

The Gainesville Zero Waste News

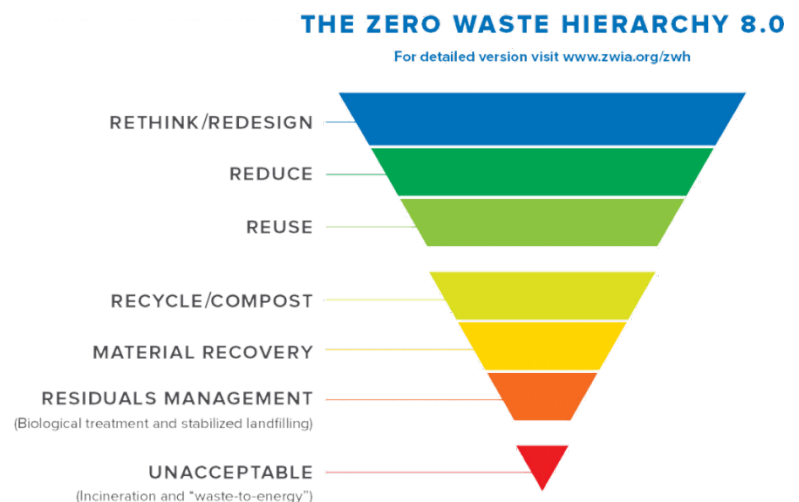
What is Zero Waste?

Have you ever heard people use the term ‘Zero Waste’ but really weren’t sure what that meant? How can there be ‘zero waste’ anyway?

According to the Zero Waste International Alliance’s (ZWIA) peer reviewed definition, Zero Waste is “**the conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of all products, packaging, and materials without burning them and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.**”

Just what does all of that mean, and how can you do your part?

- **Responsible production** – We can’t change what companies do, but we can “vote with our dollar” and support local, typically smaller companies, like at the farmers’ market.
- **Consumption** – Do I really need a free water bottle, even though I brought my own reusable one?
- **Reuse** – Before throwing it away or even recycling it, can I use it again? Recycling a glass jar is great, but using it as a jar repeatedly is infinitely more practical and less wasteful.
- **Recovery** – Roughly 50% of our waste stream consists of valuable resources we can put to good use to good use by recycling.
- **Without burning (burning trash)** – also known as “Waste-to-Energy,” which can release harmful substances, such as PFAS, to the land, water, and air. These substances can harm our land, water, animals around us, the food we eat, and our health.



We may never reduce waste all the way to zero, but we can follow the Zero Waste hierarchy and do our best for our planet, its resources, and our health.

If you’d like to keep learning about international Zero Waste efforts, please check out zwia.org. For local Zero Waste, gainesvillefl.gov/ZeroWaste and @ZeroWasteGNV on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) have got you covered.

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