

ALL BUSINESSES CAN COMPOST

While restaurants are a natural fit for adopting composting, offices actually produce more compostable waste than you would expect. We met with five businesses to learn how they started composting. If you're looking to increase your company's sustainability and save money, sign up for our compost collection service. Contact us today at (650) 493-4894.



VMware

Started Composting: July 2009

VMware, the global leader in cloud infrastructure, was the first corporation in Palo Alto to sign up for GreenWaste's compost collection service, and the first Palo Alto business to divert 90 percent or more of its waste from landfill. Their zero waste philosophy is: pay attention to what we introduce into the work environment, use items that can be reused, recycled or composted. To find out more about their program, we met with Doris Lippitt, Administrative Services Manager at VMware.

VMware helps companies reduce resources and increase efficiency. How do you put these principles into practice at your office with regards to waste reduction?

Doris Lippitt: Being "green" at VMware means more than just reducing the need for servers and lowering IT operational

costs through virtualization. It's who we are as a company. We are taking big steps every day to reduce our waste and encourage employees to recycle as much as possible.

Tell us about your Zero Waste Café.

DL: Early in the process of developing the concept for our café, we decided that we wanted to divert as much waste as possible from going to the landfill. We partnered with our food service provider to ensure everything in the dining area of our cafeteria is reusable, recyclable or compostable.

What steps did you take to transition your employees to composting?

DL: We think that training is the most important piece. We have very consistent messaging on our intranet, we offer program presentations in open forums and we provide information on day one for all new employees. The program is consistent throughout all of our buildings including all processes and signage.

Our community is aiming to reach zero waste by 2021. Do you think VMware will be able to reach that goal by then?

DL: Year to date in 2010, we are diverting over 90 percent of our waste from going to the landfill.

How do you feel about your experience working with GreenWaste on compost collection?

DL: Our experience with GreenWaste has been very positive. Our GreenWaste representative is part of the facilities green team that develops the programming and tracks the metrics. He is a valuable resource for our onsite waste management programs.

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Patagonia

Started Composting: July 2009

Beloved around the world for their cool outdoor clothing as much as their environmental passion, Patagonia's mission statement—"Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis"—is reflected in their commitment to composting at their stores. We interviewed Alie Keegan, Assistant Manager at Patagonia's Palo Alto store, to learn more about their approach to composting.

How does composting fit in with Patagonia's environmental initiatives?

Alie Keegan: Way too much stuff these days ends up in the trash at the end of its useful life. We're working to change that.

There is little difference between our employees putting their lunch scraps or used paper towels in the compost and customers putting their Patagonia fleece in the Common Threads Recycling Program bins. The items get broken down and turned into something new and useful. Our compost turns into rich soil for growing plants and food, and worn out fleeces get turned into useful garments.

Tell me about your compostable collection practice at the Palo Alto store.

AK: We have small compost bins throughout the store. The bins in the bathrooms collect used paper towels, the bins behind the cash registers collect thermal receipt paper, and the bins in our break room collect lunch waste.

When did you start composting?

AK: We started in 2007 with a worm

composting system. It was great but it couldn't handle all our paper waste. When I learned about GreenWaste's compost collection service I called them to sign up and was put in contact with an outreach representative—she's always there to help. Since we started composting with GreenWaste we have reduced our trash by 50 percent or more.

Our community is aiming to reach zero waste by 2021. Do you think your store will be able to reach that goal by then?

AK: Yes! We are up to the challenge to find new ways to cut down on the remaining things we use that have to go directly to the landfill.

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