

## ZERO WASTE ZONES

A Division of Elemental Impact in collaboration with the National Restaurant Association

The Zero Waste Zones program launched in February 2009 at an acclaimed press conference led by the Acting Regional Director of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV. The program communicates a clear message of commitment to sustainability through a strategic media plan, including metrics of diverted assets from landfill.

With the NRA collaboration, ZWZ are embarking upon a national expansion program.

### ZWZ Leadership:

**Chair:** Laura Turner Seydel

- Holly Elmore, ZWZ Director & Elemental Impact Founder
- Chris Moyer, Foodservice Advisor and NRA Conserve Program Director
- Susan Montgomery, ZWZ Program Director

### ZWZ: A Revenue Generator:

The ZWZ program is a financial winner for our company. It differentiates us, and in the realm of luxury catering, where exciting food is increasingly a commodity, differentiation is what it's about. We have already experienced well over \$165,000 in sales made almost exclusively because we are a responsible caterer who "walks the talk" of sustainable practices.

*Patrick Cuccaro, General Manager  
Affairs to Remember Caterers*

## The Atlanta pioneers share their ZWZ experiences:

### It was Easy ~ Thank You:

Thank you for how easy you made it for us to accomplish some of the most challenging of our remaining sustainability goals. I can't express how beneficial this was in accelerating our ability to meet not just your challenge, but to address a serious need in the community and our internal goal of finding a productive, sustainable use for our food waste. Your support for our recycling efforts and the recognition we have received through our mutual efforts, are very much appreciated. Thanks for paving the way.


*Randy Childers, Senior Director of Engineering  
Hyatt Regency Atlanta*

### Employee Enthusiasm:

It was amazing to see how the entire staff got behind the ZWZ initiative. Many of our staff members volunteered their support and experience to spearhead the efforts in their own restaurants. Both management and staff got excited about the opportunity and it seemed to bring an additional level of pride to their daily work.

*Paul Baldasaro, C.O.O.  
Buckhead Life Restaurant Group*

**Susan Montgomery, ZWZ Program Director,  
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[www.zerowastezones.org](http://www.zerowastezones.org)**

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Reduce waste & costs  
Recycle the recyclable  
**Divert & compost**  
Donate excess food &  
**reduce your waste to**

zero 

The foodservice industry is the second-largest private sector industry in the nation.

The industry's impact on the environment is tremendous and the amount of organic matter, including food waste, that goes to landfills is unacceptable.

**According to the EPA, organic waste in our landfills is the number one source of man-made methane in the United States. Methane is a greenhouse gas 20 to 25 times more potent than naturally-occurring carbon dioxide.**

**The time is NOW to stop sending food waste and organic matter to landfills.**

**Learn how to join or create a Zero Waste Zone: visit [www.zerowastezones.org](http://www.zerowastezones.org). or call 404-626-2267.**

The ZWZ goal is to divert the maximum amount of recyclable items and organic matter from landfills and back into the production cycle. The ZWZ Team:

**Educates** on the difference between waste and product and the importance of reducing material hauled to landfills.  
**Determines** characteristics of current material hauled to the landfill and which ones may be recycled or composted.  
**Provides** supplier referrals to meet criteria.  
**Assists** with training programs for changes in standard operating practices.  
**Promotes** ZWZ participants to the media.

#### **What are the Benefits of ZWZ Participation?**

**Revenue Retention/Generation:** customers are demanding eco-friendly operating practices.

**Cost Savings:** meeting ZWZ criteria has proven to be cost-neutral and in many instances results in cost-savings.

**Employee Morale:** staff members are eager to work with management on changing operating practices and take pride in working for an eco-friendly business.

**It's the Right Thing to Do:** treating the earth and its natural resources with respect is operating a business with integrity.

#### **Heading Towards Zero Waste:**

**"We contribute less trash in a week than a typical household of four even though we feed two to three thousand people."**

*Steve Simon, Partner  
Fifth Group Restaurants*

#### **ZWZ Criteria**

ZWZ Participants pledge to implement and maintain the following criteria:

- Spent grease is collected for the production of bio-fuel.
- Common recyclables (cardboard, paper, glass, plastic and metals) are collected for recycling.
- Excess food is donated in accordance with the Good Samaritan Food Donation Act.
- Food residuals, from preparation and service, and excess food not compliant with the Food Donation Act are collected for composting or other approved destinations. Note all destinations must meet state regulations.
- Participation in the ZWZ Metrics Tool.

Meeting ZWZ Criteria is broken down into Phases so there is minimal-to-no disruption in operations. ZWZ Champions lead the charge and are eager to help their fellow operators meet the ZWZ Criteria simply, easily and cost-effectively.

#### **A Cost-Saving Solution:**

**By joining the Zero Waste Zones we were given an easy and cost-saving solution for food waste composting. We have fewer and lighter compactor pulls since there is no smell from decomposing food in the compactor. The process was easy and our employees feel good about helping the environment.**

*David Rossman, General Manager  
Doubletree Atlanta-Buckhead*