

hello@ecodorm.org



Zero-Waste Move-Out & Accessible Move-In **Impact Report**

University of Southern California
2024



This report has been reviewed by a TRUE
Zero Waste Certified Advisor for accuracy.

About Us

EcoDorm started with some friends from South LA diving into dumpsters during college move-outs, taking out as many usable items as possible and donating it to local shelters.



We couldn't understand and refused to accept how so much could be thrown out despite incredible local need.

There had to be a better way, right?

Two years later, EcoDorm launched, bridging the gap for dorm essentials between move-out and move-in, eliminating waste and promoting accessibility for climate justice.

Along the way, we started South LA's only community cleanup program; our way of giving back to the community we grew up in.

We thank the team at USC Housing, Auxiliary Services, and the Office of Sustainability for believing in our mission for our first-year pilot partnership. We hope this is the beginning of a long partnership.

Baseline

At A Glance

300,000+

estimated 2023 lbs send to landfill during move-out

56%

increase in waste-hauling costs since 2017

\$1400

average cost of furnishing a dorm, with prices rising 40% since 2020

Move-Out

15

days
April 29th - May 13

43

donation boxes
Across **22** buildings
impacting **7000+** students

90%

diversion rate ^{*a}

16,394.4

estimated lbs diverted from landfill ^{*a}

23,435

NET CO2e lbs landfill emissions avoided (EPA WARM model) ^{*b}

7

AASHE STARS credits earned ^{*c}

5

student volunteers

\$40,000

estimated retail value of donations

Move-In

\$35,000

worth of savings achieved for students

900+

pop-up shop customers

7 days

pop-up shop

TBD

CO2e lbs product lifecycle emissions averted through redistribution of used goods

90%

estimated substitution rate

1

year average product lifetime extended

*a Waste Appendix



The Zero-Waste International Alliance defines Zero-Waste as programs that achieve 90% diversion rate. From what was put into our boxes, we successfully achieved a 90% diversion from landfill rate, warranting the term Zero-Waste.

- 70% EcoDorm-accepted items (diverted from landfill)
 - 5% items in irreparable condition (sent to landfill)
- 15% clothes (hailed to donation partners)
- 10% blankets (hailed to donation partners)
- 5% food that couldn't be donated (sent to landfill)

Tonnage estimation methodology:

- 40 cubic feet per box - each box was 90% full = 36 cu feet total volume per box
- We emptied each box an average of 2.3 times = 82.8 cu ft per box
- 44 boxes x 82.8 cu ft per box = 3,643.2 cu ft
- To estimate density/cu ft, we calculated the average makeup of the donations which primarily included small furniture, kitchen appliances, and clothes

Commodity Type	Sample Items	Estimated Density (lb/cu ft)
Small appliances	Microwaves, toasters, coffee makers	7–10
Small furniture	Drawer towers, shelves	5–8
Dorm accessories	Mirrors, bedding, pillows	2–4

- Assuming a mixed-material density of **4.5 lb/cu ft across 3,643.2** cubic feet of donated items. A **conservative average** would place the estimated lbs diverted at 16,394.4 lbs or 8.2 tons. This estimate is grounded in TRUE Zero Waste methodology.

*b

GHG Appendix

Material Breakdown

Material Type	% of Total Weight	Weight (lbs)	Weight (tons)
Mixed Electronics (small appliances)	35%	5,738.04	2.87
Furniture (mixed wood/metal)	25%	4,098.60	2.05
Mixed Plastics (dorm accessories)	20%	3,278.88	1.64
Textiles (pillows, bedding)	15%	2,459.16	1.23
Glass (mirrors)	5%	819.72	0.41
Total	100%	16,394.40	8.20

EPA WARM V16 Estimates

Material Type	Weight (tons)	Emission Factor (MTCO ² E/ton)	GHG Savings (MTCO ² E)
Mixed Electronics (small appliances)	2.87	1.38	3.96
Furniture (mixed wood/metal)	2.05	0.8	1.64
Mixed Plastics (dorm accessories)	1.64	1.04	1.71
Textiles (pillows, bedding)	1.23	3.41	3.41
Glass (mirrors)	0.41	0.06	0.06
Total	8.20		10.78

Our Emissions

Scope	Description	Emissions (MTCO ² E)
Scope 1 (Direct)	Donation hauling (152 miles)	0.15
Scope 2 (Indirect)	Storage electricity	0.00036
Scope 3 (Value Chain)	Equipment delivery (motor freight)	0.00090

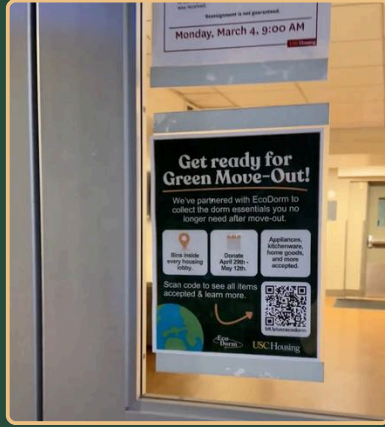
*C

AASHE STARS 3.0 Credits

EcoDorm is a student-led, university-supported initiative designed to prevent landfill waste during the high-volume dorm move-out and move-in periods. By intercepting usable items such as small appliances, furniture, and dorm accessories, EcoDorm facilitates on-campus redistribution to incoming students. The program is built around reuse, emissions tracking using EPA WARM v16, and a volunteer infrastructure that empowers students to lead and participate in tangible zero waste action.

Indicator	Credit Description
OP 11.1 Surplus and Reuse Programs	EcoDorm captures surplus personal items and redistributes them within USC, reducing waste hauling and promoting circular material use.
OP 11.3 Electronic Waste Management	Items such as microwaves, air fryers, and coffee machines were reused or responsibly processed.
OP 12.1 Waste per Person	The initiative reduced total dorm waste per capita and square meter during move-out. This program can be incorporated into USC's campus-wide waste metrics to support this credit.
OP 12.3 % Diverted from Disposal	Approximately 8.2 tons of material were diverted from landfill, based on volume-to-weight EPA conversion. This represents a significant contribution toward USC's overall diversion goals.
AC 4: Solutions-focused Applied Learning	Students participated in the logistics, data collection, volunteer management, and GHG calculations for the initiative.
AC 4: Multi-Unit Collaboration	The project involved coordination between Housing, Auxiliary Services, Sustainability, and student organizations.
EN 2.2 Sustainability-Focused Events & Peer-to-Peer Learning	Move-Out and Move-In served as high-impact sustainability events with visibility across residence halls. Volunteers educated peers on donation guidelines and the zero waste mission of the program.

Move-Out Pics



Summer Pics



Move-In Pics



Let's Do This Again



8.2 tons of donations collected. 10.62 metric tons of CO²E avoided. Thousands of students impacted.

One tiny team.

Together, we proved that circular systems aren't just possible —they're practical.

Thank you for the chance to pilot our idea on your campus.
Let's stay in the loop for your future move-out needs!
(pun very much intended)

**Siempre,
EcoDorm.org
hello@ecodorm.org**