

Completed Pollution Prevention Project Case Study

United States Department of Energy
Office of Environmental Management
Fact Sheet

Reuse of Plastic Utensils

Los Alamos National Laboratory

Original Problem

The Aramark caterers deliver plastic serving utensils along with the trays of food to any site at LANL having an event. The plastic serving utensils were thrown away after the food was eaten and the event was over. The utensils were taken to the landfill, contributing to the volume of sanitary waste that LANL is trying to reduce as specified by the Appendix F section of the UC contract.

The Project Solution

Through the combined efforts of E-Division, Aramark, and BUS-4, the plastic serving utensils can be reused multiple times instead of just once. To send the utensils back to the cafeteria, rinse them, place them in a plastic bag, and address them to the Otowi Cafeteria (MS P279) in an envelope for LANL inter-office mail. Outgoing Aramark orders include a zip lock bag and instructions. The cafeteria receives these utensils and sterilizes them for reuse.

Value of Improvement

The program allows all employees at LANL to participate in waste reduction. All groups at LANL will benefit by reducing their volume of sanitary waste along with their disposal costs. Aramark benefits by having lower expenses for replacement plastic serving utensils. Overall the program may save about \$5000 and reduce about 25 cubic feet of sanitary waste per year.

Lifecycle Waste Reduction	
Lifecycle Waste Reduction	~25ft ³ / year
Commencement Date	2001
Project Useful Life (Years)	Indefinite



DOE Monetary Benefits	
Total Project Cost	No cost to LANL
Lifecycle Savings	~\$5,000 / year
Return on Investment	NA

Benefits At-A-Glance

- Aramark can reuse the serving utensils many times and save money by purchasing fewer new serving utensils.
- All employees at LANL can participate by rinsing the utensils at their site and mailing them back to the cafeteria.
- Sites that receive the utensils and food from Aramark will reduce their sanitary waste volume by reusing the utensils instead of throwing them away.

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	Summary Data
Priority Area:	Waste Minimization Projects
Project Type:	Reuse / Process Redesign
Total Project Cost:	No cost to LANL
Lifecycle Savings:	~\$5,000 per year
Implementing Groups:	Aramark, E-DO, BUS-4
Benefiting Groups:	All groups at LANL
Useful Life Years:	Indefinite
Return on Investment:	NA
Lifecycle Waste Reduction:	~25 cubic feet of sanitary waste per year
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