

# IOWA WASTE EXCHANGE STATISTICS 1990 - PRESENT

**4.3 Million**



**TONS OF WASTE  
DIVERTED**

**125 Million**



**DOLLARS SAVED  
BY IOWANS**

**70,475**



**CLIENTS SERVED**

Established in 1990 by the Iowa State Legislature to divert waste materials from the state's sanitary landfills, the Iowa Waste Exchange (IWE) has a proven record of success.

Since its inception through December 31, 2021, the IWE has matched **16,714** byproducts and other waste materials. The IWE's success in matching materials has resulted in the diversion of over **4.3 million** tons of waste from Iowa landfills with associated savings of over **\$125 million** in avoided disposal costs, avoided purchases, reduced transportation costs and freed storage space (IWE data pulled from internal IWE database, not publicly accessible pursuant to Iowa Administrative Code regarding confidentiality, for additional confirmation or current statistics contact Bill Blum, [bill.blum@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:bill.blum@dnr.iowa.gov), (515) 725-8376)

The IWE is one of the nation's premiere materials exchange programs. This no-cost, non-regulatory, confidential service matches institutions that produce byproducts and waste with other groups interested in using or recycling those materials. The program assists clients in saving disposal and raw material costs while subsequently enhancing our natural resources through reducing, reusing, recycling and renewing materials.

## SERVICES PROVIDED

- Identification of Marketable Waste and Revenue Streams
- Administration of Waste Sorts
- Location of Markets for Value Added Byproducts
- Location of Byproducts for Production
- Writing/Reviewing Grants, Loans, SOPs, Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Management Plans
- Presentations at Conferences, Workshops, Lunch and Learns and Other Public Speaking Events
- Authoring Guest Articles
- Administration/Organization of Special Projects and Collection Events

### CLIENTS INCLUDE

- Agricultural Pursuits
- Business/Industry
- Schools/Colleges
- Governmental Entities
- Municipalities
- Hospitals and Clinics
- Non Profits

# SUCCESS STORY EXAMPLES

## Corporate Partnerships - Kum & Go

The Iowa Waste Exchange has developed long-term relationships with a host of corporations throughout Iowa. One example includes the Iowa-based company, Kum & Go.

Since 2010, the Iowa Waste Exchange has assisted in performing over 30 waste assessments including hands-on waste sorts at various Kum & Go locations throughout Iowa. Initially IWE resource specialists led the waste sorts and trained Kum and Go staff, interns and volunteers on performing waste audits and documenting and analyzing data. Today, IWE representatives work alongside Kum & Go's team of social responsibility and sustainability professionals in performing these sorts.

Kum & Go professionals use the data from the waste sorts to expand, enhance and assess existing waste reduction and recycling programs including Kum & Go's highly successful food recovery program. Final totals for 2021 are currently being calculated and are anticipated to be higher than the 1,741,496 pounds rescued from the landfill in 2020.



## Non-Profit and Municipal Partnerships

The Iowa Waste Exchange has long-standing partnerships with non-profits and municipalities throughout the state of Iowa. Area Resource Specialists assist clients in diverting materials formerly destined for the landfill to non-profits who use these materials to serve their clients and to municipalities to serve their residents and reduce expenses. Materials include personal hygiene items, textiles, cleaning supplies, furnishings, equipment and a host of others.

In some instances, the materials available must be upcycled into a different item to be the most useful and to better facilitate the IWE client's needs. For example, with the assistance of volunteers, area resource specialists turned off-spec "pie sticks" (used to measure the width of pie crusts), upcycled yarn and misprinted tee shirts into dog and cat toys. The toys were distributed to area animal shelters including the Ames Animal Shelter.



According to Abbey Weimann, Animal Control Clerk with the Ames Animal Shelter in Ames, handcrafted animal toys are extremely popular with not only the animals awaiting their forever homes, but also with potential pet parents coming into the shelter in search of their perfect companion. "Handcrafted animal toys are used by volunteers and assist in developing the animals' social skills by building positive associations with humans and human interactions, making them more adoptable," she explains. "Donations such as these reduce our costs and free up funds for much needed medical and wellness expenses."

# Educational Institution Partnerships - Iowa State University

IWE resource specialists have cultivated highly successful partnerships with primary and secondary educational institutions throughout Iowa. One of those institutions includes Iowa State University (ISU). In addition to diverting thousands of tons of materials from the landfill, including food waste, furniture, textiles, vinyl, paper, plastics, media materials, construction and demolition materials and a host of other non-traditional items, IWE resource specialists:

- Assist with on-campus waste sorts.
- Participate, assist, market and recruit volunteers for special collection events and activities, examples include EPA's Game Day Challenge, Tees for Overseas, Sustainapalooza, Campus Sustainability Day and Rummage Rampage (in partnership with the City of Ames).
- Perform walk-throughs of demolition projects to identify salvageable material and markets.
- Locate recyclable materials for industrial design classes, provide feedback and attend student product-development presentations.
- Provide IWE/ISU material reports for inclusion in campus sustainability tracking programs.
- Present to various organizations in tandem with ISU staff on sustainability and waste reduction.
- Serve as a mentor and resource for students on sustainability projects.



Additional information regarding this partnership can be found in this feature article compiled by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute in Washington, D.C. <https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/how-one-iowa-university-and-the-hawkeye-state-is-handling-waste>

## Special Events

In the interest of reducing, reusing, recycling and renewing, IWE area resource specialists work alongside event planners in implementing sustainable events, examples from 2021 include.

### DEW TOUR

Over the last four years Dew Tour has established and refined its sustainability program, taking actions to reduce environmental impacts in several areas, including promoting environmentally friendly practices at their sanctioned events. IWE was contacted by event planners to assist with the 2021 Dew Tour, which was the first-ever event held at the new Lauridsen Skatepark in Des Moines. The event included *World Skate* sanctioned men's and women's skateboarding Street and Park competitions, serving as the only U.S.-based global Olympic skateboard qualifying events for 2021. Skateboarding made its debut at the Olympic Games last summer in Tokyo.

IWE Area Resource Specialists assisted planners with waste hauling specifications, recycling logistics, diverting non-traditional materials including broken skateboards that were used for an art installation commissioned by Mid American Energy. In addition to providing hands-on assistance with top sorting of waste and recycling, IWE assisted in connecting Dew Tour planners with artists specializing in reused materials and Iowa-based volunteers to assist with waste reduction and recycling activities.



For more information regarding other sustainability initiatives of the Dew Tour visit: <https://www.dewtour.com/about/>

## Special Events (Continued)

### RAGBRAI



IWE Area Resource Specialists were contacted by Experience Waterloo for assistance in waste reduction and recycling initiatives related to the 2021 Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI). Downtown Waterloo served as an overnight stop for RAGBRAI participants.

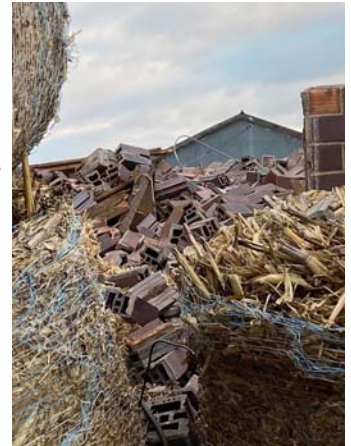
In addition to locating 55-gallon drums to be used for collection activities, IWE connected Experience Waterloo with volunteers to assist in preparing the containers for distribution. The containers are being warehoused and will be used by Experience Waterloo and their community partners in facilitating environmentally-conscious events.



## Disaster Response and Recovery

Since the onset of the Covid 19 Pandemic in March 2020, the Derecho of August 10, 2020 and the 61 tornadoes that touched down in Iowa on December 15, 2021, Area Resource Specialists have and will continue to assist healthcare organizations, non profits, businesses, municipalities, educational institutions, governmental agencies and private individuals in environmentally-minded response and recovery activities including providing technical and hands-on assistance in securing landfill alternatives.

Recently multiple businesses have contacted IWE specialists throughout the state as they have accumulated inventories of materials that were previously in very short-supply during the onset of the pandemic. These materials include masks, blankets, hand-sanitizer, bleach, cleaning supplies, face shields and as Iowa companies mobilized production efforts to assist in overcoming supply shortages, materials subsequently produced in manufacturing these items. Throughout this past year these items have been matched to multiple non-profits, conservation organizations, educational institutions and advocacy groups to serve their client' and to reduce overhead expenses associated with purchasing.



### Faceshields

For example, IWE partnered with LeSEA Global Feed the Hungry in placing inventoried face shields on behalf of an Iowa company. The company ramped up production of these safety items in light of early pandemic shortages. Through this partnership face shields, which are desperately needed equipment to areas adversely impacted by earthquakes and hurricanes, were distributed to Food for the Poor based in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti and the Caritas Arquidiocesana based in Mixco, Guatemala. A total of 78,000 face shields were sent to these organizations. An additional 34,000 face shields will be distributed to long-term care facilities, medical offices, detention centers and other organizations in the state of Iowa.

### Wood Waste

DNR reports that nearly 7.2 million trees were lost throughout the state during the Derecho of 2020. That number subsequently increased in December 2021 due to high-winds and tornados that adversely affected a majority of the state. Area Resource Specialists have and will continue to provide technical assistance in handling storm debris generated from these natural disasters including wood waste that resulted from the vast amount of canopy lost throughout Iowa.

Area Resource Specialists in the hardest-hit areas of the state including Linn and Scott Counties worked closely with local officials to investigate potential options for wood waste, provide markets for bid solicitation and assist in arranging transportation and logistics to facilitate landfill diversion of countless tons of wood. IWE assistance provided to the City of Davenport alone diverted 13,000 tons of wood materials.

# TESTIMONIALS

“Due to changing economic conditions and new environmental stewardship opportunities, the Iowa Waste Exchange is more important now than ever. Iowa businesses are fortunate to have this resource providing economical assistance and options that they may otherwise never be aware of.”

**-WILLIAM L. ROWLAND DIRECTOR, LANDFILL OF NORTH IOWA**

“The Iowa Waste Exchange knows little bounds. Their ability to take discarded materials and repurpose it to help stop the spread of the virus and keep people safe is the highest of callings in recycling! A-TEC Recycling is very happy to be a small part in their efforts, they are truly an inspiration to all of us here and we want to keep helping her fight the right fight!”

**-LARRY YOUNG, OWNER, ATEC RECYCLING**

“The Iowa Waste Exchange is a valuable program enhancing the economic success and environmental responsibility of Iowa business and industry.”

**-MICHELE BONEY, DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND HEALTH,  
WEST LIBERTY FOODS**

“Without the outreach provided by Iowa Waste Exchange, we may not have considered some of the less obvious ways to repurpose and recycle waste coming off our project. The Iowa Waste Exchange provide a great resource for our State.”

**-LAURA MANATT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, POWESHIEK IOWA DEVELOPMENT**

“The value that the Iowa Waste Exchange provides, not only to Metro Waste Authority and the customers we serve, but as an industry leader, is invaluable and we hope to continue our partnership for years to come.”

**-LESLIE IRLBECK, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, METRO WASTE AUTHORITY**

# RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Iowa Waste Exchange is funded by Solid Waste Fees remitted to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The Iowa Waste Fees are paid on each ton of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) land-filled in Iowa.

Remittance fees paid to DNR fund waste reduction programs throughout the state including but not limited to IWE. IWE receives approximately **\$440,000** annually to administer the program which has averaged an annual cost savings of **\$3.9** million per year. The return on investment for FY21, including contractor match was **1,100-percent**.

ADDITIONAL IWE SUCCESS STORIES MAY BE FOUND at:  
[www.iowadnr.gov/FABA](http://www.iowadnr.gov/FABA)