

CASE STUDY:

House of Bread



BUSINESS PROFILE

Name:

House of Bread

Location:

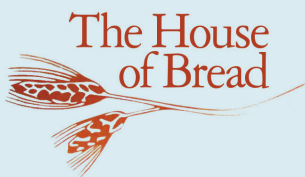
Hartford, CT

On-site dining: Yes

Take-out: No

Warewashing:

Commercial Dishwasher



The House of Bread Soup Kitchen is in the center of Connecticut's Capitol City. One in eight Connecticut residents are food insecure, and one in six children struggle with access to food. With day-old donuts and coffee, two inspirational nuns, Sr. Maureen and Sr. Theresa, vowed to help the hungry and homeless in Hartford's North End. The House of Bread's doors opened to 17 guests at 227 High Street on February 4, 1980. Today the House of Bread volunteers serve over 250 daily meals to food-insecure residents. The facility had some reusable serviceware and a functioning commercial dishwasher but primarily relied on donations of disposable cups, bowls, and utensils.

Changes to serviceware for less waste and more savings:

Single-use plastic cold cup	→	5oz durable plastic cup
Single-use expanded polystyrene hot cup	→	8oz ceramic mug
Single-use plastic spoon	→	Stainless steel spoon
Single-use plastic fork	→	Stainless steel fork
Single-use plastic knife	→	Stainless steel butter knife
Single-use paper soup container with lid	→	8oz ceramic bowl

BEFORE and AFTER: ReThink Disposable helped the House of Bread make the transition to 100% reusable serviceware for all meals.



THE BOTTOM LINE

- \$1,643.70 total annual net cost savings for items purchased by the House of Bread; this does not include donated serviceware
- Additional savings can be seen through reduced waste-hauling fees
- 123,500 disposable items reduced per year
- 845 pounds of annual waste reduction
- Switching to reusables gives the food-insecure residents who dine at the House of Bread a more elevated dining experience, contributing to the community feeling when dining together

RESULTS

Disposable Product Replaced or Minimized	Recommendation Implemented	PACKAGING IMPACTS			COST IMPACTS	
		Percent Disposable Reduction	Annual Quantity of Disposable Product Reduced	Annual Waste Reduction (lbs.)	Payback Period (months)	Annual NET* Cost Savings After Payback Period (\$)
Dart plastic cold cup	Replace with durable plastic cup	100%	20,000	59	N/A	\$201
Dart insulated cup	Replace with ceramic mug	100%	9,000	185	N/A	\$454
Sunset plastic spoon	Replace with stainless steel spoon	100%	30,000	169	N/A	\$205
Sunset plastic fork	Replace with stainless steel fork	100%	50,000	283	N/A	336
Sunset plastic knife	Replace with stainless steel butter knife	100%	12,000	77	N/A	\$81
Sunset paper soup container w/ lid	Replace with ceramic soup bowl	100%	2,500	72	N/A	\$366
		TOTALS:	123,500 pieces	845 lbs.	N/A	\$1,643

*Net Cost Savings considers any upfront and ongoing costs associated with the purchase and care of reusable items and capital improvements needed to carry out ReThink Disposable's recommendations. Net cost savings are based on avoided disposable foodware purchases.

“The House of Bread is always looking for ways to improve how we can best help our clients AND how we can help Mother Nature! Our next step toward improving our environmental impact was to eliminate the plastic utensils, bowls, and cups that we use and replace them with reusable, washable items. As a New England Zero Waste Organizer, Amber was instrumental in making this happen and was simply a joy to work with.”

Tom Porell Co-Director, House of Bread



Tom Porell with Zero Waste Specialist Amber Schmidt

ReThink Disposable is a program of Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund conducted in partnership with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies. Generous support is provided by a changing list of public and private funders. To learn more about the program, its partners, and funders, visit: www.rethinkdisposable.org

