

# Sustainable Kitchen

ALL OF THESE ITEMS WILL GAIN YOU POINTS TOWARD SUSTAINABLE OFFICE CERTIFICATION.

Your effort supports U-M's sustainability goals.



## Get rid of single use products in the kitchen:

- Remove single use paper plates, cups and plasticware from general access.
- Purchase reusable plates, coffee cups, glasses and flatware for the kitchen. Choose plates and coffee cups that can be used in the microwave. Find reusable ware available through U-M [here](#).
  - Some departments provide a place setting to each person who is responsible for the maintenance of their own items, keeping the items in their desk.
  - Other departments have a common set that everyone can use. These are kept in the kitchen/break room.
  - Some ask each employee to bring in their own dishware and flatware to use and maintain.

## Get rid of individually packaged condiments:

- Bulk sugar, creamer, coffee is more environmentally friendly than individually packaged items. Seek out the bulk options found in [Sustainable Kitchen Supplies](#).
- K-cups are generally very wasteful. However, if you must have a single cup dispenser, consider a reusable pod or compostable k-cups if you have composting in your kitchen. [Sustainable Kitchen Supplies](#).
- Recycle plastic bottle caps: Send interoffice to [Cap-Ture](#), 109 E. Madison Campus Zip 2993

## Choose sustainable food items:

Help with U-M's sustainable food goal by choosing Fair Trade, Organic, RainForest Certified or local products when supplying the department kitchen. Purchasing plant-based food will also help reduce the carbon impact. If you don't see the sustainable product you want in [Sustainable Kitchen Supplies](#), ask the supplier contact for it or complete the [suggestion form](#)! Planet Blue Begins with You!

## Reduce use of paper towels/napkins and compost what you use:

- Many units use reusable [dishcloths](#) or towels and use a professional cloth cleaning service. And many units wash dishes with a sponge that is replaced frequently.
- Staff should be encouraged to use less paper towel (6 inches or one dispenser pump are good rules of thumb).
- As long as the paper towel hasn't been used with cleaning products it can be composted!

## Make your events ZERO WASTE:

Go [zero waste](#) at events with reusable and compostable products.

## Dishwasher vs hand washing:

If there is enough staff to warrant it, dishwashers are generally a worthwhile investment.

According to [energystar.gov](#) dishwashers use half the energy and much less water than hand washing.

## Steps for environmentally friendly hand dishwashing

1. Scrape food off dishes (preferably into your [compost bin](#)) before rinsing.
2. Rinse dishes immediately after use (requires less hot water to clean) or soak dishes in a tub/sink with warm water.

**Note:** To be more environmentally friendly than a dishwasher, each dish should use no more than 1 cup of water.

## Steps for environmentally friendly dishwasher use

1. Run the dishwasher only when it is full.
2. Don't use the dry cycle (allow dishes to air dry).

## Refill your water bottle:

U-M has over 300 bottle filling stations across campus. Bottleless water coolers have an environmental benefit over plastic jugs, and often can be a financial savings.

**Note:** These may require that a water line be installed.

**Help U-M meet the Sustainable Food and Waste Reduction goals, while gaining points toward Sustainable Office Certification.**