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# Waste in our Cafeterias



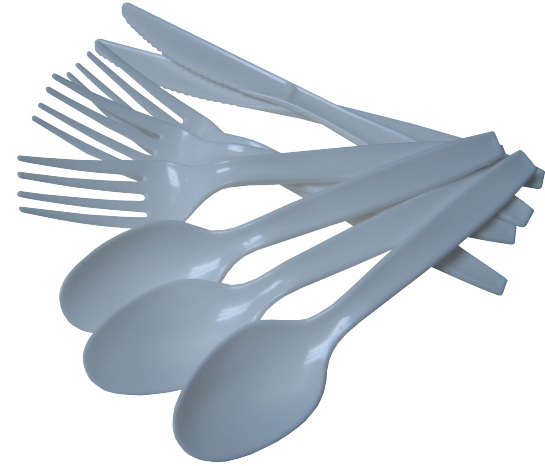
Green Team 2024-25

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# **Our Problem -**

**The middle school cafeteria waste management systems are not effective.**

- 1. Huge usage of plastic utensils and wrappers**
- 2. Ineffective waste management is costing the district a lot of money.**



**\$133,809.60**

**\$1,717.50**

YR	Month	REPUBLIC SERVICE TOTAL	RS Inv 1	RS Inv2	Aspen Waste	Total
24	Aug	\$1,436.97	\$231.41	\$1,205.56	\$9,984.41	\$11,421.38
24	Sep	\$1,072.41	\$230.30	\$842.11	\$9,974.41	\$11,046.82
24	Oct	\$1,071.27	\$229.16	\$842.11	\$9,668.68	\$10,739.95
24	Nov	\$1,445.98	\$228.42	\$1,217.56	\$9,691.44	\$11,137.42
24	Dec	\$1,069.77	\$227.66	\$842.11	\$9,612.69	\$10,682.46
25	Jan	\$1,534.73	\$267.13	\$1,267.60	\$10,200.33	\$11,735.06

**Here is an outline of utensil usage/cost:**

2023/2024 we spent \$1,717.50

That was 96 cases of forks and 133 cases of spoons

As of January 15th, 2025 we have spent \$1,183.40

That is 86 cases of forks and 108 cases of spoons

Graph

# University of Minnesota - MnTAP Waste Audit



We sorted the breakfast and lunch trash into four categories.

1. Compost
2. Recycling
3. Share Table
4. Trash

# Zero Waste Packaging Ordinance

The [Zero Waste Packaging Ordinance \(Ch. 12, Article VI\)](#) went into effect on Jan. 1, 2017, and requires that all single-use food packaging used by licensed food establishments be recyclable or compostable. This includes packaging used to serve customers on-site or taken to-go.

The ordinance applies to restaurants, bakeries, food trucks, grocery store delis and salad bars, gas stations and any other licensed food establishment. The goal of the ordinance is to reduce the amount of trash created by food and beverage packaging.

**WE ARE NOT COMPLIANT!**

Ware Type	Costs	Pros	Cons
<b>Disposables</b>	Forks .03 Trays .10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Cheap initial purchase</li> <li>▶ No maintenance necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Recurring costs to replenish</li> <li>▶ Large amount of trash</li> <li>▶ Supply chain issues hindering availability</li> <li>▶ Storage space needed for supplies</li> </ul>
<b>Compostables</b>	Forks .15 Trays .46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Environmentally friendly</li> <li>▶ No maintenance necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 3x cost over plastic disposable ware</li> <li>▶ Recurring costs to replenish</li> <li>▶ Added cost of waste disposal</li> <li>▶ Availability of composting programs</li> <li>▶ Added labor to sort at time of disposal</li> </ul>
<b>Reusables</b>	Forks .19 Trays Plastic 3.73 Trays Melamine 8.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ One-time purchase</li> <li>▶ No waste, no sorting needed</li> <li>▶ Reduces time manually washing prep ware, for net labor reduction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Labor needed for warewashing (can be reduced with use of a commercial dishmachine)</li> </ul>

# Works Cited

Magnuson, Patricia. "Email Correspondence." SLP Schools.

[St. Louis Park. "City Environment and Public Health Plan." City of St. Louis Park.](#)

Schroeder, Jon & Wikstrom, Logan. "Personal Interviews." [MNTap](#)