



# **Zero Waste at Macalester College**

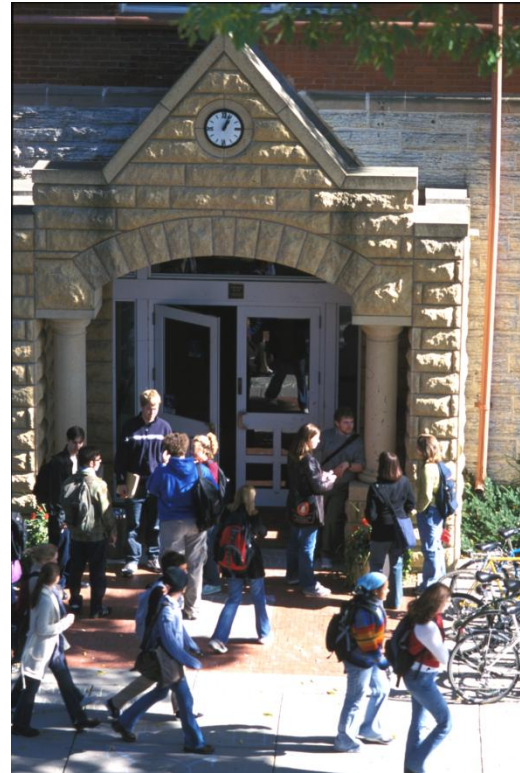
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**UMACS**

**Sept 2011**

# Format for Today's Discussion

- *History*
- *Policy*
  - *Zero waste goal*
  - *Sustainability Plan*
- *Definition*
- *Future Plans*
- *Challenges*



# It started with Recycling



- *Earth Day 1970 student volunteer*
- *Facilities Services took over in 1987*
- *By 2005, over 30 student employees and one full time custodian/recycler*



# Eureka Recycling

- *Innovative Resource Management Contract*
- *Baseline Waste Sort*
  - *Highlighted challenges with communication and bins*
  - *83% waste stream garbage*
  - *17% recycled*
  - *37% of the garbage was recyclable*
- *Zero Waste Recommendations*
  - *Set up a Zero Waste Committee*



# Sustainability Strategic Planning

***“How does sustainability advance the core mission of Macalester College?”***



- Planning Team met during the fall and spring
- Nearly 400 students, staff and faculty provided input
- The structure of the Sustainability Plan comes from this process

# Sustainability Plan Process

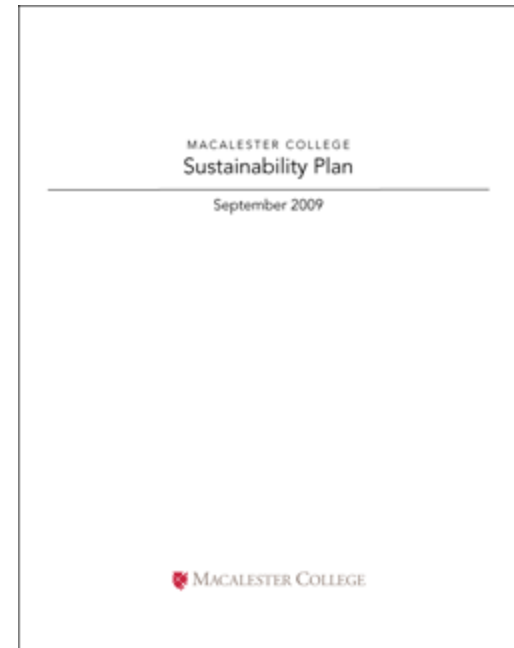
## Three main goal categories

(from Strategic Plan):

- Leadership
- Operations
- Education

## Goals developed by:

- 2009 ES Senior Seminar  
Recommendations
- Strategic Plan
- Sustainability Advisory Committee  
Task Forces (summer 2009)



# Sustainability Plan Highlights



- Climate Neutral by 2025
- Zero Waste by 2020
- Integrate sustainability into curriculum and student programs
- Other policies
  - Green building policy
  - Purchasing policy

# Zero Waste Definition

The ideal Zero Waste community sends nothing to landfills and incinerators and continually strives to reduce the volume of recyclables, compostables, and toxic/hazardous materials.

In practice, Macalester adheres to the widely accepted Zero Waste International Alliance standard, which states that Zero Waste Institutions divert 90% of waste from landfills and incinerators. *(Adopted by Zero Waste Committee, 2011)*

# 2010 Environmental Studies Senior Seminar

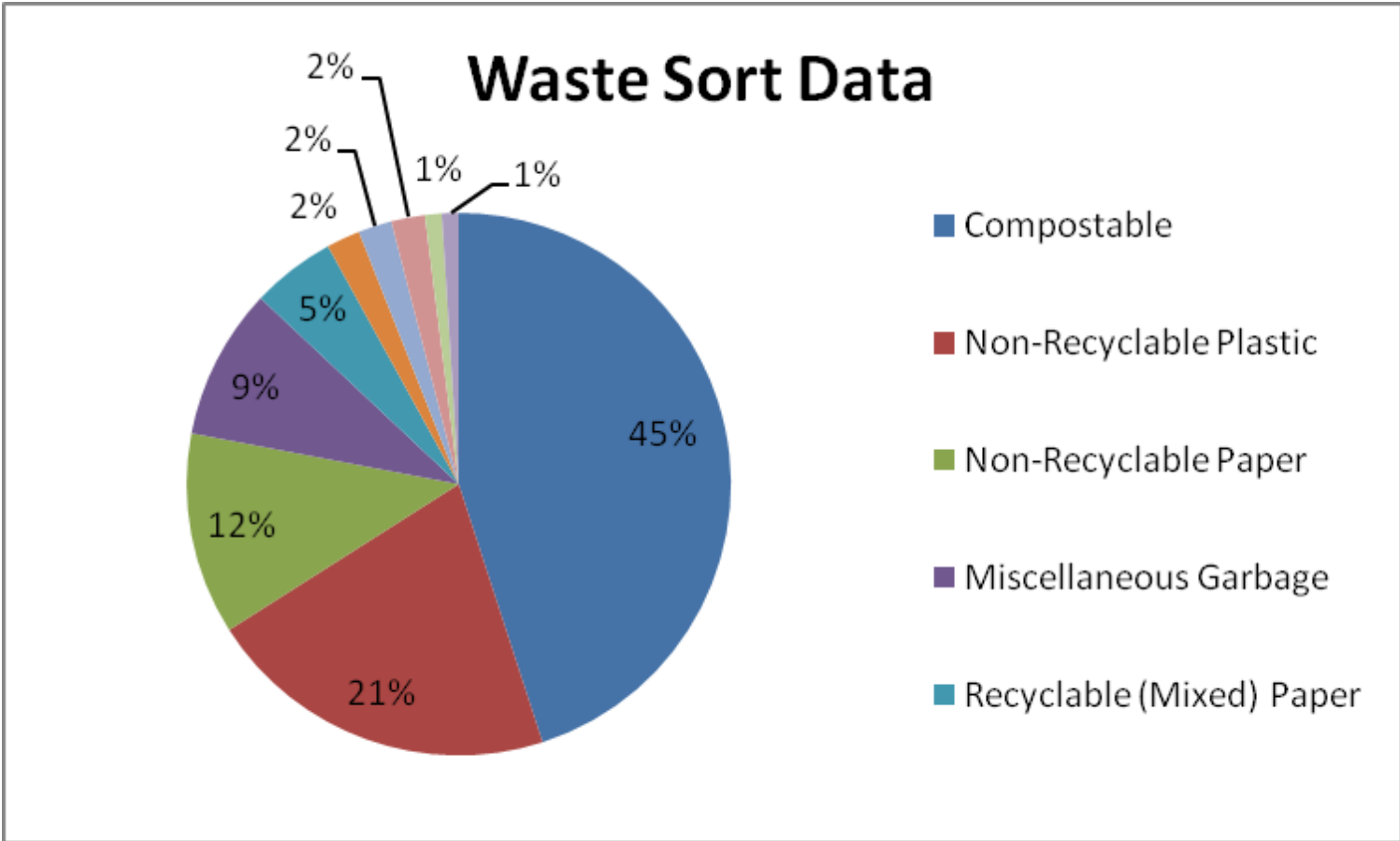
- Waste Sort
  - MN Waste Wise
  - Students assisted



## Group projects

- Recycling communications and website
- Analysis of hand dryers vs. paper towels
- Off-campus student housing compost bin trial
- Printer and copy paper life cycle analysis
- On-campus composting recommendations

# 2010 Waste Sort



# Zero Waste Structure

- **Zero Waste Committee**
  - Students, staff,
  - Co-chaired by recycling coordinator and sustainability manager
- **Zero Waste Student Worker**
  - Organized meetings
  - Organized developing a definition
  - Organized developing a plan
- **Recycling students and staff**
  - Recycling pick up and communications
  - Manage MacFree Swap
- **Sustainability Student Worker Network**
  - Food service/sustainability—Pig Food program
  - Sustainability—composting
  - Procurement—Bottled water free
- **Class projects**
  - One-time projects

# Zero Waste Projects



- **MacFree Swap**
- **EcoClamshell Take Out Containers**
- **Reuseable Dishes/Dishwashers**
- **Move Out Waste**
  - The recycling rate jumped 17% (2008) to 46% (2009)
- **Food Waste as Pig Feed**
- **Bottled Water Free 2011**
- **Recycled Art Fair**
- **Vermicomposting**
- **Backyard composting**

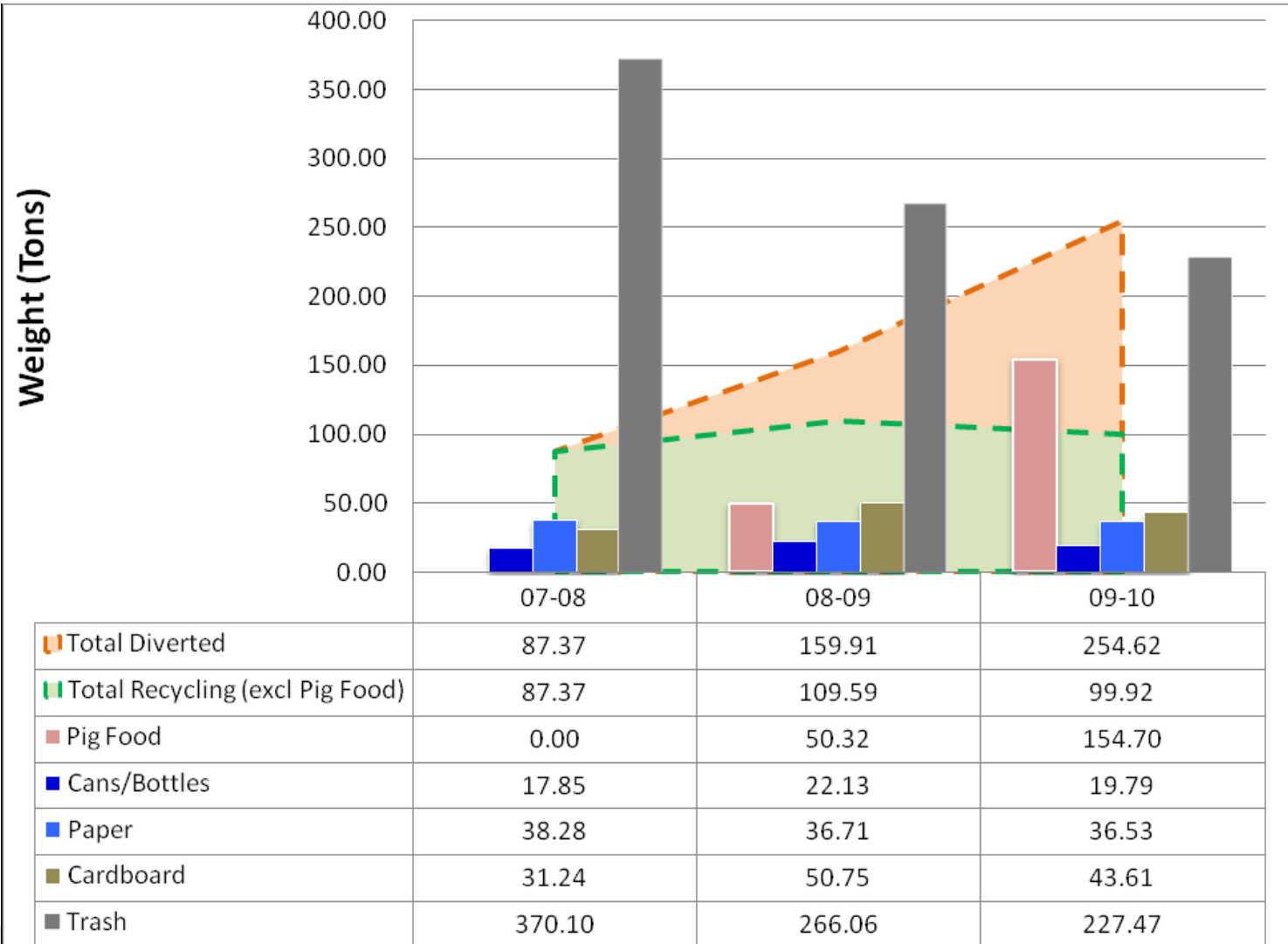
# Move Out and Graduation



Photo from  
[www.networkforbetterfutures.com](http://www.networkforbetterfutures.com)

- Partnership with Network for Better Futures
- Habitat for Humanity Donations for fall garage sale
- Cafe Mac Amnesty Boxes
- Rent Joe Boxes
- E-Waste Pickup
- Graduation Gown Donation Program

# Results



# Challenges

## Topics

- Paper use
- Commercial composting
- Special waste
  - Alkaline batteries
  - Stretch wrap
  - Computer styrofoam

## Process

- Data collection
- Communications



# Future Plans

- Finalize Zero Waste Plan
- New Logo/Communications plan
- Commercial Composting
- Backyard Composting at college houses
- Waste competition
- Paper reduction program (ITS/Library)

# Zero Waste! Now it seems practical.

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