets, commuter mugs, plants, gift certificates to local grocers, transit pass, packages of organic seeds, local wine.
4. Appoint a team of Dumpster Divers to do the deed. Outfit them with a Dumpster Dive Kit (see next page).
5. Cancel garbage and recycling pick up for the week of your event, to ensure a representative sample. Conduct your dive the day before the next pick up.
6. On the appointed day, dive in:
 - Count all the bags of garbage in your dumpster.
 - Randomly select a sample bag to examine closely.
 - Unpack the selected bag and separate it into categories: paper, glass, metals, plastics, compostables, hazardous waste, wood and textiles.
 - Weigh each pile.
 - Calculate the percentage weight of each pile against the total.
 - If neighbours get curious, use the opportunity to start a conversation about what we can all do to lower our impact. Report back to staff using the Dumpster Dive Data Collection form (next page)
 - Share photos and stories (an excuse to talk trash!) from Divers about what they observed. (Take special note of what might have been reused or repaired, recycled or composted – that's the stuff you can do something about.)
7. Ask staff for feedback, ideas and improvements.
8. Implement those ideas.