

## **Transcript: Green Leak: Recycling at UNCG – Office Paper**

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Ben: The biggest mix up is, again, going back to the commingled and office paper

differentiation. Commingled, when I say 'paper' in commingled, I mean newspaper

and magazines and cardboard. Those are low value, paper products. The higher

value paper products are the white paper and mail. Again, that's all on the bins,

but some, if you needed clarification, please let me know if you need that.

Beth: We all have those blue bins next to our desk, and someone asked, "What can go

in the blue desk side recycling bin, and what happens if they put the wrong stuff

in there?" I've seen people have, you know, plastic bottles and stuff, things that

can be recycled but in that blue bin, which I thought was for office paper.

Ben: Yeah, the blue bin next to, if you're a staff member here on campus, you

will have a blue bin next to your desk, next to your trash can, and that is for

office paper only. Office paper is another stream on campus besides commingled.

Commingled and office paper are our two biggest streams on campus. The reason

why we collect office paper separately

is because there's some significant

revenue that is generated by collecting that high value office paper. So if

you do have commingled materials, or trash, in your office paper, that

could affect... it's up to the housekeeper namely, but the

agreement that I have with housekeeping on campus, is that they

empty whatever it is into the bin that that bin is specified for. So the office

paper bins, even if it has trash and bottles in it, it will be emptied into

the office paper container, which then makes additional work for my crew when

they dump it in there. In order to maximize the revenue on that office

paper, they'll need to hand sort all those contaminants out. So I would

encourage you, if you have a desk side bin, to please only put office paper in them.

Those desk side bins should have a separate sticker on them that defines what

office paper is, along with my phone number, so if you, if you have a

question about what that sticker... first, read the sticker, if you haven't read

it already, and then if you have a question please give me a call. I promise you it won't

take more than five minutes to figure it out. But please, put your cans and bottles

in those break room areas where we have those  
Commingled containers. Um, we call them Slim

Jims. They're the blue container with the two-  
holed green top, and those are usually in

break rooms, or in the hallway. So if  
you have those cans and bottles please

take the time to put them into the  
proper container.

Beth: Well, that brings up another question  
that someone asked about getting the money

for recycling office paper, they said,  
"We have separate bins for public, and while

we can't control how they dispose of things,  
the staff could be sure to keep it separate,"

which is what you were just talking about.  
"And how much do we make a year, and how

much do you think that could be increased  
if people were better about separating it?"

Ben: Well, I have this year's, last year's  
actually, fiscal year 2010-2011,

annual report here right in front of me, and,  
um, this past year we recycled about 60 tons

of office paper, compared to about, um, 220  
tons of commingled, so it's substantial.

So of that 60 tons we made about, over  
\$8,000 in revenue. So, that's, I would

estimate, with us being an institution of  
our size, and number of offices that we

have, well, the thinking was a couple of  
years ago that we'd be paper free with

the internet and email, and in reality paper consumption has remained about the

same. So, I would hazard a guess that we could collect at least another 60 tons of

office paper. That said, there is substantial numbers of containers that

we need to purchase. In order to get to that, but the truth of the matter is,

it's up to individual decisions to put it into the correct containers. So, again,

our department's success is dependent on users. We do not have plans to collect

office paper from students. We do have it in computer lab areas, but in the

residence halls and around campus we decided it wasn't worth our investment in

additional containers and additional collection, since the bulk of the office paper is

generated in the offices on campus. The term papers, the projects that students generate

office paper from, pales in comparison to the number of pages generated by office staff.

Beth: Wow, that's a really interesting statistic to know. And that also

makes me want to really think about encouraging people to, um, put their

paper, their white office paper, in the recycle bins, especially during this time

of budget crisis, and having to make cutbacks. If we can save 8,000 with the 60 tons,

why not up that, and it's an easy way to

make money, and it just takes the person,

people on campus making the effort of  
putting their paper where it should be.

So, um, yeah, definitely encourage people  
to do that.