

Recycle Florida Today Environmental Sustainability Award 2024 Application for Consideration



Solid Waste & Resource Recovery

AlachuaCountyRecycles.com

(352) 338-3233



Don't be a Trash Panda
Recycle Right



Alachua County Solid Waste & Resource Recovery presents: Community Reuse & Recycle Days

In 2023 and 2024 Alachua County Solid Waste & Resource Recovery coordinated three Community Reuse & Recycle Days (CR&RD). These are easily scalable, single day events, that can be duplicated by other organizations. This award submission is an effort to share what we have learned from our events. Written as a How-To Tutorial, we hope this presentation encourages others to replicate our program!

We believe our CR&RD program meets the RFTES Award requirements for Outstanding Public Program.

- Providing residents the opportunity to help their neighbors, support a circular economy, and reduce what we send to the landfill
- Fostering collaboration with community organizations focused on conservation, waste reduction and reuse
- Preventing food waste by collecting non-perishable food for local food pantries
- Diverting usable clothing, architectural salvage and household goods from the landfill, and directly benefiting local non-profits
- Providing donated school, art & office supplies free to Alachua County public school teachers
- Collecting 3 tons of household hazardous waste, protecting our environment, conserving natural resources
- Saving residents gas and time by providing a one-stop, drive thru and drop off site for all items collected



What is a Community Reuse & Recycle Day?



CR&RD is a pop up, drive-thru and drop off event for residents to conveniently donate, recycle or responsibly dispose of items they no longer need. During these events, we accept hazardous waste, but we do not accept general recycling or garbage.

The set up is much like a school drop-off line. Organization trucks and tents are staged in a row. Residents drive slowly through a parking lot in a one-way direction, and volunteers and staff wearing safety vests come to each car and ask what type of items they are dropping off.

Items are collected at each station and cars are moved forward in the line until all items are unloaded. Average time for participants was under 2 minutes from entrance to exit!



What is a Community Reuse & Recycle Day?



Volunteers and staff unload the vehicles for the donors, making it very easy for people who are elderly, disabled or who simply appreciate convenience. Volunteers sort items and bring them to the correct staging areas and assist with loading the items into organization trucks/trailers. Each driver receives a small flyer asking for feedback with a QR code and is encouraged to submit a comment and potentially win a \$20 gift card. Cars are counted by a volunteer with a clicker. Cars continue the line and are routed with cones to the exit.

Events are held on Saturday mornings for 3 or 4 hours and staged in convenient locations around the County.

Promotion is done through social media, websites, County press releases, radio PSAs, flyers posted around town, and via email.

**** We have held 3 CR&RD events in 2023 and 2024.
Additional events are being planned.**



spring CLEAN OUT



FREE Drive-Thru Donation and HazWaste Recycling Event

In celebration of **SF College Teaching Zoo's Party for the Planet** - drive thru & drop off:

- clothing in wearable condition
- non-perishable food
- housewares in usable condition
- school/office supplies
- Household hazardous waste such as paint, chemicals, old electronics etc. for recycling or proper disposal

Santa Fe College (SFC) Saints Share Wear, Haven Attic Resale Store, Tools for Schools, SFC Saints Food Share and Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste, will all be on hand to help unload your donations and HazWaste items at this convenient drive-thru event.

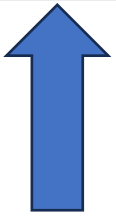
Donors receive a discount voucher for Zoo Admission - while supplies last!

More information at AlachuaCountyRecycles.com



Saturday April 15

9 am - 12 noon at Santa Fe College NW Campus
Construction Institute Parking lot 9 on North Road across from the gym.



2023 event flyer

2024 improved flyer. We learned to be more specific about items we can accept and their condition!



Drive-Thru Donation & FREE HazWaste Recycling Events

TWO EVENTS IN 2024!

Drive-thru and drop off these items:



clean clothing in wearable condition
X no dirty or damaged items



school/office supplies



non-perishable food
X no expired or open items



household hazardous waste



housewares in usable condition

i.e. paint, chemicals, old electronics etc. for recycling or proper disposal

Saturday April 6, 2024

9 am - 12 noon

Santa Fe College NW Campus
Construction Institute Parking lot 9 on North Road across from the gym.

In celebration of

SF College Teaching Zoo's Party for the Planet

In collaboration with Santa Fe College Saints Share Wear, Santa Fe College Saints Food Share, Haven Attic Resale Store, Tools for Schools and Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste.

Donors receive a discount voucher for Zoo Admission - while supplies last!

Saturday May 11, 2024

8 am - 12 noon

Alachua County Health Department
Parking Lot
224 SE 24th Street Gainesville, FL 32641

In collaboration with The Repurpose Project & Reuse Planet, Tools for Schools, Gainesville Free Grocery Store and Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste.



More information at AlachuaCountyRecycles.com

A Community Collaboration Project:





How to Plan and Host a CR&RD

- **Dates:** Pick dates that correlate with existing events. Santa Fe College Teaching Zoo holds an annual Earth Day month event called Party for the Planet. By collaborating with the Zoo, we were able to use the parking lot on campus, free of charge, plus we cross-promoted both events. The Zoo added CR&RD to their flyers and advertising including the incentive that if you participated in CR&RD you would receive a voucher for discount admission for up to 6 people! Other dates/themes you may want to consider are college move out, spring cleaning, and after the holidays when people have potentially upgraded technology (Black Friday shopping).



- **Location:** Select a suitable location such as a parking lot where you can stage your event. We have used a parking lot at Santa Fe College across from the Zoo two years in a row, and the parking lot of our County Health Department on a Saturday when most health department services are closed. Make it convenient! Be sure to check if you need special permission or a certificate of insurance in order to use the lot. We need some forms from our Risk Management dept each year when we use the college lot, however the County Health Dept lot requires nothing more than internal permission.



How to Plan and Host a CR&RD

- **Partners:** Identify what community partners you would like to invite to receive donations. Obtain lists of items they can accept. Share this information on your website and/or on flyers so residents know what they can donate. We focused on food, clothing, housewares, school supplies, architectural salvage and hazardous waste. Be specific about condition of items. Our first year we received some expired food and soiled clothing.
- **Volunteers:** Recruit volunteers! We used social media, direct email to clubs, and recruited at all our tabling opportunities and presentations leading up to the events. Offer hours verification for students that need service hours. Seek out college clubs, fraternities and service organizations in the community such as Sierra Club etc. We had the University of Florida Engineering club volunteer at one of our events and several high school students earned service hours, plus individuals and couples that just wanted to help a good cause! In 2023 we leveraged the Eco Chase Challenge game and made volunteering at CR&RD a Mission that earned teams points in the game. Be creative!





How to Plan and Host a CR&RD



- **Safety:** All participants signed a County release form prior to volunteering. All wore reflective safety vests. Gloves were available for those who wanted them. Safety briefings each morning included being mindful of moving vehicles, handling items while unloading, and staying hydrated. Emails to volunteers included instructions to wear comfortable clothing, hat, sunscreen and bring a refillable water bottle.
- **Food and Water:** Ice water was available throughout the events in insulated water jugs. Staff and volunteers were reminded throughout the morning to take breaks, drink water and eat snacks. A minimal amount of funding was used to buy breakfast snacks and Publix sub rings for lunch. Events cost us under \$200 which is mostly food.



How to Plan and Host a CR&RD



- **Shelter:** Florida weather... keeps Florida-ing. Anticipate that you may have sweltering heat and/or rain. We put up 10 x 10 shelter tents. Some organizations have a tent and table. Some we had to lend them one of ours. Have a few folding chairs for your older volunteers to take a break (or anyone with the need to sit).
- **Signs and Cones:** We repurposed election signs! Some we painted, some we printed on a plotter and taped the paper to the corrugated plastic. Place signs with directional arrows at each corner of the roads entering your location. We borrowed traffic cones from Road & Bridge department.

- **Packing List:** Make a packing checklist! This may be your one event of the year, it may be your 100th. Either way, checklists will help you and your team stay organized and reduce the chances you forget something important. Items on our checklist include a clicker/counter for counting cars, sign in sheets, extra consent forms for last minute volunteers, brochures with the address to our Rural Collection Centers where people can take items we are not accepting and dispose of it properly, several large garbage bags, hand sanitizer and paper towels etc.

RESULTS FROM OUR SPRING 2023 EVENT



THANK YOU!

Here is our impact by the numbers...



30 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers from the Eco Chase Challenge - Race to End Waste, Alachua County Solid Waste & Resource Recovery, Santa Fe College and Haven Attic Resale Store, all worked together to make this event a success.

6 ORGANIZATIONS

Six organizations either provided a service to the public or directly benefited from this event including: Santa Fe College Saints Share Wear, SF College Saints Food Share, SF College Teaching Zoo, Haven Attic Resale Store, Tools for Schools and Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste.



 **3 HOURS**



204 VEHICLES



2 MIN.

During the 3 hours we were open to the public for this drive-thru event, Volunteers unloaded a total of 204 vehicles! Hundreds of pounds of clothing, non-perishable food, housewares, school supplies and household hazardous waste, was carefully and efficiently removed from donor vehicles, sorted and loaded into trailers. Donors experienced on average, a less than 2 minute turnaround from entrance to exit! All of this material was diverted from the landfill and put back into circulation here in our community or properly recycled.



3 TRUCKLOADS & 1 FULL TRAILER

It took 2 trips with the Facilities box truck to transport the Santa Fe College donations! Haven Attic filled their truck to capacity and Hazardous Waste filled their trailer to capacity.



45 COMMENTS 100% POSITIVE!

Participants were asked to give their feedback regarding the event through a contact form on our website AlachuaCountyRecycles.com. 45 people left comments and 100% were positive!

WHAT PEOPLE SAID...

"My feedback is to shower you all with compliments. The process was very fast and efficient. All your volunteers were extremely customer service friendly." - Marty B.

"Loved the Community Reuse & Recycle Day! The event was well organized. Staff took time to answer questions while also keeping the line moving along. Thank you for a wonderful event that makes a difference!" - DJ M.

"I dropped off some clothing with Haven Hospice, some eScrap, and some old paint. It was great to have a 'one stop drop-off' for things I had been procrastinating on getting out of my house and garage. I hope this becomes a regular event. The staff / volunteers were great - friendly and organized." - Rosemary H.

"The event held on Saturday at a Santa Fe College was the most organized community event I've ever been a part of. It was convenient, well-planned, laid out well, great signage, cheerful & helpful volunteers - just wonderful for our community and our planet! Can't thank you enough for making it so easy. Please do it again soon!" - Peggy F.

"Fantastic event. Motivated me to go through my garage and closets to get rid of a lot of things I didn't need anymore or were just taking up space. I've been too lazy to make individual trips to all the locations to get rid of things so this one stop shop was genius. Volunteers were friendly and efficient and made it really easy." - Matt S.



RESULTS FROM OUR TWO SPRING 2024 EVENTS

145 VEHICLES UNLOADED

9 ORGANIZATIONS PARTNERED – Santa Fe College Teaching Zoo. Santa Fe College Saints Share Wear. SFC Saints Food Share. Haven Attic (Hospice) Resale Store. Repurpose Project. Reuse Planet. Gainesville Free Grocery Store. Tools for Schools. Alachua County Hazardous Waste.

APPROX. 3 TONS OF HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTED!

Here is some of the positive feedback we have received from the public:

*“Appreciated the **ease** of the process and the friendly volunteers/staff.” Kim C.*

“Community Reuse & Recycle Day was great. I appreciate all the hard work by the volunteers. Thank you for helping me clean up my house!” Elizabeth D.

*“I was able to drop off food, clothing, furniture and hazardous materials all in one **quick** stop and it was enormously helpful! It was also staffed by really delightful folks who were very helpful.” Cindy C.*

*“Great opportunity to bring in everything to **one location**. And it gave me motivation to clean out closets and the shed.”*

*“It was **easy** to find, and everyone was helpful. I would attend again and recommend to friends.”*

*“Thanks so much for making it **easy** to do good. Everyone at the drop off event was friendly and helpful.”*

*“So **convenient** to have several organizations all in one place!”*

*“Very organized and friendly staff! It was **E Z P Z**”*

*“Well organized and had **rapid** assistance unloading material for reuse. Thanks for making it easy!”*

****People like this drive-thru & drop-off format because its “Easy, Convenient & Quick”!**



Alachua County Solid Waste & Resource Recovery presents: Community Reuse & Recycle Days

We invite you to schedule a Community Reuse & Recycle Day for your community. It is a low to no cost, easy way to provide a much-needed service to your residents.

People generally want to do the right thing, and not throw useful items in the garbage or mishandle household hazardous waste. Many folks are also generally busy and find driving to multiple locations inconvenient and costly. They may not even know where they can take certain items for reuse or disposal. Good reusable material, food and household hazardous waste often ends up in the landfill or even worse, disposed of improperly.

Putting all of these resources in one place at the same time, plus unloading the items right out of your car, leaves few excuses for most people to not take advantage and donate and dispose of items appropriately.

Our team at Alachua County Solid Waste & Resource Recovery welcomes anyone to reach out for advice or to share their experiences. We hope this is helpful information.

Together we can do great things!



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Prepared by: Alanna Carinio, Public Education Program Coordinator on behalf of Alachua County Solid Waste & Resource Recovery
ACarinio@alachuacounty.us