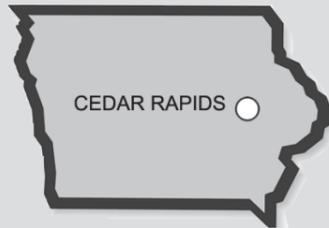


St. Luke's Hospital

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St. Luke's Hospital is a leader in community health care. Founded in 1884, St. Luke's Hospital was Cedar Rapids' first hospital. Today, St. Luke's is a fully accredited 560-bed hospital with 2,300 employees and is committed to providing Cedar Rapids and Eastern Iowa with a wide range of health care services. St. Luke's has particular strengths in cardiac care, rehabilitation, obstetrics and trauma care.

Project Background

As the global perspective of our actions is changing with increasing pollution and growing landfills, St. Luke's is interested in joining the nationwide initiative for healthy health care. There are a number of opportunities for St. Luke's to ensure the hospital's environmental visions are met. Some of the major opportunities include:

- Waste tracking
- Reduction in biohazardous waste
- Increased recycling initiatives for paper, plastic, and glass

Incentives to Change

As a cutting edge hospital facility, St. Luke's strives to be better, whether it be in surgeries and medical developments or waste segregation and recycling. St. Luke's is committed to becoming an environmentally conscious facility dedicated to reducing, reusing and recycling. The economic benefits of the environmental programs can be utilized for the further development of recycling programs and the advancement of St. Luke's numerous services.

Results

Hospitals for a Healthy Environment

Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E) is a voluntary program jointly sponsored by the American Hospital Association, the American Nurses Association, Health Care Without Harm and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. H2E is designed to help health care facilities reduce their environmental impact while saving money and reducing liabilities.

In striving to provide high quality patient care, health care facilities use a variety of products, some of which can be toxic and generate large volumes of waste. H2E is working with the health care industry to address the issues associated with the large volumes of waste generated and adopt a set of goals to guide the program. St. Luke's became a partner of H2E and has developed a Green Team to implement and maintain environmental and waste programs.

Biohazardous Waste

Many hospitals routinely throw 50-70 percent of their waste into the biohazardous waste stream, although a large portion of hospital waste is very similar to that of a hotel or office building: paper, plastics, and food waste. It is suggested that only 2-3 percent of hospital waste needs to be disposed of as biohazardous waste. Training utilizing net learning, posters and a waste disposal guide has been implemented to attain a key target of reducing biohazardous waste by 60 percent in 3-4 years for an annual savings of \$40,000.

Recycling Paper Documents

All documents determined to contain protected health information are disposed of in a locked document destruction container for shredding. Due to high costs of paper shredding, only paper documents containing patient information should be shredded and recycled.

Reusable Sharps Containers

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) estimates that more than 5.6 million workers in health care are at risk of occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. The Bio Systems reusable sharps container system is recommended to reduce needle stick injuries, improve safety, and reduce waste. The cost of handling reusable sharps containers is a flat fee cost solution, which can potentially save the hospital 20-30 percent over current sharps disposal, and will divert 29 tons per year from the landfill.

Other Recycling Opportunities

Additional recycling opportunities exist for used cooking oil, glass, plastic, and aluminum cans.



Project	Annual Cost Savings	Environmental Results	Status
H2E PARTNER		Not measurable	Implemented
BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE	\$40,000	5 tons	In progress
RECYCLE PAPER	\$3300	36 tons diverted from landfill	Recommended
REUSABLE SHARPS CONTAINERS	\$18,600	29 tons diverted from landfill	Recommended
RECYCLE USED COOKING OIL	\$8,840	3,120 gallons recycled	Recommended
RECYCLE GLASS	More research needed	More research needed	Recommended
RECYCLE PLASTIC	More research needed	More research needed	Recommended
RECYCLING ALUMINUM CANS	More research needed	More research needed	Recommended