

UW-Stevens Point: Honored by National Recycling Coalition

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The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point has been recognized by the National Recycling Coalition with its 2018 Outstanding Higher Education Award. The coalition honors one higher education institution a year with the award, which recognizes exceptional recycling programs that serve as a model and resource for coalition members. UW-Stevens Point has been recycling since 1990 when it created a Solid Waste Experiment Center. Annually the university keeps 500 tons of waste from landfills and saves on average \$17,000 in landfill tipping fees. In addition, the Surplus Property Office sells, repurposes or recycles more than 330,000 pounds of unneeded items each year.

The university's Waste Education Center serves as a recycling and compost facility as well as a training center for students to learn sustainable waste management practices and conduct research. It is administered by the College of Natural Resources, which offers a degree in soil and waste resources with a waste management option. Graduates have a 90-100 percent placement rate in private companies and government agencies such as wastewater treatment facilities, hazardous waste sites and recycling and composting centers.

Students like Lily Koss, a waste management major and member of the Waste Management Society, gain hands-on experiences that help them educate others on recycling efforts. "UW-Stevens Point's recycling efforts are important because it diverts materials from near-overflowing landfills," Koss said. "This reduces the production of greenhouse gases, mitigates climate change and saves our resources for reuse."

The university is also the first in the UW System to have composting bins in all its residence halls and academic buildings. Approximately 4,500 pounds of food waste a year is processed at the Waste Education Center and added to the campus compost. Another 119,000 pounds of organic materials is processed by the Buildings and Grounds crews to become mulch for the campus grounds.

To learn more about UW-Stevens Point's sustainability efforts, go to www.uwsp.edu/sustainability.