



“Our Oakland Processing and Distribution Center will recycle thousands of tons of materials and save at least a quarter of a million dollars this year alone. The resources provided by StopWaSte have been an invaluable component of that success.”

— Douglas Roaldson, District Environmental Compliance Coordinator, U.S. Postal Service



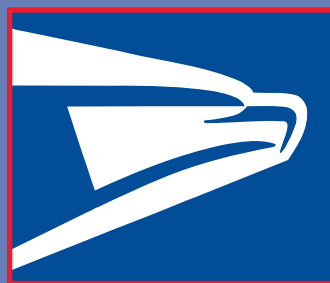
An Environmental Performance Case Study

The U.S. Postal Service's Oakland Processing and Distribution Center (Oakland P&DC) has invested in environmental business efficiency practices. When their garbage and electricity bills come in the mail this investment pays off with savings of **\$500,000** each year. The secret to their success is that their focus on the environment enhances their bottom line performance.

Alameda County businesses and public agencies like the Oakland P&DC are realizing economic benefits by cutting solid waste, conserving energy and water, and reducing wastewater discharge. These practices have proven to be cost-effective and are essential components of long-term profitability. They also offer opportunities to keep valuable materials out of our landfills, reduce pollution, and conserve limited resources.

PROFILE

The Oakland P&DC serves as the headquarters and initial mail processing and distribution point for the



U.S. Postal Service's Oakland District. The Oakland District includes Alameda, Solano, Contra Costa and Napa Counties. The Oakland P&DC has 3,000

employees who process over 2 million pieces of mail each day in the 1 million square foot facility.

The Bottom Line : Annual Savings from Environmental Programs: \$500,000

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Oakland P&DC has implemented successful recycling programs and has purchased products that contain recycled content. They also have a facility re-lighting project starting in early 2001 which will conserve energy by installing more energy efficient lamps. All of these projects show the potential offered to increase profitability by focusing on environmental performance.

Left: The Oakland P&DC bales and recycles over 200 tons of undeliverable bulk mail each year. Below: Oakland P&DC employees process over 2 million pieces of mail each day.



SPECIAL DELIVERY: BIG SAVINGS

Accomplishment	Environmental Benefit	Annual Savings
Recycling & garbage service reduction	Recycle 400 tons of material each year	\$300,000
Buying recycled	Saves trees, energy, water and landfill space	N/A
Re-lighting	Will conserve 2 million kilowatt-hours of electricity each year	\$200,000
Use of alternative fuels	Reduces vehicle emissions	N/A
Total		\$500,000

Environmental Projects

Recycling

When the Oakland P&DC first looked into recycling they expected to find some cost-saving opportunities. After they removed the recyclables from their waste stream they were able to reduce and adjust their garbage service level and were amazed at just how much they could save. Before recycling, the Oakland P&DC's garbage bill was approximately \$50,000 each month. Now, the bill has dropped to roughly \$25,000 and is still going down. This adds up to annual savings of around \$300,000!

The Oakland P&DC recycles over 400 tons of material each year including: plastic shrink wrap, scrap wood, scrap metal, plastic mail bags, beverage containers, plastic mail trays, paper, and cardboard.

PROJECT: Bulk mail recycling project.

BENEFIT: The Oakland P&DC's undeliverable bulk mail recycling project is one of its greatest achievements. Instead of throwing it into the trash, they now collect, bale, and sell nearly 200 tons of undeliverable mail to a recycling company every year.

PROJECT: Desk-side recycling pick up.

BENEFIT: By turning its office waste pick up procedures upside down, the Oakland P&DC made a strong statement in support of recycling. Instead of picking up trash from worker's desks and expecting them to service their own recycling, the custodial staff now picks up recycled paper from desktops and furnishes people with a small self service "mini-can" for non-recyclable garbage.

PROJECT: Plastic strap recycling

BENEFIT: At the Bulk Mail Center in Oakland, the U.S. Postal Service has developed a creative way to recycle the plastic straps used to secure mail for distribution. The straps are chipped and stored until they have enough to sell to a

plastic recycling company. Although only a small amount of material is recycled in this project, it illustrates that environmental solutions can be found for even the most troublesome waste materials.

Buying Recycled

PROJECT: The Oakland P&DC stands behind its environmental commitment by purchasing products with recycled content.

BENEFIT: They buy office paper (48 tons each year) with 30% recycled content. Other recycled content purchases include: toilet paper and seat covers, paper towels, and over 5,000 retread tires every year.

Energy Conservation

PROJECT: In early 2001, the Oakland P&DC will re-light its facility in partnership with PG&E.

BENEFIT: The new lights will conserve 2 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per year (enough for 325 U.S. households) and save the Oakland P&DC approximately \$200,000 on its electricity

bill. In addition, the new lights will be free of PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls, a toxic chemical that is persistent in the environment and that has been shown to cause serious health effects in animals) and will contain much lower levels of mercury than the current lights.

Alternative Fuels

As part of a project demonstrating the viability of an all-electric delivery fleet, post offices in the City of Alameda will receive 24 electric vehicles next year. Each electric vehicle will result in an annual emission reduction of 22 lbs. of volatile organic compounds, 18 lbs. of nitrogen oxide, and 290 lbs. of carbon monoxide. In addition, the Oakland District has 200 natural gas capable vehicles in its fleet.



“Why did it take so long? We should have done this a long time ago! I get comments like that all the time. I didn’t realize so many people cared about this earth, but they do.”

— **Bonnie Johnson,**
Recycling Coordinator, Oakland P&DC



The StopWa\$te Partnership

This case study is part of a series that highlights the accomplishments of organizations participating in the StopWa\$te Partnership. The Partnership is a free, technical assistance service dedicated to improving the environmental performance and reducing the operating costs of Alameda County businesses and public agencies. The program provides expert assistance to help prevent waste, conserve water and energy, and use all resources more efficiently.

StopWa\$te is sponsored and operated by the Alameda County Waste Management Authority & the Source Reduction and Recycling Board in partnership with Pacific Gas & Electric, the East Bay Municipal Utility District, the Economic Development Alliance for Business, and Science Applications International Corporation.

StopWa\$te offers a number of services, including:

- Comprehensive environmental assessments for large and medium-sized facilities
- Funding assistance
- Activity based cost-benefit analysis

The StopWa\$te Partnership has helped many Alameda County organizations to reduce operating costs, identify opportunities for environmental improvement and enhance competitiveness.



Call the StopWa\$te Partnership and get started on your environmental projects TODAY!



**Improve Your Bottom Line: 1-877-STOPWASTE
www.stopwaste.org/partnership**

