

Baseline Performance Calculation

This information will help a business set goals and measure improvements that can be shared with customers and employees.

Solid Waste Generation

The amount of solid waste your business generates can be determined by reviewing the size of your containers, how often they are emptied, and where the materials are taken. Most waste in Wisconsin is taken to landfills for disposal. Materials that are recycled will most likely be taken to a Material Recovery Facility to be sorted and sold to manufacturers as raw materials.

To calculate the volume of materials:

1. Determine size of waste or recycling containers (dumpsters).
2. How many times per week are the containers emptied?
3. To determine annual volume multiply container size X times per week emptied X 52 weeks.



You can also refer to a service contract with your hauler or past billing statements to determine the amount of waste your business is generating. In some cases you bill will have only one line item for all services, but the bill may also have separate fees for hauling, container rental, and/ or disposal.

As you begin to reduce the volume of waste your business generates or recycle more material, you will want to evaluate your collection schedule. If your garbage container is not full when it is emptied, you may be able to reduce the number of pick-ups. Fewer pick-ups should translate into lower solid waste costs. The materials your business recycles also have a value. Talk with your service provider about the value of the materials that you recycle and see if you can share in the revenue they generate.

Energy Consumption

Most energy suppliers will be able to provide you with your energy use for the past 12 to 24 months. In some cases your provider may offer access to account information via a website. You can also refer to past bills you have received. Energy bills will provide you with the kWh (kilowatt hours) of electricity used and/or Therms of natural gas you have used. In most cases the supplier of electricity will be the same as your natural gas, but there are some communities that have different suppliers for these energy products. The same will hold true if your business uses heating oil or propane (LPG).

With staff in Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee and Stevens Point, SHWEC has been providing quality environmental education and technical assistance throughout Wisconsin since 1990. To contact a SHWEC Specialist go to

www.shwec.uwm.edu.

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Vehicle fuel usage (diesel and gasoline) can be determined by reviewing past bills. You may also be able to calculate usage by reviewing maintenance records for your vehicles. If you know the miles driven per year and the miles per gallon for each vehicle you should be able to reasonably estimate fuel consumption.

Water Consumption

Businesses with Public Water supply

If your business purchases water from a water utility you should be able to review past bills to determine annual water use. Water utilities generally bill on a monthly or quarterly basis. Water use is determined by a water meter and is typically measured in “cubic feet.”

Businesses with Private Wells

If your business draws its water from a private well there may not be a water meter in place to measure water use. If there is not a meter on your water system there are methods you can use to estimate water consumption by your business. The Wisconsin Department of Commerce has developed a method to estimate water usage by various businesses that is typically used to estimate wastewater flows for wastewater treatment system. For the purposes of completing the Travel Green baseline data the table should provide a reasonable estimate of water consumption. The table is found in *s. Comm 83 Appendix, Table A-83.43-1 Public Facility Wastewater Flows*. The values in the table are in gallons per day and you will need to multiply your daily water use times the number of days the business is open.

If your business uses a significant volume of water it may be beneficial to have a water meter installed on your water supply. The meter will enable you to measure the outcome of water conservation efforts your business may implement.

Helpful conversion factors:

1 Therm = Cubic Feet of Natural Gas

1 Cubic foot of Water = 7.48 Gallons

1 Cubic yard = 27 cubic feet

MPG or Miles per gallon = Miles traveled/Gallons of Fuel used