

Digging Through the Trash at PDX

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As part of our waste minimization program, we regularly conduct waste audits at Portland International Airport. Check out these five facts about our efforts to go zero waste and help the environment.



Yes, we really do dumpster dive! To do a waste audit, our waste management team systematically goes through bags of waste, sorts items according to type, such as food waste, recyclables, landfill-bound waste, and metals; and weighs and records the data.



Our audits yield valuable insights. Without actually checking the garbage, we would just be guessing if our program is working. Audits reveal what's happening at PDX so we can prioritize changes. For example, if we notice metals in the trash, we may need a metal recycling bin in a particular area. If we find recyclables, additional signage or staff training may be needed.

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e measure program success. Waste audits, done strategically, quantify progress. For example, we just wrapped up our Green Plate Pilot Program with the PDX food carts. This replaced disposable containers with durable dishware for three months. Waste audits

conducted before the program began, and during the pilot, measured how using real dishes lowered waste volume.



PDX restaurants and shops are rock stars! Audits allow us to give customized reports to our airport partners on how to reduce waste. Our team provides detailed analysis and recommendations specific to each operation. For example, we have helped many restaurants set up more effective food waste collection systems. As a result of our partnership, PDX concessions have a 63 percent waste diversion rate.



You make a difference. Our waste audits show room for improvement in public areas at PDX. The next time you're at the airport you can help. Reduce – bring your own coffee cup or water bottle to refill. Recycle – place newspapers, magazines, plastic drink bottles, and aluminum cans in the recycling receptacle.

Our waste management team is a partnership with Portland State University's Community Environmental Services program. We offer a hands-on internship for their students to learn about sustainability in a large-scale system, PDX, which serves more than 18 million travelers each year and has 10,000 employees.