



InSinkErator® | City of Chicago
FOOD WASTE DISPOSER DEMONSTRATION
P R O J E C T

How Food Waste Disposers
Can Benefit Municipalities

A collaboration between the City of Chicago and InSinkErator to demonstrate how in-sink food waste disposers could reduce the amount of food waste residents threw away in the trash, helping the City to achieve its environmental goals while saving money.

PROJECT AND GOAL

This document summarizes the results of the program initiated with the **City of Chicago by InSinkErator**, the goal of which was to quantify the amount of food waste that could be diverted from the city's trash through the use of food waste disposers. To do this, InSinkErator agreed to arrange for the professional installation of advanced performing disposers in approximately 100 households in each of two neighborhoods, and to measure the food waste before and after the installation of the disposers. Participating households were to be those that did not have disposers.

The program, including planning and coordination, was conducted from 2013 to 2015.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM RESULTS

The Chicago project's results were inconclusive due to the inability to recruit a sufficient number of participants and irregularities in waste audits.

Two neighborhoods that were chosen for participation were on the south and north sides of the city: Uptown (north) and Maple Park (south.) After the minimum number of participants were not recruited, Uptown was dropped from the pilot.

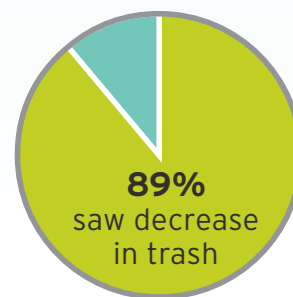
Note: InSinkErator furnished disposers to 31 residents who signed up even though the pilot was canceled.

In the Maple Park neighborhood, 52 disposers were installed by a professional plumber. A minimum installation goal of 70 homes was established pre-test as necessary to yield sufficient data.

In the pre-installation waste audit conducted before disposer installation took place, food waste was quantified as a percent of household trash. The result was 12%. This is not consistent with the 19% result of the City of Chicago's 2009 Waste Characterization Study for low and medium income households. Further, in the post-installation audit, more homes were sampled than those receiving disposers (52 homes received disposers; 66 were sampled) rendering the post audit results inconclusive.



Participating residents were mailed surveys before and after the installation of disposers to gauge impact on satisfaction and quality-of-life factors. Overall, 79% of participants reported being very happy with their complimentary disposer and said it made cleaning the kitchen easier. Additionally, 89% of respondents reported they saw a decrease in the amount of trash thrown away after the disposer was installed. Reducing trash was the most common benefit of disposer use reported by participants, while even more participants (89%) said disposer use was good for the environment.



In conclusion, residents were very satisfied with their new disposer (which was complimentary.) However, the program did not yield other statistically reliable conclusions that could be projected to the greater city.



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