

BUSINESS RECYCLING

Partnering for a better environment



Dakota Woodlands

Business type: Non-profit, residential housing

Eagan, MN

www.dakotawoodlands.org

Dakota Woodlands is a residential home that provides transitional shelter and supportive services to women and families experiencing homelessness in Dakota County.

Challenge

With 22 housing units, a kitchen that operates daily, and number of other activities, a fair amount of both residential and office waste is generated at Dakota Woodlands each day. When the County's consultant first visited the organization in 2016, some of this waste was being recycled, but there were opportunities to recycle more.

How we helped

After walking through the facility, the County's consultant worked with the Operations Director to take inventory of where recycling bins should be co-located with existing trash cans to make recycling accessible and convenient.

With this inventory in hand, Dakota Woodlands applied for Dakota County's Business Recycling Incentive Program to fund the new recycling bins, including small bins for each bedroom unit and employee office areas, larger bins for the kitchen and cafeteria, and stainless steel bins for outside.

Dakota Woodlands integrated recycling into its programming schedule intended to train residents on life skills, financial literacy and personal wellness. The County's consultant and Dakota Woodlands volunteers are now providing classes to residents to help them understand what materials can be recycled.



Outcome

Dakota Woodlands is now recycling an additional 3,432 pounds of recyclables per year.

Beyond an increase in recycling, there has been a cultural shift at Dakota Woodlands. Employees and residents have taken steps to reuse more cardboard boxes from food and supply deliveries as part of the move-out process for families. "Dakota Woodlands is a lot like other local businesses," the Operations Director said. "We have worked to be good neighbors and active members of the community, and our effort to do more recycling are one more way we can do that."

Highlights

Goal To expand recycling program

Why To make recycling accessible and convenient and a part of the shelter's everyday culture

How Placed bins in resident units, all common areas and throughout employee areas

Results An additional 3,432 lbs. of recyclables collected each year and incorporated recycling education into resident training classes