

MN Waste Wise 2019 Annual Report



Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
WASTE WISE



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905 site visits

584 businesses received Waste
Wise assistance

3.5 million
pounds of waste diverted from
the landfill

\$112,092 saved annually

260 businesses applied for nearly
\$1.5 million in grant
funding

Executive Summary

This 2019 Annual Report summarizes the results of the Minnesota Waste Wise Foundation's continued work in supporting the state's business community through waste reduction and recycling improvements.

Over the past year, Waste Wise worked with 584 businesses, nonprofits, and institutions across a wide range of industries and conducted 905 site visits across 67 cities in Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties.

By sharing recycling best practices, identifying strategies to reduce waste, assisting businesses in procuring services and infrastructure, and providing implementation assistance and training, Waste Wise helped these 500-plus organizations start, expand, and enhance their recycling programs.

Overall in 2019, Waste Wise saw 260 businesses apply for local County recycling grants, securing nearly \$1.5 million in funding for recycling bins, compostable products, balers, reusable dishware, and other tools and equipment designed to decrease waste and optimize recycling programs. As a result of this work, the local business community diverted over 3.5 million pounds of waste from landfills and incinerators and saw a combined \$112,092 in estimated cost savings.

Waste Wise on the Map



Anderson Dahlen,
Ramsey



St. Croix Kids
Early Childhood Center,
Stillwater



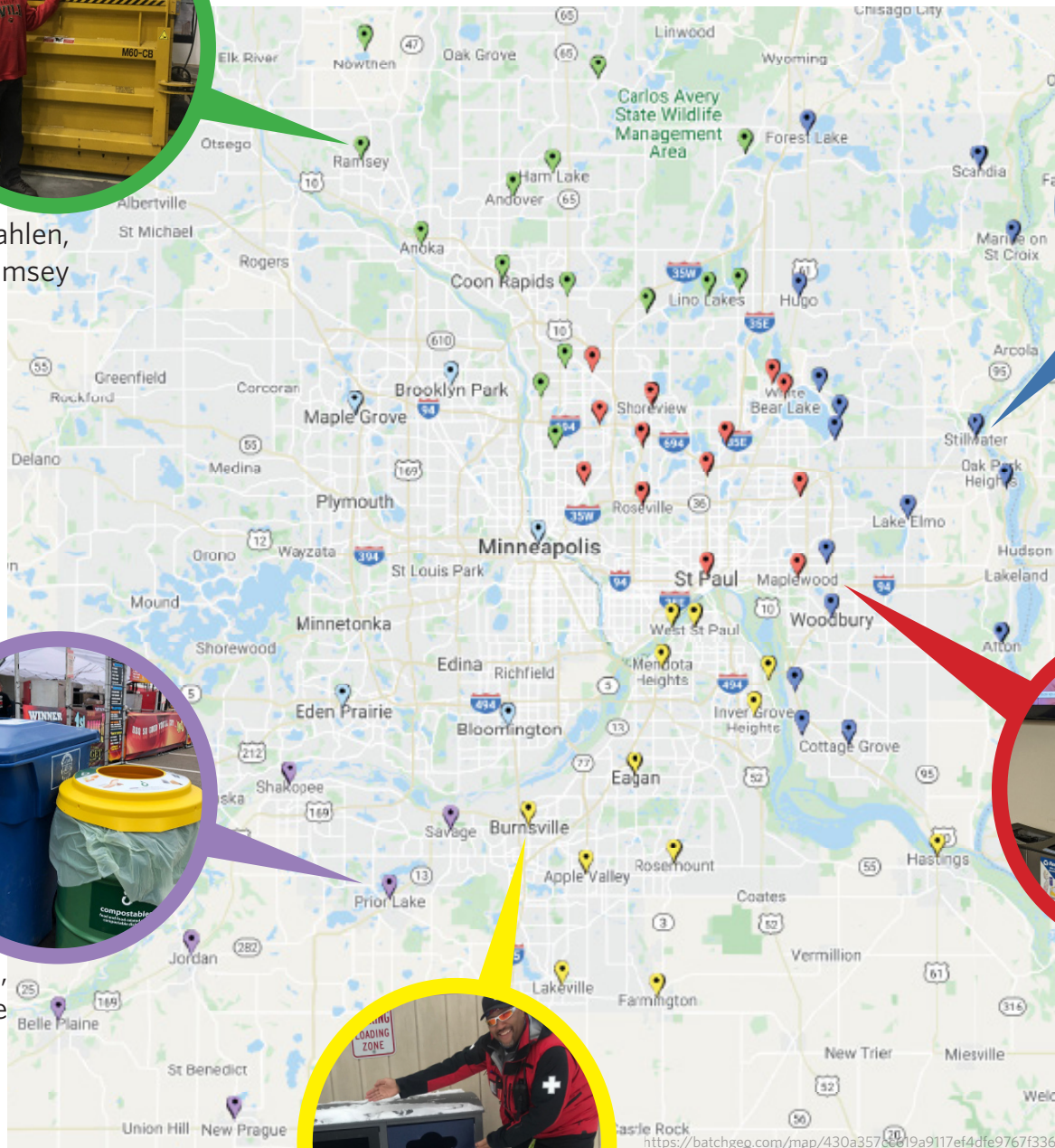
Mystic Lake Rib Fest,
Prior Lake



Maplewood Toyota,
Maplewood



Buck Hill Ski & Snowboard Area,
Burnsville



Results

Waste Wise was on site with businesses 905 times in 2019 and covered a territory of over 2,600 square miles. These visits included initial site consultations or 'walk-throughs' as well as any other follow-up assistance necessary to address waste and recycling issues such as project planning, bin placement and labeling, staff education, and program evaluation. The map on the previous page highlights every city Waste Wise worked in over the course of 2019.

Waste Wise works with all businesses that have implemented program changes to gather and track diversion associated with waste reduction initiatives. Waste Wise utilizes service charges, estimates of dumpster fullness, and EPA and industry standard volume-to-weight conversions to estimate waste diversion as a result of implemented reduction, reuse, and recycling activities. Across the seven county metro area in 2019, our work diverted more than 3.5 million pounds of waste from either a landfill or an incinerator. This annual diversion is ongoing and expected to continue in subsequent years.



3,567,706 total pounds of waste was diverted from landfill and incinerators, including:



1,307,892 pounds of single stream recycling



2,049,750 pounds of organics recycling



169,948 pounds of paper/cardboard only



26,629 pounds of specialty plastics



12,175 pounds of scrap metals

1,312 pounds of other material

Special Projects in 2019



Waste Audits

Our Waste Wise team sorted through over 8,600 pounds of waste, recycling, and organics in 2019! In total, we completed 9 waste audits last year, 6 for businesses outside our contracted service areas and 3 for the MN Department of Administration. These audits, which sort waste into separate streams by specific material type, provide valuable data to businesses and can inform waste management and employee education decisions moving forward. We anticipate the prevalence of waste audit activities to increase over the coming years as more companies implement internal sustainability standards.

MPCA Food Waste Reduction Project

In 2019, Waste Wise started a one year project funded by a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency grant on food waste reduction at casinos in Minnesota. Through the use of Leanpath, a food waste measurement and analytics tool, food waste is being tracked for one year in three different casino kitchens. The purpose of the project is to identify best practices for reducing food waste at casinos and other food-related industries. From the data collected on the Leanpath devices in 2019, a 29% reduction in food waste was achieved, equating to approximately \$44,150 in savings across all three casinos. Waste Wise will take the insights gained through the findings of this project to offer increasingly informed expertise to the greater business community, particularly related to food waste prevention.



Special Projects continued...

Capitol Complex Project

Waste Wise continued to provide services and educational resources to the MN Capitol Complex. In 2019, we created a video for the MN Department of Administration outlining recycling basics for State employees and highlighted the importance of participating in recycling activities. In addition to this, Waste Wise conducted several waste audits to illustrate opportunities for increased waste diversion, tabled at several agency events, and spoke to various state agency groups about recycling collection opportunities. In 2020, Waste Wise is contracted to create a recycling-focused calendar, film two additional recycling education videos, and continue educational activities to any interested state agencies.



The Recycling Partnership

In 2019, Waste Wise partnered with The Recycling Partnership to house and disseminate a robust library of tools for recycling educators. The goal of this project is to provide recycling educators throughout Minnesota with the tools they need to create customized mailers, social media campaigns, website content, video outreach tools, and other community recycling engagement resources. In doing so, Waste Wise is set to host three educational webinars in 2020 and become a regional hub of recycling information. Waste Wise is positioning itself as the “go-to” provider of recycling information for Minnesota recycling professionals.



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The Minnesota Waste Wise Foundation is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit affiliate of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce that provides environmental sustainability consulting for Minnesota businesses and organizations.



Conclusion

At MN Waste Wise, we are honored to leverage our expertise and experience to help the Minnesota business community thrive.

Working with businesses, small and large, and across for-profit, non-profit, and public sectors, we continue to foster sustainability within the greater business community by offering individualized consultation in the areas of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. To help businesses reduce their carbon footprint, we provide them tailored recycling recommendations and assistance in accessing local County grants. These grants support businesses' efforts by providing necessary capital for waste improvements, investments that will continue to benefit the businesses for years to come.

It has been a pleasure working together with so many organizations this past year to realize their sustainability goals. We thank the Cities, Counties, the State of Minnesota, waste and recycling haulers, chambers of commerce, and of course, our businesses partners for making 2019 a success. We look forward to continuing to support the Minnesota business community again in 2020.