RECYCLING

How does the University manage recycling on campus?
The University of Chicago has several recycling programs, depending on the location and type of waste. We recently moved to a single-stream recycling programming on campus (with the exception of residence halls; see below). This means that you no longer need multiple containers or to separate materials for recycling. All recyclable items can be dropped into any recycling container on campus. Studies show that single-sort recycling programs greatly increase participation rates and can improve recovery of waste by 30 percent.

On campus, the University recycles:
- Aluminum cans, aluminum foil, and pie tins
- Glass food and beverage containers
- Steel or tin cans
- Plastics #1-7 as noted:
  + PET plastic containers with the symbol #1 – with screw tops only, without caps
  + HDPE natural plastic containers with the symbol #2 – narrow neck containers only (i.e. milk and water bottles)
  + HDPE pigmented plastic containers with the symbol #2
  + Plastics with symbols #3, #4, #5, #6, #7 – narrow and screw top containers
- Newsprint
- Corrugated cardboard (flattened)
- Paper board
- Magazines and catalogs
- Cereal boxes
- Telephone books
- Office paper
- Mail and junk mail, including FedEx envelopes and other envelopes with plastic windows
- Brown paper bags

NOTE:
- All glass containers, tin cans, and plastic containers must be empty and free of metal caps and rings and contain less than 5% food debris.
- Tissues, paper towels, or other paper that has been in contact with food is not acceptable.
- No wax-coated paper or carbon paper.
- No plastic bags or garbage.

Do renters in residential university apartments have recycling options?
Yes. Real Estate Operations has implemented single-stream recycling at all of their apartments. They currently recycle:
- Glass jars and bottles
- Aluminum cans, aluminum foil, and pie tins
- Tin or steel cans
- Cereal boxes, paper towel rolls, flattened cardboard
- Plastic bottles and containers (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, & #7)
- Junk mail, FedEx envelopes and other envelopes with plastic windows, magazines and catalogs, telephone books, paper bags, office paper, folders, and newspaper.

NOTE:
All recyclable material should be placed by the resident into the identified light blue recycling tote located in the building's designated recycling interior or exterior location. All single-stream recyclables are serviced by a separate recycling truck, which brings the materials to an appropriate, single-stream recycling facility. Please contact Lakeshore Waste with any questions at Lakeshorewaste@ameritech.net

What about residence halls?
In residence halls, recyclables must be separated and placed into designated containers as follows:
- Newspaper: Must be loose, not bagged or tied, including newspaper supplements
- Mixed paper: Includes magazines and junk mail, flattened corrugated cardboard, office paper, envelopes, phone books, and brown bags.
- Glass: Bottles and jars must have lids removed and be rinsed (labels may remain on). No flat glass or Pyrex.
- Cans: Food and beverage cans must be rinsed.
- Plastic: Includes milk, water, beverage, and soap bottles. Remove caps, rinse and place in container. No plastic bags or Styrofoam. No other types of plastic containers. No plates or cups.

How do I request a recycling bin for my office?
Call the Facilities Work Center at 773.834.1414 and specify whether you need a desk-side container for office use or a large bin for a one-time pick up (for example, to clean out an office).
FAQs on Keeping Our Campus Green

How does the University dispose of fluorescent lamps?
Facilities Services manages the disposal and recycling of lamps—primarily the fluorescent tubes used in overhead lights. To dispose of fluorescent bulbs, contact the Facilities Work Center at 773.834.1414. Facilities will remove the bulb within 7 to 14 days.

What about electronic waste?
NSIT’s Computer Recycling Program will take your computers, monitors, keyboards, modems and other e-waste, whether they work or not. Working computers will be refurbished and donated to local charities and schools. Non-working computers will be processed in an environmentally responsible way to avoid ending up in the landfill. Electronic equipment is one of the fastest growing items of waste in the United States. Electronic waste is of concern largely due to the toxicity of some of its substances. To dispose of electronic waste, call 773.702.7913 or email NSIT at computer-recycling@listhost.uchicago.edu. Other Info on disposing of electronic/toxic waste can be found on the city of Chicago’s recycling information page [click here].

Does the University recycle household batteries?
Yes. There are about two dozen drop-off points on campus and Residence Halls and Commons has an additional 30. Facilities Services operates a program for non-rechargeable batteries of all shapes and sizes. Collection tubes (long clear tubes) can be purchased from Facilities Services for approximately $25. Any household batteries are acceptable (excluding cell phone batteries). Batteries are picked up within a week or so after a call is placed to the Facilities Work Center at 773.834.1414. The recycling service is free. In the city of Chicago, you can also drop off batteries at Walgreens stores and public libraries.

Is paper that gets shredded on campus recycled?
Yes, the shredding company handles the recycling.

Does the University compost food waste?
Yes. Food waste is currently separated and picked up for delivery by the Resource Center in Bartlett, Pierce, and Burton-Judson dining halls. Composting is one of the easiest ways you can reduce the amount of food that ends up in landfill. Composting turns certain food scraps into a valuable soil nutrient for lawns and gardens.

LANDSCAPING

Why does the University use leaf blowers?
Leaf blowers are used primarily only when an area cannot be effectively swept or raked. It’s imperative to remove leaves in a timely manner. If leaves are left too thick on the grass, the grass would die and the leaves can clog the sewage drains. All grounds crew members are trained on safety issues regarding leaf blowers, and we currently using noise and reduction equipment on all leaf blowers. The leaf blowers used on campus are warranted to meet EPA standards for emissions. In addition, campus landscapers are:

- Working with local vendors and purchasing mulch from recycled trees
- Reducing the use of pesticide and synthetic fertilizer by making the switch to compost and compost teas, improving our water quality
- Using integrated pest management—an environmentally sensitive approach to pest control
- Collecting green waste (leaves and grass) and contracting with a waste management vendor to recycle it
- Investigating greener equipment to reduce the use of gas-powered motors on campus
- Inventorying and mapping all campus trees

Tell me about the beet salt. Does it really work?
Yes. Facilities Services applies Eco Salt to icy sidewalks and entry surfaces to remove ice and prevent re-freeze in the winter. It is considered a more environmentally friendly product because the “juice” that the salt is tumbled in is a byproduct of producing sugar from sugar beets. Eco Salt is less corrosive, and is less detrimental to landscape than other de-icing products.
FAQs on Keeping Our Campus Green

PURCHASING

Which green products does Facilities Services currently purchase?
Restroom paper products: All bathrooms on campus managed by Facilities Services (which excludes Booth and Residence Halls and Commons) provide tissue paper with 20 percent post-consumer recycled fiber, paper towels with 40 percent post-consumer recycled fiber, and green hand soap. The new green hand soap is biodegradable and reduces human and aquatic toxicity while reducing smog production potential.

We also use low-VOC paint for interior spaces to improve indoor air quality. Paints and finishes release low level toxic emissions into the air for years after application. The source of these toxins is a variety of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) which, until recently, were essential to the performance of the paint.

All of the fluids for automotive repair are recovered and recycled. This includes motor oil, anti-freeze, transmission fluid, and car batteries. Tires are also recycled. When doing maintenance on air-conditioning units, refrigerants are captured and then re-used.

Does the University purchase any green energy?
Yes. Residence Halls and Commons currently purchases 5 percent of their total annual megawatt hours used in the dorms. The purchase goes toward buying wind credits from the supplier, which supports alternative energy in Illinois.

Where can I find green cleaning supplies used on campus?
The University is currently rolling out a program to use green cleaning supplies in all campus buildings managed by Facility Services. The green cleaning products are surface, floor, bath, glass and multi-purpose cleaners. Traditional cleaning products contain toxins that are harmful to our health and the environment. They may contribute to poor indoor air quality and contain chemicals that cause various health concerns.

MISCELLANEOUS

How do I report waste heat (an office that's too hot) or waste cooling (an office that's too cold)?
Call the Facilities Services hotline at 773.834.1414 and provide detailed information for a work order.