



## A ROADMAP TO ACHIEVE ZERO WASTE

### TRUE CERTIFICATION FOR ZERO WASTE

TRUE (Total Resource Use and Efficiency) is the first zero waste certification program dedicated to measuring, improving and recognizing zero waste performance through sustainable resource management. Administered by Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), TRUE enables facilities, portfolios, events and construction sites to define, pursue and achieve their zero waste goals, supporting decarbonization efforts and public health.

### WHAT IS ZERO WASTE?

Zero waste, a key component in the transition to a circular economy, encourages the thoughtful redesign of resource lifecycles so that all materials are reused. For every garbage can on the curb, there is 87 cans' worth of material behind it, stemming from manufacturing natural resources into finished products, such as timber, agriculture, mining and fossil fuels (LSR, 2018). This waste is a design flaw. By focusing on operational processes and purchasing decisions, facilities and organizations can realize financial benefits by designing unnecessary resource consumption out of their system.

### WHY EARN TRUE CERTIFICATION?

TRUE-certified projects divert 90% or more of their waste from landfill, incineration (waste-to-energy) and the environment, reaching a higher standard than the common "zero waste to landfill" designation. This third-party certification highlights sustainability leadership, contributes to decarbonization efforts, improves resource efficiency, and helps turn waste into savings and additional income streams.

### HOW DOES CERTIFICATION WORK?

The TRUE rating system provides a framework for projects to minimize non-hazardous, solid waste and maximize resource efficiency. TRUE focuses on redesigning internal policies and practices to reduce and reuse materials, avoiding the creation of waste in the first place.

TRUE certification is achievable for any facility, portfolio, event, or construction site, and existing TRUE-certified projects cover a myriad of industries across manufacturing, distribution, retail, agriculture, hospitality, offices and beyond. Projects achieve TRUE certification by meeting 6 minimum program requirements and attaining at least 31 out of 81 credit points on the TRUE scorecard using data that covers 12 months or more. The number of credit points earned determines the certification level: Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum. Precertification and recertification pathways are also available.

### BENEFITS OF TRUE CERTIFICATION

Implementing zero waste efforts is one of the fastest, most effective ways for businesses to not only decarbonize their supply chain and promote human health, but also to save money. Through TRUE, certified projects:

- **Reduce operational costs and improve efficiency.** TRUE identifies strategies that cut costs and generate extra revenue. Because TRUE is focused on rethinking internal procedures and implementing process efficiencies, rather than on the installation of new, potentially costly technologies, many zero waste strategies require limited financial investment.
- **Support organizational ESG, decarbonization and sustainability goals.** A zero waste strategy demonstrates leadership through transparent environmental performance and creates quantifiable greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Through third-party verified certification, organizations can confidently display their achievement.
- **Combat climate change and environmental degradation.** Materials management is associated with an estimated 42% of total greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. (EPA). TRUE projects help reduce emissions associated with resource extraction, transportation of materials, manufacturing, landfill methane and more, leading to reduced litter and pollution.
- **Support public health and social equity.** Mismanaged waste creates negative community health impacts. TRUE helps eliminate pollution in our air, water and land which threatens public health, particularly in disadvantaged and underrepresented communities. Integrating zero waste into the spaces where we live, learn, work and play has lasting benefits for the health and well-being of communities worldwide.
- **Promote a circular economy and green jobs.** TRUE guides companies towards circular thinking, where redesigning their processes and operations can eliminate or further reduce waste and save resources and money. In turn, this strengthens local economies and supports the creation of high-quality green jobs. Recycling and composting create 2 to 10 times more jobs than landfilling waste.

[Access more information at true.gbci.org](https://true.gbci.org)