

Doing a Visual Waste Audit

Waste audits can range from tracking waste weight/volumes and contamination to high-level observations. A cost-effective starting point is to conduct a visual waste audit to review waste practices and reveal gaps in systems and practices. Use this tool to do a basic visual audit.

Map Motivators	Identify Scope & Timeframe	Assemble a Team	Gather Equipment
Is the purpose of this audit to: • Identify waste sources? • Understand contamination?	• Schedule audit during typical waste patterns (avoid holidays) • Set scope to specific areas (e.g., waste room, common area, user units) or whole property	Who can add insight to the audit? • Head Chef • Building Manager • Cleaners • Maintenance • Strata Board	• Audit sheets • Camera • Personal protective equipment • Trash grabbers or tongs

Areas to Review:

- Kitchen
- Office
- Bathrooms
- Staff and public-facing waste stations
- Main waste sorting area
- Other areas for specialty waste streams (i.e., batteries, electronics etc)

Things to Look for:

- Contamination (items in the wrong place)
- Visible and effective signage
- Ease of access and efficient use of space
- Frequency of emptying and collection
- Container adequacy (e.g., size, placement)
- Containers provided match waste streams produced

Share Results

Share audit insights using visuals (charts, pictures, etc.) to keep information easy to understand. Identify trends or highlight significant waste streams and contamination sources. Share practices or processes that could help reduce waste or improve sorting.

Visual Waste Audit Template

Use this template to review waste streams wherever waste is being sorted. Keep past audit sheets to understand whether steps taken have impact. Check signage frequently, especially on bins where it can become damaged.

Date & time:

Location:

Waste Streams	Visual Observations	Next Steps, Solutions or Opportunities	Signage Present
Example: Organics	10% mixed containers - mostly paper cups	communicate/educate - put up poster in waste room + include in strata email	☐
Organics			☐
Cardboard			☐
Paper			☐
Mixed Containers			☐
Glass			☐
Flexible Plastics			☐
Garbage			☐
Other			☐

Wins, challenges & opportunities for improvement: