

**PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE  
RECYCLING PROGRAM**

For a number of years, Palm Beach State College has been extremely active in its efforts to recycle materials that have residual value and that would otherwise end up as waste to be disposed of in some landfill. By the College's doing so, the environment receives many benefits and we receive revenue and save money, as well. Complete biodegradation in a landfill takes 90 years for an aluminum can, 700 years for a plastic bottle and one million years for a glass bottle, but the College recycles all of them, which frees up landfill space, while also providing revenue for the College.

The College also recycles cardboard and paper, which does not provide much revenue, but which has significant environmental benefits. One ton of paper made completely from recycled materials saves 7,000 gallons of water (60% of that which would normally be used to produce it), reduces water pollution by 35% and air pollution by 73% and saves 100 kWh of energy (70% of that which would normally be used to produce it). It also saves three cubic yards of landfill space and 17 trees.

The College recycles steel, copper and other metals, as well. Making new steel from scrap metal offers 95% energy savings, a reduction in water usage of 40%, a reduction in water pollutants of 76%, a reduction in air pollutants of 86% and a reduction in mining waste of 97%. Recycling also reduces litter, which reduces the costs to pick it up. More than \$500,000 a year is spent each year just to pick up litter by crews along state highways, and the College spends more than \$150,000 in staff time each year picking up litter on its four campuses.

The College uses recycling containers of the types indicated at the following locations:

Containers Used for Recycling by Students, Faculty and Staff at Palm Beach State College		
Container Size/Color	Material Collected	Container Location
23-gallon/blue	Cardboard/paper	Workrooms, copiers, other areas where sizeable quantities of paper are generated
28-quart/blue	Cardboard/paper	Beside desks in offices, classrooms and labs
23-gallon/green	Glass/plastic/metal containers	Each floor, lunchrooms, other areas where large numbers of cans/bottles may be generated
50-gallon/blue	Glass/plastic/metal containers	Exteriors such as plazas, other outdoor student seating areas

In addition to recycling cardboard/paper, glass/plastic/metal containers and metals of various types, the College recycles certain wastes that would otherwise have to be managed as hazardous wastes, including mercury-containing lamps, mercury-containing equipment, pesticides and batteries. By recycling these wastes in accordance with programs established by

the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Florida, the College obtains the benefits that recycling offers, while avoiding the more onerous requirements and environmental impacts that managing them as hazardous wastes would present.

Through its recycling program, the College typically recycles 5,590 cubic yards of cardboard and paper, 311 cubic yards of plastic, aluminum and steel containers and 242 cubic yards of scrap metal each year. During the 2012/2013 school year, the College recycled 71% of all its waste stream. The recycling goal for the current year is 75%. Over the past five years, the College has received an average of \$7,000 each year from the sale of its recycled materials. By undertaking its recycling program, the College has been able to return valuable materials to productive use, conserve energy and protect natural resources and the environment, while also modeling good environmental stewardship for its students, faculty and staff.

Something to remember, however, is that it is not necessarily “the College” that puts the paper, glass, plastic and metal into the collection containers to be recycled. In order to be completely successful, recycling takes the attention and effort of every member of the College community. So please do your part to help the environment and look for a recycling container the next time you need to throw something away.