

August 21, 2014

Office of Sustainability (MC 996)
150 Paulina Street Building
1140 South Paulina Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612

STARS Innovation Credit: Pipette Tip Box Recycling

I am writing to inform you that pipette tip box recycling program at UIC meets the criteria for the STARS Innovation credit. The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) is home to over 1000 research laboratories; the majority of these labs use plastic, disposable laboratory materials. Some of the materials are non-hazardous plastic containers for other lab supplies. At the time, UIC labs discarded all lab supplies in the trash (if not contaminated). A majority of labs at UIC use pipettes and plastic pipette tips for their research. This plastic never becomes contaminated with hazardous chemicals, and therefore is a good candidate for recycling.

Through a campus-wide survey conducted in 2011, it was discovered that approximately 350 labs use pipette tips, and thus discard pipette tips boxes. UIC discovered that labs at UIC generated at 500 - 1,000 pounds of pipette tip boxes per month.

At the time the recycling program was started, it was a universally accepted idea that everything generated inside a research laboratory was hazardous. No other university publicized a similar recycling program. Working with multiple departments, administrators, and UIC's recycler, I established a program that changed the notion of what isn't hazardous in a laboratory and through recycling, reduced the pipette tip boxes from the landfill.

For more information, visit <http://sustainability.uic.edu/campus-resources/recycling-waste-minimization/#RecyclableMaterials>

Sincerely,



Lisa Sanzenbacher, M.S.
Program Coordinator & Outreach
University of Illinois at Chicago
Office of Sustainability

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