

# Treasure from Trash

## a toolkit for MOVE-OUT REUSE PROJECTS

### a word of thanks:

It takes time to run a successful move-out reuse project. Likewise, it took a considerable amount of time to produce the toolkit you see before you. Of the many, many people who collaborated on this manuscript, a special thanks to Edie Horton and Fern Nye for their wonderful artwork, to Sarah Heller for her layout, editing and technical assistance, and to John Crisley for his support and excellent advice throughout this project.

Lisa Heller, January 2003  
Brookfield, Massachusetts

# Treasure from Trash

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# Introduction

## *What are Move-out Reuse Projects?*

Move-out reuse projects rescue usable items from the trash, reduce unnecessary wastefulness, and raise awareness about our impact on the environment, all at the same time.

“As we move out, we throw out.” This is particularly true of college students. Items you find during college move-out include the sorts of things that can’t fit into the car or suitcase, things that simply seem impractical for life after college. Typical “found treasures” include designer clothes, carpets, furniture, desktop printers, coffee machines, dorm size refrigerators, dishware, dish and laundry detergents, textbooks and working laptop computers.

This is because students move frequently and often across great distances, under extremely tight deadlines imposed on them by universities. Many students must move immediately after taking final exams, when they are physically and mentally exhausted.

THESE FACTORS RESULT IN LITERALLY TONS OF PERFECTLY USABLE MATERIALS ENTERING THE WASTE STREAM.

### About our Sponsor

This toolkit is funded by a grant from the **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection**, which has a goal of 60% reduction in municipal solid waste by the year 2010.

Visit [www.mass.gov/dep/recycle](http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle) for more about recycling and waste reduction in Massachusetts.

## ***Why hold a move-out event?***

A wealth of items with a great deal of useful life end up in landfills and incinerators across North America, and all because people have no idea where else to turn. Move-out reuse projects are a good way to divert trash away from the landfills and help out your local communities at the same time.

The scope of the college/institutional solid waste issue is truly staggering. Every year, the average college student in the United States throws out 640 pounds of garbage. Much of this waste is generated by students as they move out of housing at the end of each academic year.

Residence Life, Custodial and Physical Plant are all under similar administrative pressure to keep the campus looking nice during the graduation season. At that time more than ever, appearance matters. Administrators don't want to hear about the trash heap in front of the residence halls. Town officials don't want to deal with the headache of old couches left on the curb.

Although this waste problem poses a significant challenge to colleges, it also presents an opportunity to reduce costs associated with waste disposal. ***There are three ways that a move-out reuse event can positively affect your institution's financial "bottom line:" through lower waste disposal fees, decreased payroll costs, and lower waste container rental fees.***

College students  
throw away  
an incredible  
number of  
usable items as  
they move out of  
their residence  
halls each spring.

**Lower waste disposal fees.** Within the first year of implementation of a reuse event, end-of-semester solid waste generation at Bates College and Tufts University decreased between 25% to 50% in residence halls who fully adopted the program. With waste disposal fees between \$85/ton to \$100/ton in the Boston area, even a small institution can expect to save hundreds of dollars in waste disposal costs. Tufts University and Bates College operations staff have determined a cost savings of at least \$1,000 in waste disposal. Each year the the program is in operation this savings has increased.



**Decreased payroll costs.** After your project has established itself, housekeeping may feel less need to hire extra seasonal custodial help.

**Lower waste container rental fees.** Universities rent 30 cubic yard dumpster “roll-offs” at the end of the year from recyclers and waste haulers. Depending on length of rental period and geographic location, these containers can cost \$1,000 per unit to rent. In later years, a move-out event can decrease the need to rely on these extra dumpsters.

*Move-out Reuse Projects: the Basics*

Move-out reuse projects can be separated into two tracks:  
Track 1: sale events. Programs designed to turn massive amounts of “trash” into “cash” through sale events, and thus generate money for charity, and Track 2: give-away events. Programs to divert usable consumer goods toward those who need them. (Step 5: Day of the Event discusses these distinctions in more detail beginning on page 29.)

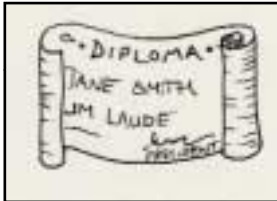
Regardless of the track you choose, all move-out reuse projects have the following objectives:

- Cost saving to Universities and municipalities through mitigated waste disposal costs.
- Reduce the volume of waste generated by prolonging the useful life of discarded items.
- Generate capital or distribute goods to nonprofit community groups.
- More broadly, educate the public about social and environmental problems associated with the excessive consumption of natural resources and of the advantages of conserving such resources for future generations.
- Include recyclers by inviting them to come and get the material that they want after the swap has occurred.

## ***About this toolkit***

This toolkit is based on the experience of Dump & Run, Inc. which has helped many colleges and universities design and implement their own move-out reuse event.

This toolkit will help you implement a move-out reuse project of your own. Although we target college students moving out of college housing at the end of the academic year, the principles can be applied to other situations, such as multi-tenant housing and medical residency programs.



You will learn how to bring together volunteers to rescue would-be discards from the waste stream and how to organize and redistribute these goods effectively.

### **About**

**Dump & Run, manager of student move-out projects.**

**Dump & Run, Inc.** is a Massachusetts based nonprofit organization dedicated to improving waste prevention efforts among institutions of higher education. Dump & Run's primary focus is in helping to facilitate the implementation of university-based reuse programs and workshops.

**For more information on Dump & Run please visit [www.dumpandrun.org](http://www.dumpandrun.org)**



Throughout the text we have highlighted especially helpful or important ideas using this symbol:

Hot  
Tip



These are gems of wisdom that have been “tested in the field” and are now being passed along to you.

## How to use this toolkit

A well-designed move-out event can be the start of an annual event held each year to manage the large spike in reusable materials generated by colleges and universities.

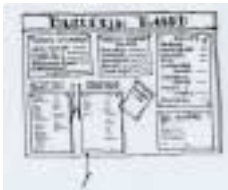
***With the right mix of planning, organization and good teamwork, you can expect to be able to raise between \$2,000 to \$12,000 at your first sale!***

You will also get the satisfaction of joining a larger movement to turn massive amounts of “trash” into “cash.” Together, we can change the way North America deals with waste. The steps included are:

### Step 1. Planning your Project



### Step 2. Recruiting Volunteers



### Step 3. Gathering Resources



### Step 4. Collection



### Step 5. Day of the Event





# Step 1

## Planning your project

### *Timing is everything*

Many people ask the question, “When should I begin work on a move-out project?” This is a very important question. The answer depends on many factors, including volunteer availability, the size and location of the school, the school move-out deadlines, and the level of administrative support for your project.

Even if your school seems perfectly situated for a move-out project, many factors can get in the way, and you may find yourself forced to postpone your project until next year. Even so, you can still begin the planning process. Take note of the “deadline days” when everyone absolutely must move out of the dorms. These are usually the last day of finals and graduation day. Document what goes on at the end of the year by taking photographs of the dumpsters. Photographs are dramatic ways of demonstrating the problem, make great additions to posters, and are very persuasive tools to enlist the support of school administration.



## Step 1 Planning

*Timing is everything*

*Building Support  
at your institution*

*Who does what?*

*Taking the first steps*

## ***Building support at your institution***

.....



**STUDENT BODY.** It is important that students become aware of the problem of extreme waste and unsanitary conditions related to residential housing at the end of the year. The message must be simple and convenient to gain student support: “donate, don’t dump.”

**ADMINISTRATION.** Enlisting the cooperation of the administration is essential to the success of a move-out collection event. You are offering the administration an effective way to address their solid waste problems. Explain how your project can minimize and remove waste, both saving the university money and creating a good public relations opportunity. Use last year’s photos to persuade!

**FACULTY AND STAFF.** Faculty and staff are in unique positions to help. Faculty can encourage student participation in the project. Staff can inform you of campus practices and policies. Both are in the position of understanding the campus culture and environment. They understand the challenges at their institution and will make excellent project coordinators.

.....



## Who does what?

A **PROJECT COORDINATOR** must take charge of this project. This person will recruit volunteers, assign volunteer duties, and serve as liaison to the various institutional administrative contacts. This toolkit is designed to help this individual.

**STUDENT LEADERS** publicize the project among the student body.

**FACULTY** may wish to incorporate a service component into their coursework, such as the implementation of a campus solid waste audit, a public relations project on waste awareness, or an outreach plan to recruit and train volunteers. Be sure to approach the environmental studies department.

**UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS STAFF** may wish to donate facilities, equipment and/or staff time and should be encouraged to share their expertise with the project coordinator.

**VOLUNTEERS** (made up of staff, faculty, students and community members) help collect, sort, price, and organize material. They also may locate groups to receive donations of leftovers.

### **UNIVERSITY PUBLIC RELATIONS**

staff or Publicist Volunteer (may be a staff, faculty, student or community member) contacts local and national press, writes editorial pieces to be printed in the press, and places advertising in the paper and over the web.

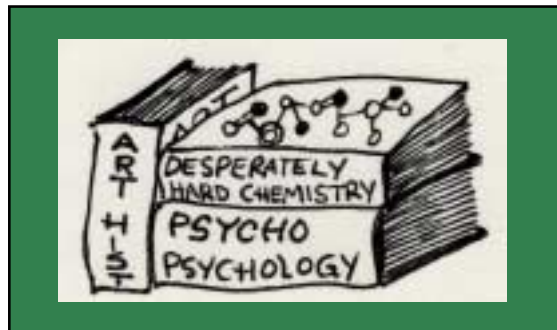


*Photo courtesy of Tufts Daily*



## Taking the first steps

- 1) **GET ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.** Meet with staff and administrators in residential life, student life, public relations, operations management, purchasing and campus safety. Learn their concerns and availability to help early in the process.
- 2) **GATHER CAMPUS VOLUNTEER RESOURCES.** Meet with service learning and campus internship offices to set up student internship and volunteer opportunities.
- 3) **BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT.** Meet with city or town officials, municipal waste representatives, and community groups. In communities with off-campus student housing, municipalities can be swamped with discards left behind by departing students. Many communities are eager to help get rid of the yearly “trash” problem.
- 4) **ASSESS THE COLLEGE CULTURE.** You will want to consider factors such as school size, student body demographics, geographic location, school operating budget, local and state laws, and whether or not the school already has a similar program in place! All these variables will affect your collection methods if not the feasibility of your project.
- 5) **ASSESS THE SITUATION.** Interview Custodial staff, Residence Life staff and Resident Assistants about the “worst” dump sites, and ask their suggestions on running a successful program. Learn “pickup days” for trash removal. Understand that trash collectors may be competing with you for discards.



## Step 2

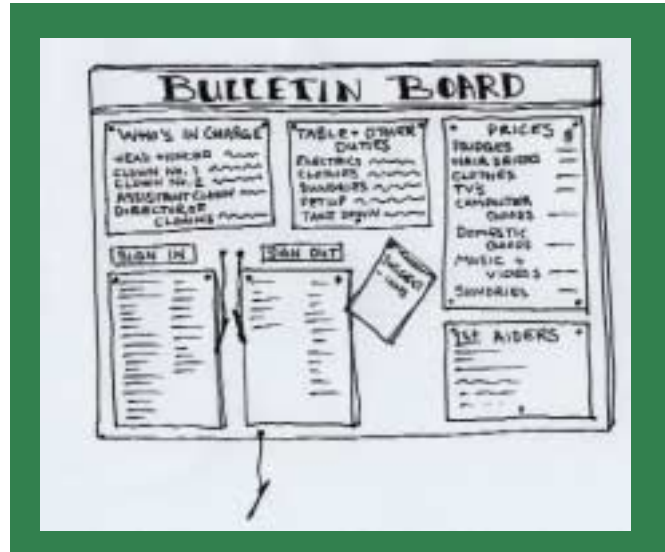
# Recruiting the people you need

### ***Identify partner organizations***

Potential collaborators for move-out projects are everywhere:

- Retirement organizations
- Environmental groups
- Local thrift stores
- Service organizations
- Corporate volunteer partnerships
- Nonprofit educational programs & charities
- High school clubs and PTA groups
- Civic groups
- Local church and children's advocacy groups
- Local college clubs  
(such as service, environmental or athletic groups)

*see page 34 for more ideas on partner organizations.*



## Step 2 Recruiting

*Identify partner  
organizations*

*Recruit and  
manage volunteers*

*1 commitment*

*2 training*

*3 recognition*

*4 follow-up*

*Establish  
a support network*



step 2: recruiting



Promote the program and recruit volunteers by putting up flyers around campus and around town. You can have an awareness campaign starting any time in the year to get people thinking about the issue. Be creative, and make it fun!

## ***Recruit and manage volunteers***

There are four key issues to consider in recruiting and managing volunteers:

### **#1. INSTILL COMMITMENT.**

Volunteers need to be committed to the cause. Only then will volunteers be reliable, show up on time, or care about hosting a successful event. One way to assure volunteers care about this project is to offer profit-sharing.

Most successful projects are a collaborative venture, with multiple groups participating. Before you begin, each organization should clearly understand the method used to distribute donated goods and sale proceeds. This is especially true if you plan to run a sale. You might consider keeping track of the time each volunteer group contributes and divide the proceeds of the sale according to hours spent and services offered. One way is to tabulate the total number of volunteer hours and to determine a percentage breakdown based on the number of hours contributed by each group. You might give each volunteer a time sheet and tabulate hours based on an honor system.





## #2. TRAIN VOLUNTEERS.

Untrained volunteers will undersell merchandise, miss shoplifters, and may even endanger the safety of themselves and others. This is why it is so important for training and support programs to be put in place. You will want to seek out those people with skills: people

who are comfortable driving big trucks or people who are willing to use personal vehicles such as trucks, vans, SUV's. You will also want people with moving, packing, and retail experience. Having clear work descriptions is one way of addressing this issue. *(Please see Appendix B, for sample work descriptions).*

## #3. RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS.

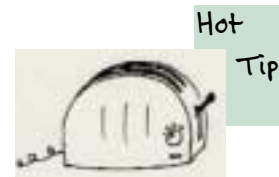
Volunteers recognition is essential. Opportunities to thank your volunteers include **Formal recognition**, such as a recognition event, **Informal recognition**, such as a personal note, and **External recognition** in a public venue such as a newspaper or media outlet or in your annual report.

## #4. FOLLOW UP.

It is important to give volunteers the opportunity to share their perspective. This will allow you to more accurately assess the effectiveness and success of your program and to plan for improvements.



step 2: recruiting



Recognizing volunteers by giving each a custom t-shirt or cap, or offering them first pick of the merchandise have been successful techniques for previous move-out reuse projects. You may want to indicate that they must donate at least one three hour shift to participate.



step 2: recruiting

## ***Establish a support network***

It is a daunting task to undertake a move-out project on your own. The challenge is much easier with a firmly established network of support. The following ideas can help put this network in place:

### CREATE A PROJECT COORDINATOR POSITION:

- RECYCLING OFFICE The best scenario for the longevity of any college program is that it be overseen by a full-time administrative staff person.
- CAREER DEVELOPMENT Talk to career development about setting up for-credit internships for student project coordinators. Dump & Run®, Inc. is happy to be your nonprofit program sponsor.



- STUDENT GROUPS Develop a Move-out Coordinator position within your group. This will institutionalize the transition from year to year and emphasizes the responsibility to maintain the program.

### GET UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION INVOLVED:

- Talk early and often with Residence Life, operations and maintenance staff, each of whom can provide valuable first hand knowledge regarding current moveout procedures. Incorporate your move-out project into New Student Orientation and RA training programs. Seek out the purchasing office about potential on-campus storage opportunities as well as college surplus property that they may want to donate to your collection.



## Step 3

### Gathering resources

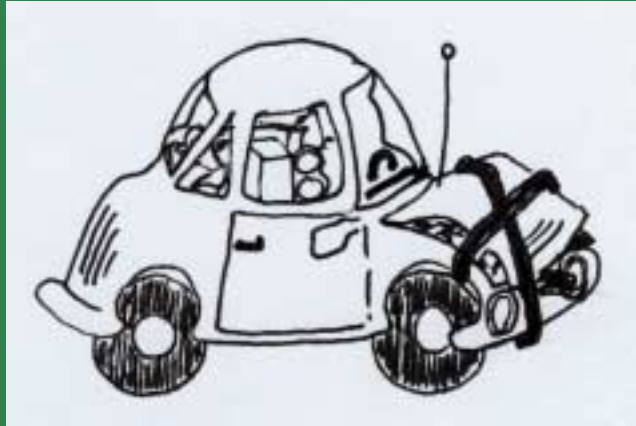
Move-out projects involve the transportation, organization and storage of a tremendous amount of materials and goods. Keep in mind that if you or your group does not have the resources to run this project by yourselves, you can always enlist the help of others. It is not unusual for several volunteer organizations to collaborate on a single project.

Here are the resources that you will need for your project:

#### ***Money for expenses***

You should expect to spend between \$400 to \$1000 on expenses, including storage fees & truck rentals, T-shirts and event publicity. If you are having a sale, project expenses should be reimbursed from the proceeds before the profits generated from each sale are distributed among groups.

.....



### Step 3 Gathering Resources

.....  
Money for expenses

If you choose not to have  
a yard sale...

Storage

Transportation

Supplies

Ask yourself...

.....



step 3: gathering

Hot

Tip



You should try to get as much donated as possible. Look for donations of storage space, sale supplies, material transportation, and food and drink for volunteers. Many supplies can be gotten from student activities offices or from personal donations.

## ***If you choose not to have a yard sale...***

...you will need to find alternative funding sources to cover expenses. You may choose to minimize expenses by donating items directly to groups such as homeless shelters, transitional homes, the Salvation Army, Goodwill or community thrift stores. But contact them ahead of time! Don't assume that they will be available to pick up donated items or that they will take everything that you have. Many groups have inventory and space constraints. A backup plan is a must!



## Storage

You will need a fairly big space. Aim for 10,000 square feet. Yes, that's a lot of space, but you are expecting lots of donations!

Donated storage space is the ideal option, as it will save you a significant amount of money. Keep in mind that the shorter the period of time between your collection and the distribution event/sale, the more likely you are to find a donated space.



*step 3: gathering*

### TIPS ON DONATED STORAGE:

- Look for spaces on campus that aren't used in the summer, such as student run cafes, student offices, locker rooms, gymnasiums, or buildings undergoing renovations: sometimes a building may be shut down for the summer in anticipation of renovations scheduled for fall.
- Look for sympathetic community members who own empty warehouses, empty store buildings or vacant office buildings. Approach the landlord and explain what you are doing. You will be surprised how many people are willing to donate the use of the space to a good cause. Local business leaders have been known to donate vacant office buildings as they prepare to renovate. Be sure to clearly indicate how long you will need the space.
- People can be generous when you are doing something to benefit their community. Nonprofit groups with members who are in touch with the





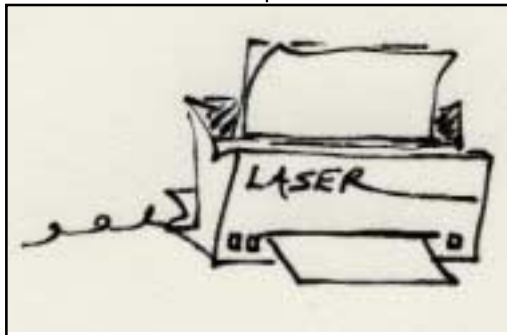
*step 3: gathering*



Keep in mind that the shorter the period of time that you need, the more likely you are to find a donated space.

community can often be your best links to donated storage and donated trucks.

- On-campus spaces, such as university sports facilities or basketball courts, make great short-term storage and sale sites. You'll want to check with facilities staff about appropriate floor care.
- University Facilities may have available storage space.
- The Summer Conferences office is a good place to start. They schedule the summer events and know what buildings are being used and when. They can point you in the right direction.
- Storage companies might store your stuff in exchange for some good publicity with students. Offer to put up flyers across campus with their name and logo.



- Local church basements and meeting halls are good for short term storage.

## WHEN YOU CAN'T FIND FREE STORAGE

If you cannot find donated space, some other places to look for storage include:

- Commercial storage. Commercial rental units are usually small tin boxes, can be expensive and are generally not suited for sorting. If you decide to use commercial storage as an option, be sure to price, sort, and label your boxes before putting them into storage so that you can transport them directly to the sale from this site.

- Trailer rental. Trailer rental is a good option if you need storage for several months and/or if you can store the trailer close to the site of the sale. Trailer rental companies usually need at least a week's notice. They will drop off the trailer to your site, but they may charge a drop off and a pick-up fee, and many charge a monthly minimum.



*step 3: gathering*



Hot  
Tip

Trailers, like storage rental units, are generally not suited for sorting. If you use either of these for storage, you'll either want to sort before storing goods, or arrange for enough time to sort at the sale location before the sale.



step 3: gathering



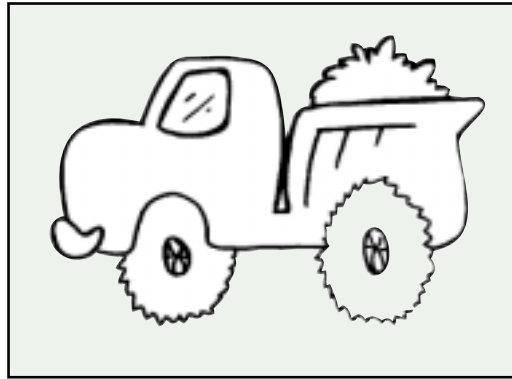
Remember, Personal SUV's and pickups make great additions to your fleet. Never turn down an offer of a personal vehicle. You will find a use for it. Even if you have been given donated trucks and don't think you will need to rent, you should make a backup reservation at a rental agency. Find out the latest date you can cancel without penalty and then if you don't need the truck, cancel the reservation.

## Transportation

There are three critical dates that you will need to reserve transportation:

- 1) The underclass move-out deadline
- 2) The graduating senior move-out deadline
- 3) The date you will need to transport material from the storage site to the event site.

**RENTAL TRUCKS** are in highest demand at the beginning and end of the months and on the weekends, so plan ahead. In general, 10 foot box trucks or 15 foot trucks are better than 24 foot trucks because they fit into more parking spaces and people feel more comfortable driving a smaller truck. Your personal vehicle insurance will not cover the vehicle, so be sure to take out an insurance policy on the truck. Local rental companies can be cheaper than the national chains, so shop around.



ALWAYS get the insurance coverage on moving vehicles.

## Supplies

**HATS/T-SHIRTS** to identify volunteers during the collection and sale event.

**MATERIALS FOR MAKING POSTERS AND FLYERS** to recruit volunteers, advertise the collection and the sale itself. You'll need paperboard sheets for signs, scissors, and don't forget duct tape to put up the signs.

**CALCULATORS AND CASH BOXES** for adding and holding money. Use money bags to store money (You will want to make a cash run to remove money from the premises at least once an hour in the morning).

**CASH:** Make sure you get adequate change from the bank. We suggest at least \$100 in ones, \$50 in fives, and \$50 in tens, and \$10 in quarters. You can reimburse the cost from the sale proceeds at the end of the day.



*step 3: gathering*



Collect supermarket bags and plastic bags to use for people to carry their purchases.

If you are short on tables, you can borrow clothing rack(s) or use rope to create a clothes line. The school theatre department, may be willing to lend you a clothes rack from the costume shop.



step 3: gathering

: **EVENT SUPPLIES:** Walkie-talkie radios, music system, sun-screen and water (if it is an outdoor event) “PAID” stickers, markers, pens, paper, bed sheets (for signs), Bullhorn for announced specials, dollies for moving stuff, balloons and signs. Have a LOT of tables. If your collection has been successful, you will probably need 30 tables just for clothes! Tables can be set up categorized by price and type of item: 1 dollar tables, 50 cent tables, appliance tables, shirt and blouse tables, etc.

: **ADVERTISING & PUBLICITY:** See [Step 5: Day of the Event](#), page 29, and [Appendices A & C](#), pages 37 and 38.

: **SECURITY:** If it is a campus sale, the University may be able to provide you with free security. Security is especially important for the early hours of the sale, as this is the busiest time.



***After reviewing the items listed above,  
ask yourself:***

- Do I have the sufficient resources?
- What additional resources might be made available?
- What obstacles need to be overcome?

With some advance planning and creativity, you will run a successful project.



## Step 4 Collection

### ***Publicize!***

You should start publicizing the collection at least two weeks before move-out. Use your imagination! Distribute flyers across campus, send mass emails, and hand out materials at the campus dining hall. Direct one-on-one appeals are very effective. Ask volunteers to go door-to-door in the residence halls handing out flyers to talk up the project.



### ***When, Where and What?***

**WHEN TO COLLECT.** Begin collection during finals week. The last two days of finals are the heaviest move-out days for undergraduates. Don't forget about seniors! The day of graduation and the day after are the busiest times for graduating seniors, and they throw out the most material.

If your resources are limited, plan to do the collection on one or two days and have a few limited drop-off spots. This will reduce your scope, but may make it manageable enough for you to do the project with only a handful of volunteers.

## Step 4 Collection

*Publicize*

*When to collect*

*Where to collect*

*What to Collect*

*Sort and Price*

*Documenting your results*

*Looking to the Future*



step 4: collection

Hot

Tip



### Collection tips:

- Line up volunteers for shifts. If you finish ahead of schedule, you can assign later shifts to work on sorting.
- Have plenty of medium sized boxes on hand for loose items.
- If your storage facility is small, sort as you collect and label boxes according to categories (clothing, small appliances, etc.).
- Tie laces of shoes to keep pairs together.

**Remember, the more you collect, the more storage you need – Don't end up with literally tons of stuff and nowhere to put it!**

See page 17

(Step 3: Gathering Resources) for ideas on storage.



**WHERE TO COLLECT.** You will want to secure permission from University administrators to place collection boxes in laundry rooms, hallways, next to trash chutes and dumpsters. Design your collection process with University safety regulations in mind. Many campuses won't allow non-students to enter private campus residences, or for collection boxes to be placed in laundry rooms because of fire and safety codes.

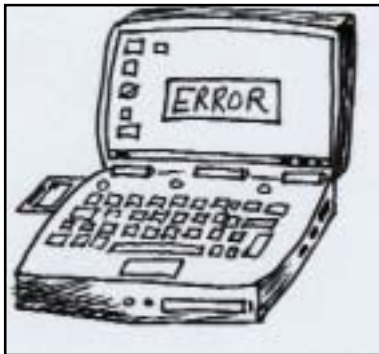
Once you've gotten approval, have someone monitor the boxes and make sure they get emptied regularly. A phone "hotline" will help schedule pickups. Otherwise, you risk alienating Housing Facilities or Residential Life staff with overflowing boxes!

If you have a lot of volunteers but a small school with limited on-campus housing, why not collect off campus? One additional benefit: off-campus collection drives do not have to coincide with move-out day. You will want to establish good relationships

in the community. You might talk to tenants associations and landlords to be sure that they are aware of your collection project.

**WHAT TO COLLECT.** One of the most interesting parts of any move-out is swapping “fish stories” between volunteers. Imagine what you might find that someone has thrown out!

Past organizer experience shows that a majority of what gets donated will sell. People have been known to purchase half-empty containers of shampoo and items with missing parts. Our motto? “Our role is not to question why, but to be grateful for the donation and for



the purchase.” Of course, there are limitations! Two of the challenges are to identify material that will sell and how to dispose of leftovers. See the lists of “Less desirable items” in the column to the

right. Also see page 34 ([Step 5: Day of the Event](#)) for advice on leftovers.



*step 4: collection*



#### **Less desirable items:**

Tires  
Furniture with missing parts  
Radios without CD players  
Full-size refrigerators  
Exercise Equipment  
Older/Obsolete Computers  
Items with mold or mildew  
Appliances that don't work  
(If you are selling any appliances you will need to have electricity and extension cords available to test electrical goods on site on the day of the event.)



step 4: collection

Hot  
Tip



#### In high demand:

Microwaves

Televisions

Stackable Containers

Organizers

Wood furniture

Couches

Clothes

Dressers

Cleaning aids

(Brooms, Mops, Trash cans)

Decorative items

Novelty items

Laundry Detergent

(Even if it's just half full,  
it will sell.)

## Sort and Price

**Note:** If you have decided not to charge for the items you have collected (i.e. a giveaway event), you can skip to page 27,

**Documenting Your Results.** Proper sorting and pricing are the keys to making money at the sale. You should sort by categories such as clothing, decorations, toys, furniture, and so forth.

Whenever possible, you should sort as you collect, organize material into categories and discard material that is deemed unsaleable. Otherwise, you will need to organize a substantial number of volunteers (between 20 to 60) to sort for one to two full days before the event.

Regardless of what size, location or type of university, you should expect to receive a LOT of clothes! Remember, you need to sort to sell. Don't expect to simply unload everything from the truck. Piles of clothes make an unsightly mess.

A word about prices: A word about prices: The IRS provides guidelines for useable items on their form #8283, called "Non Cash Charitable Contributions." the form is available on their web site, [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). There is also a valuation list for common household items on the Salvation Army's website. Don't attempt to price each and every item. It is more efficient to price according to category.



## ***Documenting your results***

Demonstrating the dollar value of your event is a good way to build municipal and university support. You should make every effort to gather data on waste hauling costs incurred by the University and municipality. This information can be used to calculate the cost savings of implementing the move-out project.

There are several methods to document your results:

- **BY WEIGHT**

You may either weigh items individually or weigh by truckload at a weigh station. If you weigh items by the truck, you should first weigh the truck when it is empty, then calculate the weight of the items when the truck is full by subtracting the previous weight. Be sure to contact a weigh station ahead of time to get your fees waived.

- **BY CUBIC YARD**

This will be a valuable statistic. Many universities rent 30 cubic yard dumpster “roll-offs” at the end of the year from recyclers and waste haulers. If the housing office knows you have saved enough material to fill a rolloff, you have just translated your results into dollars! You can calculate cubic yards by multiplying truck height x length x width. Be sure to get precise dimensions for the truck.

- **BY THE AMOUNT OF MONEY RAISED**

You will want to distinguish between the gross income (the amount raised before expenses are taken out) and the net income (the amount raised after expenses.)



*step 4: collection*



Document the problem! Photographs and video are great ways to document what is happening. This is especially important if you plan to seek grant money or seed money to start your move-out sale.



step 4: collection

• **BY GROUPS SERVED**

Describe how groups involved with the sale intend to use the money to reach their goals. If groups received a material donation, indicate how useful this was to their operations. Don't forget to include groups who received sale left-overs.

• **BY PROVIDING A PROFILE OF ITEMS SOLD**

You may want to keep a rough inventory of items received from year to year. This will allow you to anticipate yearly growth and supply needs. For example, if you find an increased donation in couches, you may need to look for more storage space.



• **BY PHOTOGRAPHY OR VIDEOTAPE**

Not only are photographs and videotapes dramatic ways of demonstrating the program, but many times the press will expect that you have photographs for their use. Without a photograph, your article will not get the prominent exposure that it deserves.

***Looking to the Future***

As the word spreads among students and the administration, donations will grow, you will see increasingly less trash, and there will be a heightened awareness of the solid waste issue.

Administration is more likely to provide storage and sale space on campus. Personal vehicles become more available. And, the quantity of trash in dumpsters will fall. This is a classic win-win situation, and YOU are the moving force that brought it together and made it happen!



# Step 5

## Day of the Event

### ***Track 1: The sale event.***

#### ***Read this step from start to finish.***

If you have chosen to host a sale, Step 5 has been designed with you in mind.

### ***Track 2: The giveaway.***

#### ***Read selectively.***

If you have decided NOT to have a sale, you only need to read the sections on Transport (page 30) and Leftovers (page 34). Keep in mind that if you have chosen to host an event for local non profits and their beneficiaries to “shop” then you will benefit from reading this entire step.

#### ***Publicize!***

Coordinate your efforts with the university’s public relations office. Keep your message simple and straight-forward. Use catchy slogans. Involve your volunteers in designing the publicity.



## Step 5

### Day of the Event

*Track 1 or 2*

*Publicize*

*Transport*

*Host the sale*

*Leftovers*

*Clean up*



step 5: day of the event



Regardless of the storage system you use, plan your route ahead of time.

You want to design a route map for the driver.  
Identify the best places to park vehicles.

Clearly label boxes to facilitate unpacking and event set-up.

## Additional suggestions:

- Local cable TV channels offer free bulletin boards.
- Editorials and articles: contact local journalists
- Don't forget to contact the student paper early!
- Team up with a local or the campus radio station to publicize on the day of the event.
- There are a lot of places to post nonprofit events on the web, such as newsgroups, web chat rooms, and bulletin boards.

See [Appendices A and C](#), pages 37 & 38, for a sample press release and yard sale ad.

## Transport

You will need trucks and lots of volunteers to transport material from your storage facility to your sale event. Whenever possible, store donations on University property as this cuts costs and makes material more accessible. (For more on transportation, see page 20 ([Step 3: Gathering Resources.](#))

### VEHICLE SPECIFIC TIPS:

- Park as close to the building as possible. Don't let volunteers persuade you that they can carry that couch an extra 25 feet.
- Avoid using compact cars, which have a small carrying capacity.
- When transporting from storage to the sale, load the truck the night before if possible.
- When loading a large truck, place the heaviest material toward the front of the vehicle to avoid an unbalanced load.



# Host the sale

**WHERE AND WHEN:** The two most important things in selecting your site are LOCATION and VISIBILITY. You must be visible from the road and provide easy parking for people to come and go. Make sure you have good SIGNS. Handwritten signs on bedsheets are very large, visible and freely available.

You should look for an indoor or an outdoor site that won't be affected by the weather. If you are using an outdoor site, you should try to get event tents donated for the day. See if you can use the storage location as the event site to minimize shuttling stuff from place to place.

When setting the date for your event, it is important that you decide whether you'll be interested in setting up a SPRING or a FALL event. Experience has shown that spring events have a few organizational advantages over fall events. With a more rapid turnaround, material is less likely to deteriorate and storage is more available. Additionally, you can use the same volunteer pool for both collection and the event.

A fall event, on the other hand, has the advantage of allowing you to sell your material back to incoming students. If you have a fall sale with on-campus storage, you'll want to confirm your plans with the campus summer programming office. You'll also want to talk with community leaders to check for conflicting events that would draw people away from your sale.



*step 5: day of the event*

## Possible groupings:

- Household goods
- Personal care & toiletries & cleaning
- Nonperishable Food
- Office supplies
- Holiday/Decorative
- Toys/novelties
- Clothes
- Shoes  
(tie laces together)
- Bedding & Linens
- Furniture (keep near the door)
- Dorm specialty
- Books
- Sporting goods
- Appliances & Electronics  
(fans, computers, etc.)

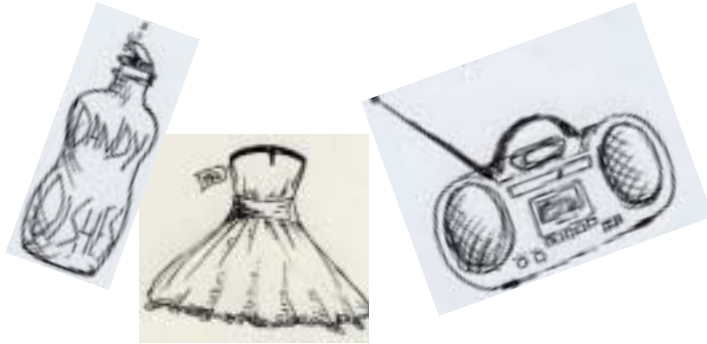


step 5: day of the event



### Be there early!

You will need as many volunteers as possible to be on the scene at least 2 hours prior to your start time. This is assuming that you already have everything set up and priced. The day of the sale you will find plenty of last minute things to keep you busy, not the least of which is holding off those early shoppers that want to come in before the official start time.



**ORGANIZE THE SALE:** You should look at the sale as a portable retail store. Appoint a manager, cashiers, department heads and security. The first two hours will be the busiest, so you will need to staff more volunteers during this time.

**START EARLY:** Yard sale shoppers, from all ages and backgrounds, will be your primary customers. As yard sales do most of their business before noon, the earlier you open the more business you will do. If at all possible, you want your sale to coincide with normal yard sale hours, from 8 or 9 am to around 3 pm.

**CREATE THE VIBE!** Your sale needs to have some energy. Supermarkets have done studies on how music keeps people in a shopping mood. Get an extension cord and set up a boom box, or arrange for a live band and make sure the tunes keep flowing. You'll be surprised to see how this inspires people to stick around. If you borrow the boom box, make sure it doesn't get sold!

**CREATE THE HYPE!** Have you ever wondered about the person standing on the side of the road wearing a bunny costume, waving at you? This is to get your attention. It works!

**MAKE SURE YOUR VOLUNTEERS ARE IDENTIFIABLE.**

Use Tee-shirts or hats to set apart your staff. They should be trained be on the alert for shoplifters and to tell shoppers where the cash register is, and how the money system works.

**HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF ENTRANCES AND EXITS.**

Follow the procedures used by large department stores to separate entrances and exits. Be sure to have the check-outs near the exits and monitor the exits to make sure shoppers have paid before leaving. Use table placement to create a flow pattern.

It's a good idea to have a price list at the register, and to conduct all money transactions in one place. You want to limit the number of volunteers who are authorized to negotiate deals.



*step 5: day of the event*

**Sale Day:**

- Spray paint "Giant Yard Sale" on big bedsheet and string it up in a visible spot perpendicular to the side of the road.
- When afternoon sales get sluggish, get a very energetic person or group of people to stand out by the road to direct traffic to your sale.
- Yard sales have a culture all their own. Yard sale shoppers love to haggle and you must be prepared for this.



step 5: day of the event

If you decide to reduce prices, reduce them gradually, throughout the day. You probably shouldn't begin to reduce prices until after 10:30 am. But remember, don't be stingy. You'll be left with all the unsold items at the end! You don't want to have to move that couch at 3 pm.

## Leftovers

Even the most successful sales have a fair amount of leftovers, especially in the clothes and housewares departments. As our goal is zero trash, the place of last resort is the landfill or incinerator.

Call potential recipients of leftovers early and often. If your sale is typical of most, your "leftovers" will include such items as designer clothing. Be sure to emphasize this to your recipient. If they do not offer pickup, find out about drop off facilities. Give this step the importance it deserves, and you will find a home for just about everything, removing an enormous amount out of the waste stream and recycling it back into the usable marketplace.

On the next page, we provide a partial list of organizations that may accept donations. Your yellow pages may have local solutions under such headings as "social and human services," "humane societies," (used towels) "shelters," "thrift stores," and "appliance repair".

For those items that you simply cannot get rid of, ask the University or College to arrange in advance for the disposal of this remaining trash.

*Just a note:* A good resource is the EPA New England Reuse Guide on the web (website listed on the next page.) Also look for the book *Choose to Reuse: An Encyclopedia of Services, Businesses, Tools & Charitable Programs that Facilitate Reuse* by Nikki and David Goldbeck.

## **Nationwide Organizations:**

### **The Salvation Army**

<http://www.salvationarmy.org/>

1-800-95-TRUCK

### **Goodwill Industries**

<http://www.goodwill.org/>

## **Organizations in New England:**

**EPA New England Reuse Guide A Resource Guide to donation opportunities for businesses, local governments, and residents**

<http://www.epa.gov/ne/assistance/reuse/index.html>

**WasteCap of Massachusetts** Statewide recycling directory online:

search under “recyclers,” “textile collections”, and “scrap metal”

<http://www.wastecap.org/>

### **Talbert Trading Co.** (rags)

Contact: Ben Mantyla 508 755-1342

PO Box 89 Milbury, Ma 01527

### **The Boston Foundation** (various)

<http://www.charityamerica.com/wcvb/charitylist.cfm>

### **Central Mass Housing Alliances Donations Clearinghouse** -

(furniture and household) 508-791-7265 ext. 22

### **Nike** (athletic shoes, any brand, under “reuse-a-shoe”)

<http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz.jhtml?page=27>



step 5: day of the event

Hot  
Tip



Have your materials boxed and bagged before groups arrive to pick them up. The more clearly labeled and organized your materials, the more materials groups are likely to accept.



*step 5: day of the event*



### **Don't forget clean-up!**

Administrators will remember if the hockey rink was left messy, and won't want to give you the site in following years.

Be sure to schedule fresh volunteers for clean-up duty.

## ***Clean-up***

Most people forget about clean-up until it hits them square on, when they are most tired and ready to go home. It is important that you schedule enough people and enough time to tidy up your sale location.

It is absolutely essential that you schedule fresh volunteers to help with clean-up. The worst scenario is where the coordinator and a few exhausted volunteers are left to clean up after a mob of morning shoppers. Fresh volunteers will give you the energy and perspective you need to get the job done.

Don't forget: you will need large bags for trash and sturdy boxes for left-overs.



# Appendices

## Appendix A

### ***Sample Sale Ad for the Newspaper***

HUGE YARD SALE – Saturday, (date)  
(Date and Day of Week), from \_\_am to \_\_pm at the  
(location). Rain or Shine! Many large items, including  
couches, dressers, desks, chairs, appliances, storage  
containers, small furniture, clothes, nonperishable food,  
lots of stuff! All proceeds to benefit nonprofit recycling  
work, and many local non-profit organizations. Please  
come out and support our sale and get a bargain too!  
For more information, please call (phone #)



## Appendix B

### ***Volunteer Descriptions***

*We are looking for volunteers to fill the following positions:*

- COLLECT ITEMS. This position involves collecting student donations. Some heavy lifting may be required. We'd also appreciate drivers and trucks to transport the collected items.
- SORT AND PRICE ITEMS. This position involves categorizing, pricing, and labeling saleable items. Retail or thrift store experience would be a real plus!
- SELL ITEMS. This position may involve staffing sale tables, answering questions, helping with purchases, etc. Anyone is welcome to volunteer for this position– volunteers with yard sale, retail, or thrift store experience would be a real plus!
- CLEAN UP. This position involves clearing the sale site of debris and preparing leftovers for pickup.

# Appendices

- Appendix A:  
*Sample Sale Ad*
- Appendix B:  
*Volunteer Descriptions*
- Appendix C:  
*Sample Press release*
- Appendix D:  
*Volunteer Agreement*



## ***Appendix C Sample Press Release***

*Date: [today's date]      Contact: [your name]*

***\*For Immediate Release\* [or Release date: ]***

*Phone: [your phone]*

**MOVE-OUT REUSE PROJECT: DORM CASTOFFS FOR CHARITY**

[Town where event will take place]. Every semester, college residence halls empty out and the dumpsters around them fill up. Some schools have tight move-out deadlines and

inevitably, some things won't fit in the car. Clothes, lamps, dressers, couches, futons, bed linens, bathroom/ kitchen items, and even computers get left behind.

[Name of institution or organizations] [has/have] turned this problem into an opportunity by hosting a unique kind of event. On [date of event], they will be [selling items/giving items away] that were donated by students moving out of their dorms in the Spring.

The [sale/giveaway] at [location], which is open to [the public/nonprofit groups], will begin at \_\_\_\_\_AM and run until \_\_\_\_\_PM. A portion of the proceeds will benefit \_\_\_\_\_. [Include something about benefiting organization here].

Since the Dump & Run® move-out reuse project was first created in 2000, hundreds of tons of material has been diverted from the trash. In addition to thousands of rescued items, over \$100,000 has been raised at sales all along the east coast of North America. The list of participating schools includes Acadia University, Bates College, Columbia University, Skidmore College, Tufts University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Pittsburgh. Nonprofits who have benefitted include Head Start, the Sierra Club, Lion's Club International and various local community groups.

Among the dumpster items, collectors see a lot of irons and ironing boards, storage crates, dry-erase boards, and lower-back support pillows. What is really surprising are the appliances in working condition that get tossed -- toaster ovens, blenders, TVs and microwaves.

Move-out projects are a great way to be conscious of waste management, aiming for a 50% diversion rate from trash to recycling. For more information, please contact [name] at [phone] or visit on the web at [web site].

###



## ***Appendix D***

### ***Volunteer Agreement***

.....

#### **VOLUNTEER LETTER OF AGREEMENT**

This agreement, made and effective (date), by and between (individual) and (institution) establishes the expectations and limitations of a move-out project “volunteer.”



A volunteer is to enter University property and to engage in activities relating to the purpose of preparing, organizing and conducting a “move-out sale” event [specific time period].

Specific activities to this end will include maintaining and emptying the pre-authorized collection boxes; collecting, sorting, and preparing donated goods for resale; and staffing a recycle sale.

By signing this document, you agree to serve as a volunteer under the following conditions:  
While engaged as a volunteer you agree to:

- 1) Be personally responsible for your own safety and health AT ALL TIMES. Know your own limitations. You agree not to lift anything beyond your capability.
- 2) Abide by all (institution) policies and regulations and to respect University property and University personnel.
- 3) Hold harmless (institution) from any and all claims or demands for injuries to persons and/or property resulting from negligence of the University and/or failure to maintain a safe environment.
- 4) In-kind compensation of volunteer hours will be decided at the sole discretion of the (volunteer organization). You agree not to take anything for personal or group use without the prior consent of the designated volunteer coordinator.

By signing below, you acknowledge you have read and understand this agreement.