



**B.C. OWNED
AND
OPERATED**

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Dear AASHE STARS Committee,

This letter is in support of SFU's STARS innovation credit for leadership in waste management communications.

Our company, Smithrite Disposal Ltd, has worked closely with SFU on their innovative Zero Waste program since the planning stages began in September 2013 – as their principal waste hauler.

SFU's Zero Waste program is a clear example of how the institution is leading the region in environmental communication and living lab research. From the outset, the program was designed to improve consistency and clarity in waste communications, not only within SFU, but also across the wider Metro Vancouver region. New, bespoke Zero Waste Stations were introduced into all public spaces in all three SFU campuses – in the municipalities of the City of Vancouver, City of Burnaby, and City of Surrey. Working with Metro Vancouver and other local institutions, SFU designed signage with colors and symbols to support the transition towards regional standards – thereby making recycling easier, more convenient and consistent for those who work, study or visit their campuses.

Since the launch of the program in January this year, SFU has worked hard to integrate the 'zero waste' concept into life at SFU – through unique communications campaigns such as the 'separation anxiety' campaign and 'zelfie' competition, 'It's time for Zero Waste at SFU' music video, student volunteer educators engaging the community at waste stations, and the development of a dedicated Zero Waste website. The program has become a 'living lab' research project, with community feedback encouraged and used to drive the program to evolve and improve. May saw the installation of updated signs based on this feedback, and we have worked closely with the university to engage students and staff to carry out large-scale waste audits to find out what is really going out in the trash.

Beside SFU's work to contribute to a regional standard of communication and clarity, what makes this program unique is that it looks beyond just waste disposal and aims to integrate 'zero waste' into each and every aspect of university life. For example, new food packaging standards are currently in the final stages of development to ensure that all vendors and caterers on SFU campuses use only recyclable and compostable items, and the President's BBQ – one of the largest university events – will be a Zero Waste event for the second time this year.

SFU is sharing this work and what has been learnt so far with other institutions and organizations, and aims to continue to be an industry leader in waste communications through guidance and collaboration. We commend SFU for its Zero Waste vision and efforts to improve waste communications and enact behavior change, not only within the institution itself but also in the wider municipalities in which it is placed.

Sincerely,

Orietta Danyluk
Account Manager