

Conducting a School Waste Audit

A waste audit calculates the weight and volume of a sample of trash. A representative waste sample is collected from around the school, sorted by material type (paper, food scraps, etc.) and then measured by weight and volume. By identifying what's in your waste you can make a plan for recycling and reducing the amount of trash your school creates.

A waste audit can be done before your school implements a recycling or waste reduction campaign and again after, to measure the effectiveness of your recycling and waste reduction efforts.

Assistance with conducting a waste audit may be available through your local city or county government solid waste, recycling or sustainability division. Use the information provided on the School Recycling Guide page to contact your local city or county government.

Below are links to waste audit lesson plans:

Green Flag schools lesson plan

<http://www.greenflagschools.org/RRRWasteAudit.htm>

National Wildlife Federation Eco-Schools Program lesson plan

<http://www.nwf.org/Global-Warming/School-Solutions/Eco-Schools-USA/Become-an-Eco-School/Pathways/Consumption-and-Waste/Audit.aspx>

Oregon Green Schools lesson plan

http://www.oregongreenschools.org/waste_audits.cfm

Pierce County Washington, Solid Waste Department lesson plan

<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/xml/services/home/enviro/ed/School%20Waste%20Audit.pdf>

The Resourceful Schools Project lesson plan

http://www.resourcefulschools.org/docs/waste_audit.pdf this lesson plan incorporates the scientific method