

# SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAM



## CASE STUDY

## Sustainability Plan Development with a Focus on Zero Waste to Landfill for Rochester Regional Health

Rochester Regional Health (RRH) was formed in 2014 with the joining of Rochester General Health and Unity Health Systems. These organizations share legacies that go back generations, to visionary physician and community leaders who have a passion for caring for the sick and injured families who live in the Finger Lakes region.

### Challenge

In an effort to continually improve, RRH is interested in pursuing “zero waste to landfill”, however, there is no single recognized definition for this term as noted in the table below. Furthermore, the healthcare industry manages unique waste streams that present greater challenges to achieve “zero waste to landfill”.

Summary of Common Zero Waste Certification Program

Certifying Body	Zero Waste Criteria Summary	Diversion
		Rate Threshold(s)
Green Business Certification, Inc. (GBCI)	TRUE Certification	90%
UL Environment	(1) Zero Waste to Landfill	100%
	(2) Virtually Zero Waste to Landfill	98%
	(3) Landfill Waste Diversion	80%
Intertek	(1) Zero Waste to Landfill	99%
	(2) Near Zero Waste to Landfill	95%-99%
	(3) Advanced Waste Diversion	85%-95%
NSF International	Landfill Free Verification	99%

### Solution

RRH requested the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP21) assist with the development of a Sustainability Plan with a focus on waste reduction to pursue “zero waste to landfill”. The work was performed at one of RRH’s hospitals, Rochester General Hospital (RGH) and included: 1) establishing a baseline status of current waste management practices and metrics, 2) conducting an on-site assessment to observe waste management practices, 3) benchmarking waste management practices and metrics at other hospitals, 4) identifying potential source and diversion opportunities, and, 5) piloting the Sustainability Plan in the cafeteria.

Per NYSP21’s findings, RGH generated over 2,800 tons of waste in 2017, of which approximately 14% was diverted from landfill. While not meeting

### CHALLENGE

- Rochester Regional Health (RRH) was interested in pursuing “zero waste to landfill”, however there is no single recognized definition for this term, and, there are unique challenges for the healthcare industry

### SOLUTION

- NYSP21 assisted with the development of a Sustainability Plan with a focus on waste reduction, at one of their hospitals Rochester General Hospital (RGH), to advance RRH’s efforts towards “zero waste to landfill”

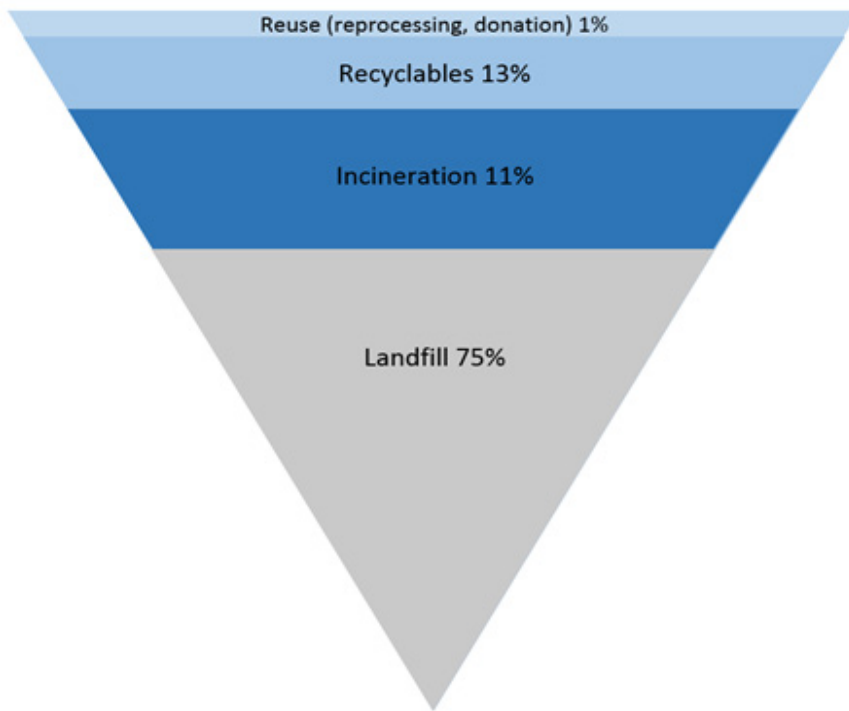
### RESULTS

- NYSP21 identified gaps within existing practices at RGH and outlined steps in a Sustainability Plan that can significantly improve the effectiveness of waste diversion and point source reduction at RRH
- NYSP21 integrated pollution prevention best practices with a “5S” approach and incorporated the Sustainability Management Cycle towards continuous improvement
- NYSP21 initiated healthcare accommodation inquiries in meeting zero waste thresholds with the Zero Waste Certifying Bodies
- RGH exceeds Practice Greenhealth’s recycling rate criteria of 10% for Greenhealth Partner designation and is well positioned to advance its efforts towards sustainable waste reduction

Zero Waste diversion thresholds in the table above, RGH exceeds the Practice Greenhealth recycling threshold of 10% for Greenhealth Partner designation.

### Results

NYSP2I identified gaps within existing practices and outlined steps in a Sustainability Plan that can significantly improve the effectiveness of waste diversion and achieve further waste reduction. NYSP2I has integrated pollution prevention best practices with a “5S” approach and incorporated the Sustainability Management Cycle towards continuous improvement, resulting in a comprehensive plan. NYSP2I outlined new waste management practices for consideration including: 1) development of a ‘Green Team’ to achieve zero waste goals, 2) institution of distinct waste bins utilizing easily identifiable visuals, 3) increasing diversion of materials such as construction and demolition waste, food waste and operating room packaging waste, and, 4) increasing source reduction efforts through innovative approaches for packaging and working with suppliers. Last, NYSP2I initiated healthcare accommodation inquiries in meeting zero waste thresholds with the Zero Waste Certifying Bodies.



2017 Total Waste Streams (%) at Rochester General Hospital

Through NYSP2I’s observations, RRH is well positioned to advance its efforts towards sustainable waste reduction and zero waste to landfill.

## Testimonial

“NYSP2I was not only instrumental but guided us every step of the way towards zeroing in on our zero waste to landfill goal.”

- Mike Waller,  
Director of Sustainability  
Rochester Regional Health

## NYSP2I PARTNERS



New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Funding provided by the Environmental Protection Fund as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

© 2018 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](http://nysp2i.rit.edu)  
E-mail: [nysp2i@rit.edu](mailto:nysp2i@rit.edu)

