Public Sector Solutions

Success Story: Boston University

"During the 2009 fall semester, the University installed 33 solar-powered trash compactors and recycling receptacles. Beyond reducing the frequency of trash pick-ups and expanding our recycling program, they provided a meaningful step toward increasing visibility for the University's new sustainability program."

Michael Lyons
Senior Buyer
Boston University

Boston University Looks to City for Lesson in 21st Century Waste Collection

Traditionally, colleges and universities serve as the proving grounds for new ideas, systems and technologies that eventually make their way to the world at large. However, sometimes knowledge flows in the opposite direction, with institutions of higher education learning a thing or two from the world beyond.

Boston University (BU) is one of New England's most prestigious private research universities. Officially chartered in 1869, BU currently serves approximately 31,000 undergraduate and graduate students through 18 schools and colleges spread over 177 acres on Boston's Columbia Point.

In 2007, BU realized it needed to address its campus-wide trash collection, recycling and litter issues. Not only did its traditional trash cans needs to be serviced seven to eight times per week, students routinely took the "jump-shot" approach to waste disposal, resulting in frequent overflows and litter around the cans that, in turn, created potential pest control problems.

Fortunately for BU, the City of Boston had introduced solar-powered trash compactors to high-traffic neighborhoods in 2006. Intrigued by the city's experience, BU decided to test the technology for itself. It

When it comes to advanced waste collection, WM Solar-Powered Trash Compactors earn an A-Plus!

installed three solar-powered trash compactors at key locations throughout its campus and carefully monitored the results. It found that collections could be reduced to just twice per week, and that overflow and litter problems were minimized, if not eliminated.

BU was encouraged by these positive results and negotiated with Waste Management to rent a combination of 33 solar-powered compactors and recycling units for installation in the campus' busiest areas. In addition to being solar-powered, and thus not dependent on campus electricity, the units also had wireless monitoring systems that called a central service facility for attention only when they were near or at capacity, further increasing their efficiency.

To date, the solar-powered trash compactors have lived up to their promise. Collections are significantly reduced, costs are down and litter is becoming a fading memory. The units have been so successful that BU hopes to replace all of its trash receptacles with WM Solar-Powered Trash Compactors in the near future.

WASTE MANAGEMENT
Think Green.®

WMI.110.31.183 0410