

4.3.1 Hospitality Industry: Food and Beverage Services

Case Study #1

BUSINESS: Thunderbird Hotel/Totem Pole Restaurant; Bloomington, Minnesota
WASTE ORIGIN: Commercial Restaurant Food Preparation
WASTE TYPES: Solid Wastes, Food, Cardboard, Glass, Aluminum, and Tin

COMPANY BACKGROUND

The Totem Pole Restaurant prepares meals for its patrons and caters meals for events held at the Thunderbird Hotel.

MOTIVATION

Reduce waste volumes after disposal costs more than doubled in one year (from \$35.75/ton in 1990 to \$95/ton in 1991).

STRATEGIES

Monitor food wastes and change preparation processes. Recycle leftover foods and reduce other dumpster materials by recycling, where possible.

ORIGINAL PROCESS

The restaurant filled its dumpster every five days with food preparation wastes, leftover foods, and food containers and packages. Disposal costs were \$95/ton.

NEW PROCESS

Food waste is collected for recycling as animal feed by a local food by-product recycling firm. Cardboard, glass, aluminum, and tin are separated and recycled by independent haulers at a cost substantially less than waste disposal costs. A computerized system is used to monitor food inventory, amount of food used per meal, and the percent waste per meal.

RESULTS

Waste Reduction

- Reduced volume of restaurant's total waste by 50 percent.
- Reduced dumpster pick up from every five days to once every three to four weeks.
- Recycled 4.75 tons of food waste each month.
- Recycled 4.5 tons of cardboard each month.
- Recycled 2 tons of glass each month.
- Recycled 500 pounds of tin and aluminum each month.

Economics

Savings: \$919.25 per month in disposal costs (\$596.25 for recyclables, \$323.25 for food waste) after recycling costs.

Capital Cost: \$5,000 for a one-time purchase price of a cardboard baler.

Operating/Maintenance Cost:

\$45/month for cardboard, glass, aluminum, and tin recycling.

\$128/month for food waste recycling.

Payback Period: Information not available.

PROBLEMS

The program needs daily recycling area management and support of the employees to be effective.