

7 Steps to Eco-Friendly Waste Management

Reducing waste-to-landfill is vital.
With the right partner, getting
started is easy.



Introduction

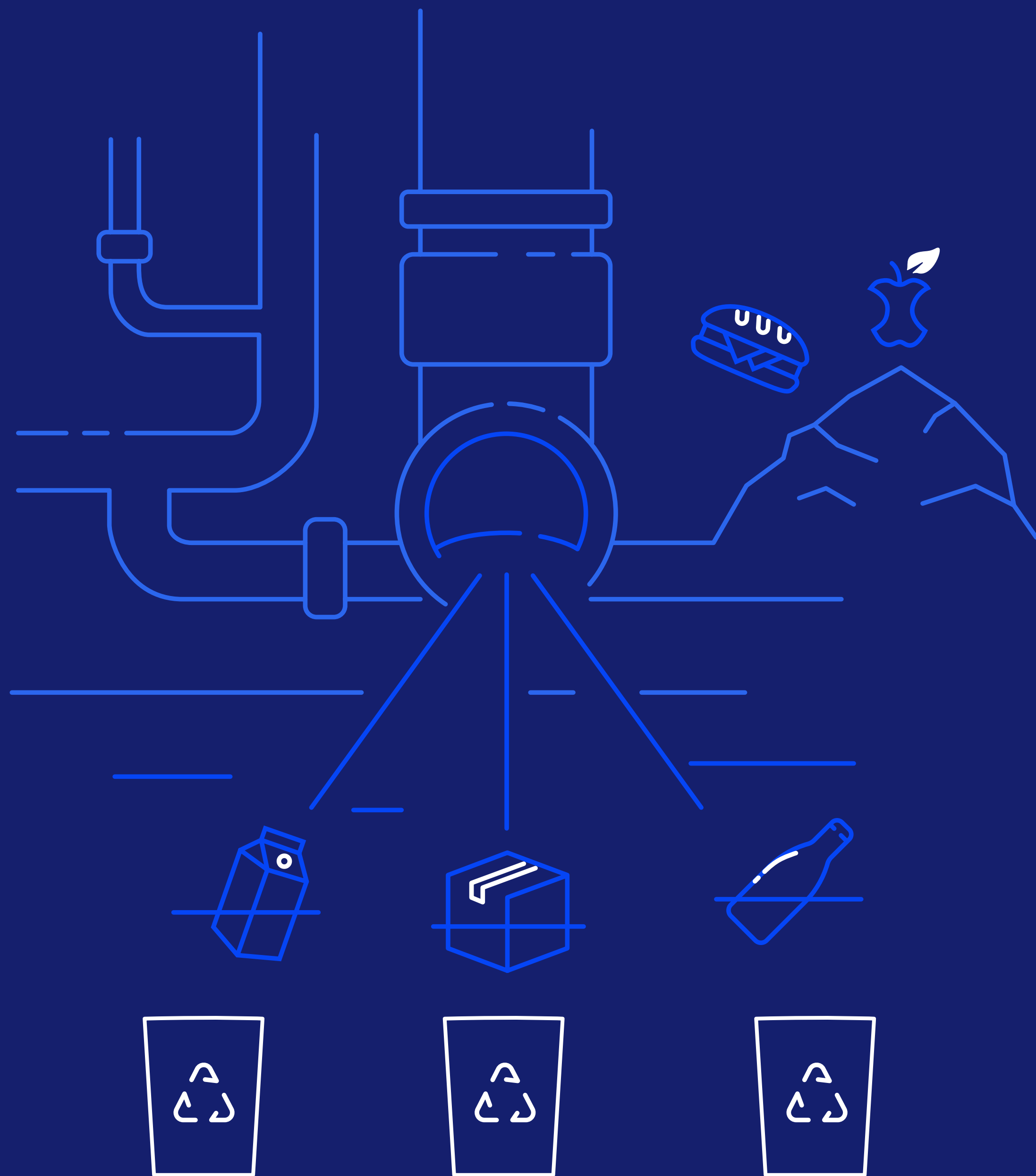
When it comes to creating a facility that you and your occupants can be proud of, the need to progress towards more eco-friendly practices is more important than ever—and getting started with a waste management program may be easier than you think.

Rapidly changing demographics and an increased focus on sustainability is leading to a major shift in consumer preferences. For example, a recent Nielsen study found that 73% of millennial consumers are willing to spend more on products and services if they come from sustainable brands.¹

Implementing a waste management (WM) program provides prestige in corporate citizenship, reduces your environmental footprint, and creates a brag-worthy tenant experience. Many companies save money (or at least break even) on sustainable WM program costs, leading to one question your management team needs to ask: would funds be better spent caring for our environment or landfilling?

Read on to see what steps your facility can take towards a greener future.





Step 1

Identify your waste streams

“Waste” is a generalized umbrella term that can be broken down into various categories. Depending on the industry, facilities generate recyclable materials like glass, paper, and cardboard, as well as materials that can be composted or sent to a landfill. Conducting a waste audit is the first step towards identifying your facility waste streams, identifying the potential waste diversion rate of your facilities and developing a successful reduction and management plan.

Step 2

Set short-term and long-term WM goals

Before you jump into planning a WM program, setting realistic goals is an essential step toward creating and implementing a measurable action plan. Goals can be divided into realistic time periods, from immediate (1 year) to long-term (5-10 years). With this system in place, short term goals like recruiting waste education personnel, centralizing waste, and implementing proper signage can lead to the achievement of longer-term goals down the road, like improving the recycling rate of your facility or achieving the TRUE Zero Waste certification.

Step 3

Develop a comprehensive plan



With prep work out of the way, now is the time to start turning your WM goals into results. Optimizing a collection route, conducting infrastructure audits and condition assessments, and installing semi-automated container auditing systems are just a few ways you can begin to implement your WM plan.



Step 4

Reduce from above

Making a difference starts at the beginning. Take a look at the waste produced from your supply chain. Whether your facility is using an excess of printer paper, plastic products in the communal kitchen, or cardboard shipping boxes, what seems like harmless material usage can add up in the long run.

In office spaces alone, one pound of waste per 100 square feet is generated every day.² Partnering with your suppliers and eliminating unnecessary use of materials can make a substantial impact on your total facility waste generated.

Encouraging employees to bring meals in reusable containers or offering free reusable water bottles and tote bags are great ways to foster a sustainable mindset among occupants and phase out a portion of your facility's material overconsumption.



Step 5

Consider stormwater compliance

Though the bulk of waste pollution comes from improperly managed materials, facility pollution can also come in a more natural form: stormwater. If managed incorrectly, stormwater can carry numerous pollutants into our waterways. The implementation of green roofs, permeable pavements, and bioretention areas can help absorb and filter stormwater onsite.

Step 6

Create an occupant awareness and engagement program

With no accountability or engagement, it's unlikely that occupants will be eager to participate in (or even remember) a facility-wide WM program. Convenience (as well as clear signage on recycling, composting, and trash bins) can play a crucial role in meeting diversion rate goals.

When studying waste centralization implementation, researchers found that when compost bins were placed on each floor in a multi-family residence, instead of on just the ground floor, composting rates increased by 70%.³

Hosting a facility-wide meeting to spread awareness can be followed by fun challenges and recognition awards to maximize program engagement.





Step 7

Consistently monitor progress

For any program's success, there's no achievement without accountability. Implementing a tracking and monitoring system to evaluate performance, holding regular check-in meetings for sustainability team members, and consistently engaging occupants with eco-friendly challenges can help to ensure your WM program is operating at maximum efficiency.

A more sustainable future is waiting.

An eco-friendly WM program can improve your facility image and attract a new wave of sustainability-minded occupants while ensuring your operations abide by local and state recycling mandates (saving you from hefty fines). Partnering with an experienced WM provider like ABM can help your facility achieve LEED and TRUE Zero certification by creating a customized program and helping meet (and exceed) your sustainability goals.

To learn more about ABM's Waste Management & Recycling services, visit [ABM.com](https://www.abm.com) or call 866.624.1520 to speak with our experts.

Sources

1. 2015 Nielsen Global Sustainability Report
2. Waste Generated by Industry and Building Type
3. Blame the signs: When recycling is confusing, we avoid it



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