Waste Reduction for Hotels

The Best R of the 3 R’s
Presenter

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What is Waste Reduction?

- Waste reduction: the first of the 3 R’s: *reduce*, reuse, recycle.
- Waste reduction: purchasing fewer goods that are unneeded.
Why Reduce Waste?, 1

Business Reasons

- ↓ *purchasing costs!*
- ↓ hauling and disposal costs.
- ↓ time moving unneeded goods around the building.
- ↓ single-use plastics is important to some customers.
Why Reduce Waste?, 2

Environmental Reasons

- Climate Change and Air Pollution
  - All products have embedded energy (growing, mining, manufacturing, transporting, etc.), mostly from burning fossil fuel.
  - Food and other plant-based waste create methane in landfills.
Environmental Reasons

- Solid waste
  - All products have embedded waste (same processes) that’s many times more than the waste when the hotel disposes it.
  - Waste keeps goods out of landfills, incinerators, land and sea.
Reduce Food Waste, 1

- This is where the $ is!
- Some food services ↓ total food purchases by 2% - 6%, and ↓ post-consumer waste by 50%.
- ↑ recognition of food waste prevention in recent years.
Reduce Food Waste, 2

Food Waste Management Task Force

- System for measuring food over-purchasing.
- Create reports. Set goals.
- Set waste prevention strategies for menu planning, food purchasing, food handling and service to guests.
- Train, supervise staff.
Reduce Food Waste, 3

Tools

- Great tools to identify over-purchased items, tracking progress and engage staff.
- EPA Food Waste Logbook, Leanpath, Phood and Winnow.
Reduce Food Waste, 4

Menus

- Eliminate less popular dishes.
- Cross-utilize ingredients across options.
- More fully use entire plants (root-to-stalk) and animals (nose-to-tail).
- Re-purpose surplus food into new meals for employees, or donate it.
- Use mostly low-waste ingredients.
- Adjust portion sizes to match what’s actually eaten.
Buffets

Studies almost 1/2 of buffet food uneaten.

- Track which foods are most wasted, and reduce the quantity accordingly.
- Shallower containers, and have staff refresh more often.
- Serve food in small serving vessels, not chafing dishes, particularly when meal winds down.
- Don’t refresh buffets too soon—particularly for high value items like meat, cheese and fish.
- Smaller plates and serving utensils, no trays.
- Food dispensers.
Reduce Food Waste, 5

Events

Predicting event size is difficult. It’s common to make too much food. These practices will help.

- Reports on event attendance, food made, food waste will help with predictions—particularly for repeat events. The FRESH metric can help.
- Updated counts from event planners.
- Adjust food volume to attendee demographics.
- Create menu used by > 1 event, with ingredients that can be used elsewhere.
- Pre-plated dishes waste less than buffets.
Reduce Bottled Water

- Bottled water is a single-use plastic, trucked in at great environmental expense.
- Use filtered water instead.
- Offer guests refillable bottles with hotel branding.
- Offer water bottle filling stations.
Reduce Restaurant Supplies

- Washable linen or no table covers at all vs. single-use table covers.
- Cloth napkins.
- No plastic straws, unless requested.
- Washable dinnerware.
- Reusable coffee filters.
- Condiments dispensed in bulk, not individual packets.
Amenity Dispensers

Advantages over bottles of soap, shampoo, conditioner:

- ↓ waste.
- Saves $.
- No need to restock carts and rooms with tiny bottles.
- Improvements: now they’re elegant, associated with high-end amenities, easy to use, easy to refill, don’t leak.
- Touch-free dispensers available.
Reduce Bathroom Paper Use

- Hand dryers: eradicate paper towel waste, save storage space, eliminate need to stock and re-supply paper towels. Are they slightly less sanitary? The jury is out.
- Touch-free paper towel dispensers.
- Paper towel rolls instead of folded towels.
- Coreless toilet paper.
Reduce Building Materials, Furniture, Supplies

- LED lights last longer than other lights.
- Modular mattresses enable hotels to replace just parts of the mattress that are worn, stained or pest-ridden.
- Mattress covers: extend mattress life.
- Carpet squares enable hotels to replace just stained or worn areas not the entire section of carpeting.
Reduce Other Items, 1

- Cleaning supplies: use concentrated cleaners or make your own on site (Electrically Activated Water, etc.). Much less waste and work.
- Paperless for check-in and check-out, etc. Double-sided printing.
- Newspapers: only for guests who request them.
Reduce Other Items, 2

- Suppliers: ask them to ↓ packaging.
- Plastic dry cleaning bags: replace with reusable canvas bags.
- Mugs: give to staff for their coffee and tea.
- Keycards: replace with a keyless entry system.
Conclusion

There are scores of ways that hotels can reduce waste, save serious money and help the environment.
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