



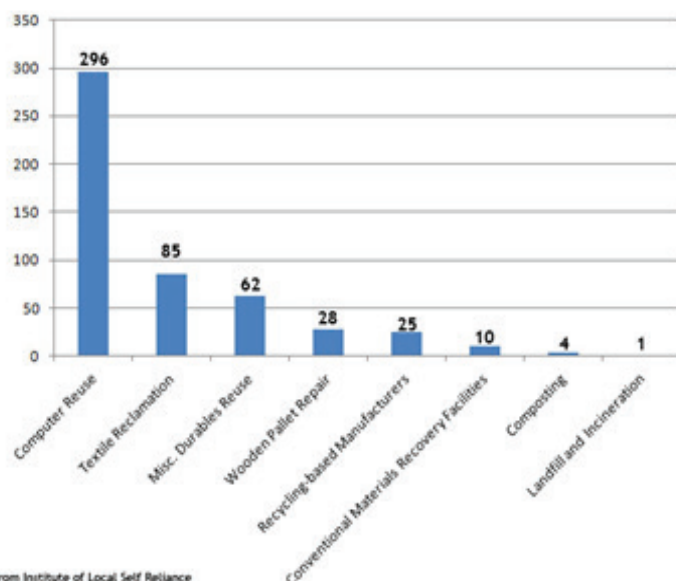
Expanding ReUse Infrastructure in New York State

Finger Lakes ReUse is a not-for-profit organization based in Ithaca, NY, with a triple-bottom-line mission to enhance community, economy, and environment through reuse.

In 1995, Tompkins County made a commitment to develop a ReUse Center as part of its 20-Year Solid Waste Management Plan. Having reduced waste by 58% after 12 years of implementing other plan components, Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division views reuse as the most efficient, economic, and environmentally friendly way to reduce the waste stream further. Every year, Finger Lakes ReUse diverts hundreds of tons of materials related to construction, computers, electronics, household goods, sporting equipment, textiles, and furniture from the waste stream.

Unemployment and underemployment persist as one of the greatest challenges facing upstate New York communities. Since opening their first ReUse Center in 2008, Finger Lakes ReUse has created 23 living wage jobs, and earned \$2.6 million in used merchandise (more than 600,000 items), deconstruction service fees, delivery charges, and computer repair services. Finger Lakes ReUse has been actively transforming liabilities (solid waste) into community assets (taxable, durable goods, living wage jobs, and job training opportunities). These taxable goods and services have so far generated more than \$200,000 in sales tax.

Jobs Created Per 10,000 Tons Per Year



CHALLENGE

- Diverting waste from residents and businesses from across New York State, as well as increasing capacity for materials by opening and expanding reuse centers
- Preventing greenhouse gases and reducing energy output from not having to manufacture new goods

SOLUTION

- Finger Lakes ReUse developed and published the Community ReUse Center template
- Finger Lakes ReUse conducted community outreach, provided consultations to communities and developed additional technical support documents

RESULTS

- Project successfully leveraged the knowledge and experience of the ReUse staff to support the development of independent Community ReUse Centers
- During the grant period, 13 consultations and on-site meetings and events were held, reaching over 475 individuals
- St. Lawrence County ReUse Partnership was established as a result of this project

CONTACT INFO

DIANE COHEN
 Executive Director
 607-257-6669
 diane@fingerlakesreuse.org
 http://ithacareuse.org/

Finger Lakes ReUse
 214 Elmira Road
 Ithaca, NY 14850

TESTIMONIAL

"It took 3 years of planning for Finger Lakes ReUse to develop and launch our first Community ReUse Center. NYSP2I made it possible for our organization to publish a tool that reduces the planning burden on other communities interested in developing their own reuse operations. As a result of our successful project, Finger Lakes ReUse is working directly with other New York State communities as they develop their own independent Community ReUse Centers. This project is playing a major role in supporting the long-term development of reuse infrastructure across New York State. We appreciate the funding and support from NYSP2I."

– Jackie Doherty, Director of Development
Finger Lakes ReUse, Inc.

Challenge

In 2009 the US EPA reported that 40% of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. can be attributed to the life-cycle impacts associated with the manufacture, distribution, sale, use and disposal of the goods and food we consume¹. By extending the lives of hundreds of tons of consumer goods, Finger Lakes ReUse prevents greenhouse gases from becoming an even bigger problem and reduces energy output from manufacturing new goods².

Solution

Finger Lakes ReUse developed and published the Community ReUse Center Template in 2014, with support from New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I). The template is an interactive online tool that assists communities in replicating the non-profit ReUse Center Model established in 2008. Through this project, Finger Lakes ReUse conducted community outreach, provided consultations to communities and developed additional technical support documents to further enhance the template.

The goal was to identify opportunities to improve environmental performance, with solutions that are either cost neutral or cost saving.

Results

There are over 100 registered users of the Community ReUse Center Template website. During the grant period, the site reached over 650 individuals. This project successfully leveraged the knowledge and experiences of ReUse staff to support the development of independent Community ReUse Centers. During the grant period, 13 consultations and on-site meetings and events were held, reaching over 475 individuals.



Photo Credit: Finger Lakes ReUse staff and a few volunteers in front of the Earth mural on the exterior of the Ithaca ReUse Center

As a result of this project, a group in St. Lawrence County has established a new working group, the St. Lawrence County ReUse Partnership, which is working to establish a Community ReUse Center in the North Country. The group is a project of Local Living Venture, a 501(c)(3) organization based in Canton, NY.

Online Media

[Ithaca ReUse Website](#)
[Community ReUse Template](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)

¹United States Environmental Protection Agency (2009). Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Materials and Land Management Practices. Retrieved from: <https://www3.epa.gov/region09/climatechange/pdfs/ghg-land-materials-management.pdf>

²According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, 26% of energy use in the US is consumed by the "stuff we buy"! See: Shulman, S. & Union of Concerned Scientists. (2012) Cooler Smarter: Practical Steps for the low-carbon living: expert advice from the Union of Concerned Scientists. Washington, DC: Island Press.

NYSP2I PARTNERS



10 Regional Technology Development Centers

Funding provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

© 2016 Rochester Institute of Technology
Any opinions, results, findings, and/or interpretations of data contained herein are the responsibility of Rochester Institute of Technology and its NYS Pollution Prevention Institute and do not represent the opinions, interpretation or policy of the State.

For more information please contact us:

111 Lomb Memorial Drive, Bldg. 78
Rochester, NY 14623

Tel: 585-475-2512
Web: nysp2i.rit.edu
E-mail: nysp2i@rit.edu

