

MINNESOTA WASTE WISE SUCCESS STORY

WILDFLOWER EARLY LEARNING CENTER



Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
WASTE WISE

Wildflower Early Learning Center is a nature-based early childhood program in Savage.

Wildflower co-owner Carrie Linde met with Waste Wise in late 2019 to discuss opportunities to further demonstrate its environmental commitment through waste reduction. While the Center was already collecting recycling and organics (mostly paper towels), the Scott County Business Recycling Grant program presented the opportunity to streamline bin color-coding and add labeling. The Center was awarded a grant for bins and labels in 2020. Furthermore, Wildflower switched their single-serve plastic cups to compostable paper cups – the plastic cups were too small to get sorted successfully at a materials recovery facility (MRF) and were made of non-recyclable polystyrene (#6) – and installed a washer and dryer which made it easier to employ reusable cloths over paper towels. These changes have resulted in 300 less plastic cups and 4000 less multi-fold paper towels being used each month. Based on weight estimates for each product, this equates to a savings of approximately 15.75 pounds of plastic waste and 252 pounds of paper annually.

“Wildflower provides kids an opportunity to strengthen their connection to nature. Well into our first year of business, we were exploring ways to reduce waste. With the help of Waste Wise and Scott County, we taught our preschoolers reduce/reuse/recycle practices through efficient labeling of bins, by using reusable cloths for cleaning and disinfecting, and by using compostable drinking cups when not using our reusable dishes for organized meals.”
– Carrie Linde, Wildflower Early Learning Center



HIGHLIGHTS

- **15.75** pounds of plastic diverted from the landfill annually
- **252** pounds less paper towels used annually