

MINIMIZING WASTE - SUPPORT PACKAGE

WasteLess Wednesday



Schools generate a lot of waste. Lunch foods are purchased in convenient single-serving packages that add up to a lot of plastic that persists in the environment. If your school uses disposable products like plastic cutlery in your cafeteria, that adds even more waste. School is a great place to learn about the connection between everyday habits and waste. WasteLess Wednesday is a school-wide initiative to help reduce the amount of waste produced every Wednesday. The campaign includes assessment, planning, education, and evaluation. Start by reducing one item; talk about it a lot; keep it fun; keep it important; keep the goal clear; celebrate successes! The intention is that these waste reduction habits will stick, and your school community will waste less every day!

Action Plan

Step 1- Conduct a WasteLess Assessment. A waste assessment is an opportunity to get benchmark information about your school and also help identify specific opportunities to reduce waste. You may not need an assessment if you already have clear ideas for your WasteLess Wednesday initiative. To find out more, check out the [Green Schools NS WasteLess Assessment Support Package](#).

Step 2- Plan and Set a Goal. Make a clear goal for what you will reduce each Wednesday. It is essential to keep it simple. Choose one waste item to focus on at first, for example, paper towels in bathrooms; water bottles; juice boxes; plastic utensils; ziplock bags; food waste; paper waste. The goal could be to target an additional waste item each month, or litterless lunches, for example. In any case, it is really up to you. Recycling Council of Ontario has a valuable [Waste-Free Lunch](#) website if you choose to focus on litterless lunches.

Step 3- Education. Invite your Green Schools NS Engagement Officer for a virtual presentation to get your school started. You could also invite your local [Divert Nova Scotia Waste Educator](#) to review best practices of waste management and introduce tools and knowledge for waste reduction. There is also [Eddie the Cat](#) who can visit grades primary to three. For more options including peer education check out the great videos and books listed below.

Step 4- Promote, Promote, Promote! This is a very important step for success. Share the WasteLess Wednesday plan with staff, students, and parents. Explain some reasons why wasting less is important. Share the plan and results in school newsletters, social media, and the school website. Plan a few announcements to outline clear steps in the initiative. You may be inspired by the stories and videos from other Green Schools linked below.



Possible Announcement: “(Your school name) is excited to WasteLess every Wednesday! This Wednesday we challenge you to reduce your waste by bringing your drink in a reusable container. Let’s get rid of single-use containers! Together we can reduce our impact on the Earth and save energy as a result!”

Step 5- Evaluate and Follow-up. After the changes have been implemented and the new WasteLess Wednesday behaviours have been set up, you may want to do a quick assessment to see the results of your initiative or to measure the target waste item. You could also add Classroom Checks as an ongoing project which will help maintain the change and celebrate the results!

Resources

[Green Schools NS Wasteless Assessment](#)
[Green Schools NS Classroom Checks Support Package](#)
[Green Schools NS Water Bottle Refill Station Support Package](#)
[Green Schools NS Upcycling & Green Gifts Support Package](#)
[Green Schools NS Ocean Plastic Support Package](#)
[Green School West Northfield Elementary School - WasteLess Assessment](#)
[Green School Dr JC Wickwire Academy - Earth Day Activities](#)
[Green School Tatamagouche Elementary School LitterLess Lunch Campaign](#)
[Green Schools NS Pinterest Minimizing Waste](#)
[Green Schools Pinterest - Green Upcycling: 4L milk jug into a lunch container](#)

[Waste Reduction Week Canada - School Waste Reduction Resource Kit](#)
[Ontario EcoSchools - Visual School Waste Audit](#)
[Saskatchewan Environmental Society - School Waste Audit](#)
[Canada - Waste Reduction Week](#)
[Canada - Earth Day](#)

Videos

[Recycling Council of Ontario - Waste-Free Lunches](#)
[Ontario EcoSchools - How to do a Waste Audit](#)
[Esmeralda Planet Protector & the Litterless Lunch](#)
[Environment and Climate Change Canada - Litterless Lunch Challenge Video](#)

Books

[Sandy's Incredible Shrinking Footprint - by Femida Handy](#)
[Michael Recycle Meets Litterbug Doug - by Ellie Bethel](#)
[How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?: The Story of Food - by Chris Butterworth](#)
[I Can Save the Earth!: One Little Monster Learns to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle - by Alison Inches](#)
[Why Should I Recycle? - by Jen Green](#)
[Frankenstink: Garbage Gone Bad - by Ron Lightburn](#)

