



ZERO WASTE FACILITY CERTIFICATION
PROCESS
2021



INTRODUCING ZERO WASTE

Zero Waste today represents a growing global movement involving businesses, policymakers and communities reacting to an ever-increasing scarcity of resources and loss of value, resulting from an unprecedented rate of consumption on a global scale. Our current make-use-dispose model has brought us into ecological deficit, as globally, we consume more resources each year than what our natural environment has the time to regenerate.

Zero Waste has emerged as a systemic response to this challenge, the founding principle of which is that there is no such thing as waste, but merely a mismanagement of resources. A Zero Waste strategy goes beyond mere diversion away from landfill through recycling, looking for a concrete and progressive reduction in total waste generation as its core objective.

ZERO WASTE CANADA

[Zero Waste Canada](#) is a non-profit organization and the Canadian national affiliate of the [Zero Waste International Alliance](#) (ZWIA). The ZWIA is the governing body for Zero Waste on the global stage, overseeing the Zero Waste certification of facilities and communities, as well as furthering the concept of Zero Waste by disseminating the International [Zero Waste Definition & Hierarchy](#).

ZERO WASTE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE





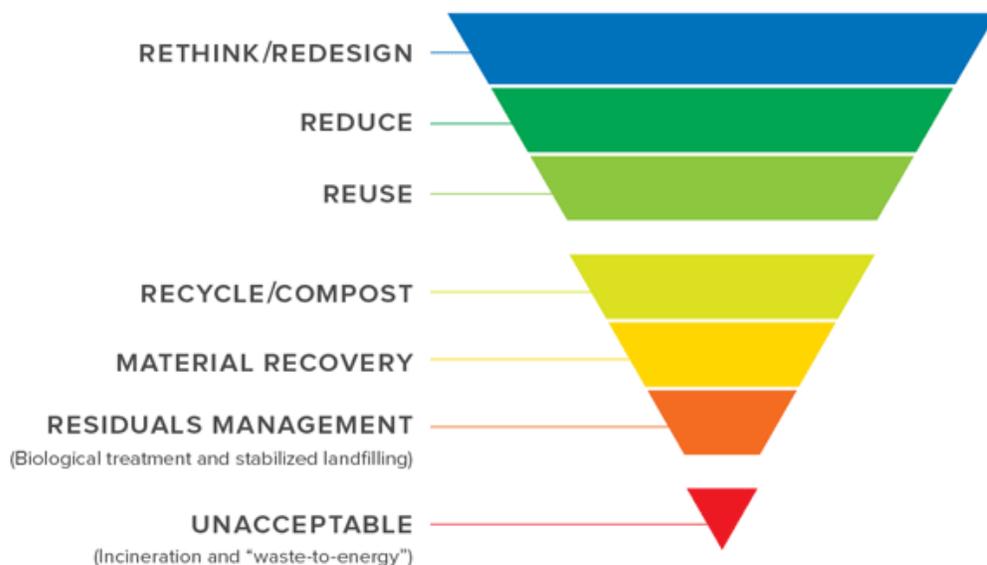
THE INTERNATIONAL ZERO WASTE DEFINITION

“Zero Waste: The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.”

The Zero Waste International Alliance
Last updated December 20th, 2018

THE INTERNATIONAL ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY

THE ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY 7.0



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PURPOSE

The Zero Waste Hierarchy describes a progression of policies and strategies to support the Zero Waste system, from highest and best to lowest use of materials. It is designed to be applicable to all audiences, from policy-makers to industry and the individual. It aims to provide more depth to the internationally recognized 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle); to encourage policy, activity and investment at the top of the hierarchy; and to provide a guide for those who wish to develop systems or products that move us closer to Zero Waste. It enhances the Zero Waste definition by providing guidance for planning and a way to evaluate proposed solutions.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Rethink/Redesign	What has led us to our present linear use of materials and thus, what needs to evolve to move towards a closed loop model? How do we re- design systems to avoid needless and/or wasteful consumption?
Reduce	What supports the use of less material and less toxic material?
Reuse	What supports the better use of those products we already have in ways that retain the value, usefulness and function?
Recycle/Compost	How do we ensure materials are put back in the materials cycle?
Material Recovery	What was salvaged from mixed waste?
Residuals Management	What is still left and why? What do we need to take out of the system that should not have been circulated in the first place? How do we manage what is left in a flexible manner that continues to encourage movement towards Zero Waste?
Unacceptable	What systems and policies encourage wasting and should not occur?

Adopted by ZWIA Board November 19, 2020



BECOME ZERO WASTE CERTIFIED

A Zero Waste facility is a facility that has been certified as following internationally accepted Zero Waste policies and practices.

The process begins by analyzing and understanding your resource use, in order to introduce a system of feedback that will inform targeted actions. The Zero Waste Facility Certification process offers formal validation of the efforts of responsible facilities, thus also serving the larger purpose of differentiating genuine and documented applications of the term “Zero Waste” from inconsistent or misleading ones.

- The first and only facility certification program for Zero Waste formally recognized by the Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA).
- To guide communities, organizations, and businesses towards the top of the Zero Waste hierarchy and ensure they do not stumble into false solutions such as burning waste for energy.
- This **Zero Waste Facility Certification** has four levels, and can be applied to any type of building, or facility such as office, warehouse, restaurant, community centre etc. as long as it has a fiscal location.
 - Prior to pursuing any level of certification, a facility must first be recognized with “On The Road To Zero Waste” recognition status by Zero Waste Canada.
 - Each level is a steppingstone towards the next.
 - The Certification is inclusive rather than exclusive. It has been designed to be accessible and achievable for all types of business, no matter where they are currently at with their Zero Waste journey.
 - Everything is constructive when it comes to Zero Waste. Zero Waste Canada wants to be ambitious, but we are also realistic.
 - It’s all about the journey, the process of moving in the direction of Zero Waste.



IMMEDIATE BENEFITS

- **Environmental Performance** – achieving internationally recognized standards for Zero Waste.
- **Economic Performance** – Uncovering opportunities for avoided costs via product re-use policies, material substitution/elimination, waste hauling fees and purchasing expenses.
- **Impact Measurement** – Achieving a superior understanding of the financial, environmental and social impact of facility resource use via the establishment of an internal system of metrics and feedback.
- **People & Culture** – Redefining the role and value of facility employees as educators when communicating with colleagues, suppliers, investors, partners and patrons alike.
- **Facility Claims** – Authorization to feature Zero Waste Canada's ON THE ROAD TO ZERO WASTE badge, and ultimately, its ZERO WASTE CERTIFIED badge.
- **Credibility** – Achieving formal third-party verification and recognition of Zero Waste efforts via Zero Waste Canada.
- **Facility Experience** – A unique values-based relationship with those engaging with the facility (from patrons, clients and service providers, to employees and visitors alike), reflecting the mission, vision and values of the wider organization.
- **Exposure** – Name and website featured across all Zero Waste Canada communication channels with its wider community, members, and the general public (including website, social media, newsletters, educational material, media and outreach), as well as via the Zero Waste International Alliance.
- **Media** – Dedicated press release on behalf of Zero Waste Canada.
- **Membership** – Zero Waste Canada membership.



PROCESS

STEP 1 - REGISTER

Complete the registration form on the [ZWC website](#) by clicking the **Step 1 symbol**. Note, your registration will be considered complete upon ZWC receiving both your registration form and payment. Once your registration is complete, your organization will receive the required documents such as the Zero Waste Facility Certification Guide, which outlines all criteria to be met for ON THE ROAD and Silver, Gold, and Platinum Certification.

STEP 2 – APPLY

Submit an application for ON THE ROAD TO ZERO WASTE recognition, the first step in the certification program. You can submit your form on the [ZWC website](#) by clicking the **Step 2 symbol**.



As a facility works towards certification, they may be formally recognized with ON THE ROAD TO ZERO WASTE recognition status

This acknowledges that a facility has the core structures in place that will enable it to work towards ZERO WASTE & Certification

By meeting the recognition criteria facilities are able to demonstrate their acknowledgement of the challenge, and their commitment towards addressing it.

In order to apply you will need to provide information and documents as evidence to support you meet all the criteria for ON THE ROAD TO ZERO WASTE criteria alongside your facility's corresponding application fee. Once ZWC has received your application form and fee, you will be provided a link to a secured folder to submit all paperwork and supporting evidence.

If you have any technical questions, you may email certification@zerowastecanada.ca.



STEP 3 – ON THE ROAD TO ZERO WASTE RECOGNITION REVIEW & EVALUATION

During this step Zero Waste Canada will review the submitted documents to verify the information is accurate and that all criteria has been met by the facility to receive official recognition by Zero Waste Canada and subsequently the Zero Waste International Alliance.

STEP 4 - CERTIFY

Following the achievement of ON THE ROAD to Zero Waste recognition status, the process towards Zero Waste Certification may begin.

ZERO WASTE CERTIFICATION consists of three distinct levels of performance: SILVER, GOLD and PLATINUM.



A **SILVER LEVEL** performance represents the base level of certification, certifying that a facility has successfully enacted Zero Waste policies internally, at every organizational level within their facility.



A **GOLD LEVEL** performance certifies that a facility has maintained and gone beyond the base level requirements of SILVER LEVEL ZERO WASTE CERTIFICATION, by expanding the reach of its internal Zero Waste policies within its wider operational reach (this may involve other organizational branches, partners, service providers, suppliers, patrons or other entities interacting directly with the facility and its operations, but who remain external to the facility itself).



A **PLATINUM LEVEL** performance certifies that a facility has maintained and gone beyond both the base level requirements of SILVER LEVEL ZERO WASTE CERTIFICATION, and the wider implications of GOLD LEVEL ZERO WASTE CERTIFICATION, by further expanding the reach of its Zero Waste policies beyond the facility itself and its direct operational influence, by directly engaging the wider community in which it operates. A PLATINUM LEVEL performance certifies a genuine commitment towards Zero Waste from a larger societal perspective, where the facility actively advocates for wider systemic change towards Zero Waste, and in so doing, offering a living example of how Zero Waste is ultimately about much more than just waste.



At this step you must also submit a new application for the facility or facilities you are applying to certify. You can submit your form on the [ZWC website](#) by clicking the **Step 4 symbol**.

Similar to the ON THE ROAD, in order to apply you will need to provide information and documents as evidence to support you meet all the criteria for desired certification level alongside your facility's corresponding application fee. Once ZWC has received your application form and fee, you will be provided a link to another secured folder to submit all paperwork and supporting evidence.

STEP 5 – ZERO WASTE FACILITY CERTIFICATION REVIEW & EVALUATION

During this stage, Zero Waste Canada will conduct a pre-review of your application, and a Third-Party Verifier will conduct an On-site Assessment to verify the documentation submitted is accurate. After this a final review will be conducted by Zero Waste Canada and upon passing a Zero Waste Facility Certification will be rewarded.

STEP 6 - RECERTIFY

Zero Waste Canada requires facilities to continue to improve their Zero Waste commitment as such there is a renewal process required. This portion of the process allows a facility to acknowledge that they are maintaining their status or improving their Zero Waste initiatives.

The process to recertify involves submitting some of the criteria documents annually along with a renewal fee. The criteria required for renewal is explained in more detail within the Zero Waste Facility Certification Guide.

Please note for the ON THE ROAD recognition status an organization has a minimum three-year time frame to achieve the level of certification that they are aiming for once the ON THE ROAD to Zero Waste recognition status has been awarded. If renewing their ON THE ROAD status for a third year and the facility has still not applied for or achieved certification then the organization will lose their recognition status. The organization will be able to re-apply, however there will be stricter criteria and timelines, which are highlighted in more detail in the Zero Waste Facility Guide.

Further details pertaining to the required timelines to maintain or upgrade the current Zero Waste Facility Certification Level can also be found within the Zero Waste Facility Certification Guide.