

Reducing emissions through waste management

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Facility managers face environmental scrutiny as 95 percent of major businesses now report on sustainability*, including their carbon emission rates. Waste currently accounts for three to five percent of greenhouse gas emissions – meaning it’s vital that facility managers tailor their approach to effectively reduce the company’s carbon footprint.

Common concerns across waste issues include fragmented collection, inadequate recycling, and informal waste management processes. The best outcome is to limit the amount of waste being produced, whilst engaging with the sustainable disposal of unavoidable waste.

Daniel Redfern, Director at [Envirovue](#), an innovative waste management specialist, shares his recommended approach to reduce emissions through efficient waste management.

How can we reduce waste?

Conducting thorough waste surveys and collecting insightful data can create fantastic tools for facility managers, identifying areas where waste can be reduced through regular monitoring that will ultimately reduce carbon emissions.

To be able to accurately reduce waste, Daniel recommends all facility managers go back to basics and prioritise understanding what waste is being produced. A holistic approach to waste is a must, rather than approaching with specific items in mind.

Daniel explains: “Targeting lower volume waste streams with intensive recycling systems, such as batteries, can seem like an excellent strategy, but without comprehensive data, we often see bigger

opportunities to reduce emissions being missed.

“By coordinating surveys and using the insights to arm yourself with data, facility managers can tailor their approach with an in-depth look at actual waste requirements – saving the most time and money in the long run.”

Harnessing technology

Implementing and investing in tech solutions is an integral strategy for facility managers aiming to reduce carbon emissions through a streamlined waste programme.

Daniel adds: “Although some waste management firms will apply technology for certain items or waste streams, it’s rarely done in a way that gives sites true insight into how to reduce waste or find the quick wins when looking to minimise environmental impact.

“This is often because asset-based waste companies will favour the use of their assets rather than those best for the job. A compactor can be a great asset that makes waste management more efficient as it reduces the amount of collections required, reducing cost and environmental impact – a waste company with a fleet of bin lorries is unlikely to share the data that leads to this conclusion”

“We see a lot of facilities have rows and rows of bins outside – our goal is to reduce the amount of bins as this suggests a reduction in waste, meaning our partners are reducing the requirement for travel, fuel, emissions and often manual handling.”

Investing in education

For firms to fully unlock the potential of waste management systems, all staff must be engaged and comply with the selected processes. Without compliance from the whole business, carbon emissions will not be reduced.

A huge barrier for effective waste management is colleagues not engaging with the required process often due to a lack of knowledge. If a holistic approach is to be effectively implemented, it’s vital that the benefits of waste management are clearly understood by team members at each stage.

Daniel adds: “Using education, we must change mindsets so that behaviours align with the waste management strategies deployed to maximise recycling initiatives.

“When you select your waste management partner, always ask about the educational tools that are available to support your team. Reducing waste is a team race, creating incentives where staff benefit from being sustainable can be one route, or efficiently tracking waste results can motivate colleagues to want to continue to improve recycling and work more sustainably.

“Education ultimately starts with staff engagement and celebrating recycling wins that reduce waste going landfill is the perfect place to start.” To find out more about Envirovue and its services, please visit:

www.envirovue.io

*Source one: <https://link.springer.com/journal/10163>