

Project: Pipette Recycling

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Description: One time use disposables are ubiquitous in scientific research. Many of these disposable items are actually recyclable, but recycling streams in laboratories are still poorly adopted or ignored. For example, most pipette tip boxes are sent to landfills after sterilization. Here at Tufts, I propose the establishment of a recycling stream for the non-hazardous pipette tip boxes we are currently sending to landfills. A local Boston-based company called GreenLabs Recycling provides services to recycle pipette tip boxes. Pipette tip boxes are one of the most prevalent lab-generated plastic waste items. Even if pipette tip boxes make their way to a recycling facility, they are often sorted out into the trash because they are identified as medical waste. GreenLabs Recycling is solving this problem by providing a local and cost-effective recycling option for research facilities. They are already servicing several Boston schools such as MIT, BU, Harvard, and Brandeis. The primary cost for implementation of this proposal will go toward the service of collection pickup at a centralized location. In addition, this program will allow us to report how much waste we are diverting from landfills - valuable information for public communications about sustainability at Tufts. **People Involved:** Tufts Facilities would need to be involved to help centralize a collection station. We would need the cooperatively of wet labs that utilize pipette tip boxes from departments in engineering and arts and sciences.

Budget: After contacting Green Labs Recycling there will be flat fees for the cost of pickups. Based on the number of collection boxes we request and the number of locations for pickup the fees can change. I have not received word from GreenLabs about their fees yet. However, given the opportunity to advance to the next stage, a budget will be outlined.

Timeline: Contact GreenLabs Recycling to determine options collection pickups and coordinate with Tufts Facilities to determine best location for collection bins. Bins will be collected from GreenLabs Recycling on a periodic schedule.

Benefit to Tufts Community: Research Labs at Tufts produce several forms of plastic waste. This is often a moral conundrum for many researchers since we cause environmental harm while trying to advance our research. This program can help decrease the amount of plastic that ends up in landfill caused by scientific research.