



# Capital Metro

*Solid Waste Services started the WasteSMART program to recognize local businesses that reduce and recycle waste and buy recycled products...*

### The Story

Capital Metro is Austin's public transportation system established in 1985. Capital Metro provides bus service on flexible, convenient schedules at more than 3,000 bus stops throughout Central Texas. Its fixed route bus service includes 53 metro routes, eight Express routes and 20 UT shuttle routes. Capital Metro also offers 56 AISD school routes, van and carpooling coordination, shuttles to special events and special transit services for the elderly and disabled. Recognizing that their industry has an impact on the environment, Capital Metro has taken significant steps to minimize its waste output and increase its recycling participation.

### How They Do It

Capital Metro is reducing waste by buying sustainable products and encouraging employees to recycle a variety of items.

Capital Metro regularly recycles:

- All paper products
- Corrugated cardboard
- Wood pallets
- Scrap metal
- Aluminum cans
- Plastics #1 and #2
- Motor oil
- Water from bus washes
- Scrap electronics

All recycling bins are clearly labeled to help employees know exactly which types of material go into which containers. Any containers that have problems with contamination are identified so the problem can be corrected. Capital Metro has also adopted a written purchasing policy for recycled-content products.

### Above and Beyond

Capital Metro has developed an educational campaign about the value of recycling and how to do it on-site. Through the "Clean Up Your Act" campaign, they communicated their message with emails and posters. Capital Metro is currently expanding the program to include a quarterly environmental e-newsletter, which will have tips and tricks for home and office recycling as well as performance statistics for the program.

### Ride the Green Bus

Capital Metro's maintenance department tracks the weight of waste and recycled materials. In January 2009, the first month of their recycling program, Capital Metro captured 2,225 pounds of paper—more than had been recycled the previous January. Capital Metro's desire to mitigate any harmful impact of its operations extends to every area of its business. From participating in the GreenChoice renewable energy program to adding hybrid busses and cars to its fleet, Capital Metro is greening mass transit.