

ReWorksSA

Certification Guide



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Program Profile

ReWorksSA is a division of the Solid Waste Management Department and is one of the San Antonio’s Climate Initiatives as sponsored by the Office of Sustainability. San Antonio businesses that earn the ReWorksSA certification will be recognized as one of the elite organizations leading the commercial sustainability movement in San Antonio as our City experiences tremendous growth. ReWorksSA is a program designed to help the local business community begin or improve sustainability best practices in the workplace.

Introduction

Welcome to the Certification Guide. Here you can learn about: i.) the certification process; ii.) standards required to achieve certification; iii.) rewards for each tier of certification; and, iv.) the application and verification process. The levels are Bronze, Silver, Gold and the Pinnacle Award. We’re ready to help if you have any questions.

How it Works

We have identified a series of sustainability best practices in the areas of recycling programs, energy and water conservation, transportation policies and environmental policies. Each of these best practices has certification point values. Each tier has a minimum of points to earn. We will help you find them – often we see opportunities that people overlook. Remember, we **want** you to succeed.

Certification Standards

Each practice has a point value from one to five based on how challenging it is to implement. There is one mandatory practice, a recycling program, and also multiple elective practices. Businesses must implement the mandatory practice and enough elective practices to earn the points needed for each tier.

Certification has value and therefore does require effort. Documentation is a critical component of accruing points.

ReWorksSA was designed to help all types of businesses, across different industries with scalable options for large enterprises, small shops and non-profit organizations. There are a total 45 best practices (one mandatory and 44 elective) to choose from and 200 available points to earn. This matrix provides businesses a robust selection of relevant activities that are applicable to their unique profile.

Mandatory Practice

ReWorksSA started in 2018 with a focus only on recycling programs. That remains a fundamental element of the program and is the required practice for every tier of sustainability certification. Either a recycling program or a composting program qualifies. If your organization has both, you get extra points in the elective practices section.

Elective Practices

The range of categories for elective practices to choose from is broad. Proper signage, training, purchasing and take-back programs, as well conservation and donation programs are only a few examples. Many of these are attainable even if you lease your business location space as a tenant and may not be able to control some sustainability initiatives. The full list of elective practices is included in the Appendix.

Innovative Practices

What can we learn from you? If your company has a unique way of reducing your carbon footprint, we want to know. There are opportunities for additional points for innovations in sustainability you have implemented that are not already on the list.



Certification Rewards





As referenced earlier, there are Bronze, Silver and Gold certification levels and the Pinnacle Award for companies that have made sustainability their highest priority. Bronze certification is designed for businesses that are new to recycling with modest but solid waste reduction and recycling programs. Silver and Gold are proportionately more challenging to achieve, and the Pinnacle Award is one of the most prestigious designations the City can bestow. Your efforts deserve recognition which is our promise to you.

Rewards by Certification Tier



Each tier must include a specified number of points for recycling	45 Total Points	55 Total Points	65 Total Points	85 Total Points
Official Certificate	1	1	1	1
Certification Window Decal	1	1	1	1
Digital Logo Package	1	1	1	1
Recognition on ReWorksSA.org	1	1	1	1
Framed Official Certificate		1	1	1
Thank You Letter from City Leadership		1	1	1
Gold Certification Plaque			1	
Dedicated Spotlight Page on ReWorksSA.org			1	1
Pinnacle Award Trophy				1
Business location presentation event by the Solid Waste Department and the Office of Sustainability and a framed commemorative photo				1



Annual recognition event for all Pinnacle companies as partners in climate action hosted by City Leadership				
Reference on the Office of Sustainability Website				
Reference in the Solid Waste Department's Annual Report				
Display advertising in local business publication				

Steps to Certification

Certifications are valid for two years and then a business can apply for recertification. The process can be broken down into these four steps.

Start at ReWorksSA.org

The application for certification is online. Follow the links to 'Get Certified.' Once you create your account, you are on our radar and we'll follow-up to get the process going.

Complete an Application

Here you may tell us about your sustainability programs and strategies. Select the practices you currently have implemented and make commentary where applicable. Once you have completed your application, a notification will be automatically sent to the ReWorksSA team. You are officially in the pipeline.

Pass a Site Inspection

Expect to hear from the ReWorksSA team within three business days. We will schedule a site visit for verification and walk you through any additional documentation and information needed to verify your application. Leading up to this visit, we're available for assessments, consultations and other helpful conversations.

Shortly after the site visit, we discuss our notes internally and will then be able to tell you the results for certification. If the implementation of certain practices at your business do not meet the program standards, we will help you develop a plan for meeting those standards.

Get Rewarded

When you earn certification, we begin preparing your rewards. Some will be sent to you directly while others require scheduling and coordination. Certain rewards take a little time to create such as the custom plaques and trophies and content management at the website.



Decertification

As stated, certification expires after a period of two years. However, to protect the integrity of the certification brand, the City of San Antonio, the Solid Waste Management Department, (SWMD), and the Office of Sustainability (OS), there are certain circumstances in which certification may be revoked before it expires.

Core Recycling Programs

If the SWMD learns a ReWorksSA certified organization has ceased to practice their qualifying recycling program or otherwise failed to meet the standards in place during the verification process, the SWMD may revoke certification early.

Other Standards

If the SWMD learns a ReWorksSA certified organization is in significant violation of any city, state, or federal regulations (e.g. nonpayment of taxes or fines, noncompliance with environmental regulations, etc.), the SWMD may revoke certification early.

Recertification

If an organization has had their certification revoked in these circumstances, it will be ineligible for recertification for a period of two years.

Contact Us

If you need help navigating any part of the process, the ReWorksSA team is ready to help.

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Appendix: Best Practices

Recycling

#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
1	Addressing Most Abundant Wastes	Explain how you reduce, reuse, or recycle four of your most abundant wastes.	A restaurant donates excess food to the food bank, recycles cardboard through their hauler, and recycles plastic film through a mail-in program.	1-4¹
2	Recycling and Compost Program	Your organization has regular collection of both recyclable and organic materials.	You have contracted collection services for recyclable and organic materials (food scraps, food soiled paper, etc.).	5
3	Recycling Signage and Bin Convenience for Employees²	Signage is provided on recycling and compost bins, is easy to identify, and consistent throughout employee areas of the facility.	Recycling bins in employee break rooms, conference rooms, and printer areas have bins with the recycling symbol printed on them.	2-6
4	Recycling Signage for Customers³	Signage is provided on recycling and compost bins, is easy to identify, and consistent throughout areas of the facility where customers are permitted.	Recycling bins in lobbies, show rooms, retail, or dining areas have bins with the recycling symbol printed on them.	2-6
5	Avoid Disposables	Your organization does not provide disposable cups, dishware or tableware. Instead, reusable tableware or dishware and cleaning facilities are provided.	Employees are encouraged to use reusable mugs, reusable water bottles, and a dishwasher (for cleaning dishware). A restaurant uses refillable condiment containers instead of individual packets.	4
6	Communication and Support Structure	Your organization has designated a specific person or group responsible for running the recycling and compost program.	A volunteer employee led Green Team manages the recycling program and communication about your recycling goals.	4
7	Communication Systems⁴	Recycling and compost program goals, guidelines, and updates are communicated to employees regularly (at least once per quarter).	A Green Captain maintains a bulletin board of monthly goals to reduce waste. Your EHS Manager sends out quarterly updates about diversion strategies that create cost savings.	4

¹One point is awarded for each of the top four most abundant wastes identified in application for which the business has adopted a reduce, reuse, and/or recycle strategy.

²A recycling or composting logo is worth one point. Images (or images and text) of accepted materials and “Recycling Only” or “Food Waste Only” labels is worth two points. One additional point can be earned if all text on the signage is in both English and another language.

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⁴Communication about recycling or compost recovery must take place at least once per quarter to be eligible for these points. Company-wide emails, newsletters, digital signage and other forms of communication meet the eligibility requirement for these points.



#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
8	New Employee Training Program	New employees are trained on proper recycling and compost collection when hired.	Your company has a policy or training document that new employees must be informed of how to properly bale cardboard.	4
9	Employee Training Program or Certifications	One or more employees (or the organization as a whole) have successfully completed courses or have current certification directly relating to waste management.	A restaurant employee completes a training course about best practices for eliminating food waste in the kitchen and receives a certificate. Your EHS Manager receives an individual ISO 14001 certification to ensure your company complies with ISO 14001 standards.	5
10	Environmental Purchasing Policy⁵	Your organization has a written Environmental Purchasing Policy (EPP) in place.	A restaurant has a policy to purchase dishware made from recycled plastic. An office has a policy to purchase recycled paper for printing.	4
11	Take-Back Opportunities	You purchase from one or more suppliers who pick up used materials or used packaging material from previous orders for re-use or recycling.	An office repackages printer cartridges to be sent back to the supplier. A retail store receives merchandise on reusable pallets or crates that are returned to the supplier.	1-5
12	Bulky or Durable Materials Diversion	The organization ensures equipment or furniture is refurbished, reused or donated to charitable organizations.	A property manager stores old furniture for reuse by tenants. A retail store refurbishes equipment for reuse or auction to local customers.	1-5
13	Food or Clothing Donations	Your organization has a policy ensuring excess food or clothing is donated rather than being disposed.	A grocery store donates excess food to the local food bank. A retail store donates excess clothing to local shelters.	4

⁵The EPP must be in place (in writing) and effective at the time of the verification visit and include standards for purchasing materials with some post-consumer content to be eligible for these points.



#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
14	Recycling or Compost Availability at Events	Events held at or sponsored by your organization provide recycling or compost services. Or, your organization hosts a sustainable event that has a positive impact on the environment. (Does not apply to events covered by the City's Green Event Ordinance.)	<p>You contract services for recycling and food waste to be collected at off-site company events.</p> <p>You provide supplemental recycling or compost services for events held at your organization.</p> <p>A business hosts a clean up area event.</p> <p>A business hosts a tree give-away event.</p>	5
15	Building Owner or Property Manager Recycling or Compost Programs	Your organization provides recycling or compost services to tenants. Or your organization accepts recyclable or organic materials from other organizations to divert waste from the landfill.	<p>A property manager provides recycling dumpsters at every trash location in a shopping center.</p> <p>An office allows nearby businesses to use their large recycling container.</p>	5
16	Other Practice	Your organization has implemented a resource recovery practice that has not yet been mentioned.	Anything not covered in the practices above.	2-5
Total Points Available				75



Transportation

#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
1	Commuting Policy	Your organization has a commuting policy for your employees.	A business has a commuting policy that encourages employees to use sustainable transportation (e.g. walking or biking to lunch, using alternative modes of transportation for off-site meetings, enabling remote meetings and remote work).	1-5
2	Alternative Transportation	Your organization has employees that are actively engaged in using alternative transportation to get to and from work.	<p>A business tracks/documents the number and the percentage of employees who use alternative sustainable transportation to and from work.</p> <p>A business has had a consultation with a transportation industry expert.</p> <p>A business has a survey/analysis report about their alternate transportation.</p> <p>A business promotes organizations like <i>Alamo Commutes</i> and invites them to consult with employees on their daily route and allows <i>Alamo Commutes</i> to monitor travel patterns.</p>	1-5
3	Carbon Offsetting	Your organization has a travel policy that incorporates carbon offsetting programs.	<p>A business uses a program like <i>The Good Traveler</i> to offset emissions from flights.</p> <p>A business uses <i>Terrapass, Native</i> or <i>Myclimate</i> to offset emissions from its fleet.</p> <p>A business uses alternate modes of transportation for meetings within the city.</p>	1-5
4	Sustainable Transportation Support Systems	Your organization has sustainable transportation support systems or equipment.	<p>A business has EV charging stations at their location.</p> <p>A business has bike or scooter storage areas with security systems in place.</p> <p>A business has locker room or shower facilities for employees to change and refresh.</p>	1-5



#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
5	Customer or Employee Incentives	Your organization offers employees or customers incentives for reducing local commutes.	A business has a partnership with VIA to provide discounted bus passes for their employees to ride the bus to and from work. Local bike shops provide discounts for your employees.	1-5
6	Company Car or Fleet	Your organization has a company car or fleet that relies less on fossil fuels.	A business uses an electric or hybrid vehicle as the branded company car. A business has hybrids or zero emissions vehicles in its fleet.	1-5
7	Other Practice	Your organization has adopted and implemented a program or policy best practice specifically to reduce fuel consumption and lower emissions that have not yet been mentioned.	Anything not covered in the practices above.	1-5
Total Points Available				35



Energy

#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
1	Energy Consultation	An energy professional has consulted with your organization about your energy use.	Your building or property has gone through an energy audit with <i>CPS Energy</i> . A business reduces its energy costs through the <i>Commercial Demand Response Program</i> .	1-5
2	Thermostat Temperature	Your organization is enrolled in a program that automatically regulates your thermostat temperatures based on occupancy. And/or your business has a written policy that your indoor air temperature stays between 66 °F and 70 °F during the months of October to March and between 74 °F and 78 °F between the months of June – September.	The building temperature is managed by an automated system that monitors the building occupancy. A business participates in the <i>CPS Energy WiFi Thermostat Rewards</i> program. A property manager or employee has programmed the thermostats to stay within the recommended ranges throughout the year.	1-5
3	Lighting Improvements	Your business has made improvements to the building/ office lighting in the past 12 months.	A business has converted most of its lights to LEDs. Motion-sensor lighting has been installed throughout the building or property.	1-3
4	Signage	Your organization has a system in place to either remind staff to turn off the off lights or the lights automatically turn off when no one is in the room.	A business has friendly reminders near the light switches for employees to turn off the lights when they leave.	2
5	Energy Improvements	Your organization has made improvements to the building’s envelope in the past 12 months.	A business has solar screens or window film installed to block out UV rays. Doors have been weather sealed to reduce cooling or heating loss. A grocery store or restaurant has installed automatic door closers or strip curtains on walk-in coolers. A business has improved its building’s performance with major retrofit projects.	1-5
6	Purchasing Policy	Your organization has a purchasing policy that requires buying <i>Energy Star</i> ® qualified equipment and appliances.	Through their corporate policy, a business encourages the procurement of <i>Energy Star</i> ® appliances or energy efficient servers.	3



#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
7	Maintenance	Your organization performs regular HVAC and refrigeration maintenance.	A business receives a free <i>HVAC Tune-Up</i> from <i>CPS Energy</i> or a specialist routinely performs system maintenance according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Shows receipt.	3
8	Renewable Energy	Your organization has renewable energy on-site or participates in a community solar program.	A business has solar panels on the roof or solar covered parking. A business receives solar credits on their energy bill through the <i>Big Sun Community Solar</i> program. Shows receipt.	4
9	Other Practices	Your organization has implemented energy practices or invested in energy equipment that have not yet been mentioned.	Anything not covered in the practices above.	2-5
Total Points Available				35



Water

#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
1	Water Conservation	Your organization uses native plants or xeriscaping in your outdoor landscaping.	Using resources from SAWS or SARA , a business installs native or adapted plants to create a rain garden.	1-4
2	Water-Efficient Irrigation	Your organization practices water-efficient irrigation with regular maintenance and seasonal adjustments.	A business documents a monthly maintenance check. A business schedules seasonal adjustments with a professional. A business submits an annual irrigation check-up to SAWS .	1-5
3	Leak Checks or Repairs	Your organization has a written policy or process to conduct regular leak checks and repairs.	A business uses a local or EPA leak check list multiple times a year.	3
4	Recycle Water	Your organization uses non-potable water.	A business participates in rainwater harvesting. A business reuses greywater for landscaping or industrial processes.	1-5
5	Reduction of Wastewater	Your organization keeps receiving and loading docks, dumpsters, and parking areas free from litter, oil, chemicals, and other contaminants.	A business routinely monitors for sources of pollution with a checklist.	1-5
6	Signage	Your organization provides signage in key areas that demonstrate best practices to prevent pollutants from reaching storm drains.	Customers are reminded not to litter in parking lots.	3
7	Continuing Education	One or more of your staff has participated in a water conservation training or workshop within the last two years .	A business coordinates annual presentations or workshops with SARA , SAWS , Alamo Commutes or Eco Centro .	5
8	Other Practices	Your organization implemented other water savings or stormwater management practices that have not be mentioned.	Anything not covered in the practices above.	1-5
Total Points Available				35



Environmental Policies

#	Practice	Description	Example	Points
1	Sustainable Goals and Policies	Your organization has goals or policies to avoid the unnecessary consumption of goods, equipment, office supplies, energy or fuel.	<p>A business uses paperless methods and reduces the amount of office supplies (e.g. binders).</p> <p>A business encourages digital sharing of presentations instead of print outs.</p> <p>A business strategically invests in sturdier and repairable products like tires, tools, machinery or employee uniforms with longer life-cycles in order to avoid the repetitive purchasing of inferior products.</p>	5
2	Purchasing Policy	Your organization has a green purchasing policy to procure products that are environmentally friendly, safe and sustainable to the environment.	<p>A business switches from harsh chemicals to plant-based cleaners.</p> <p>A business has a policy that encourages the procurement of tools or equipment that don't require fossil fuels and instead, are replaced with electric alternatives.</p>	5
3	Food Policy	Your organization has a sustainable food policy.	<p>A restaurant has a policy that encourages the purchase of local produce, dairy, and/or meats.</p> <p>A restaurant has a policy to take unused food to a shelter to feed the hungry.</p>	5
4	Other Practices	Your organization implemented other sustainable best practices that have not be mentioned.	Anything not covered in the practices above.	1-5
Total Points Available				20

Unique Practice

Description	Example	Points
Have you implemented any resource recovery practices that have not yet been mentioned?	Anything not covered in the practices above.	1-5
Total Points Available		5

