State Farm Arena

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Location
Atlanta, Georgia
Certification level
Platinum
Percent of Overall Diversion Achieved
90.3%
Facility Size
680,000 sq. ft.
Type of Operation
Sports & Entertainment
Project Overview
State Farm Arena is focused on being true to Atlanta and practicing sustainability to lessen their environmental footprint. State Farm Arena is the world's first sports and live entertainment venue in the world to receive TRUE Platinum certification. When beginning this journey in 2019, State Farm Arena diverted only an average of 10 percent of total waste. Since May 2021, the venue has consistently diverted a minimum of 90 percent of waste from landfills. State Farm Arena's zero waste commitment encompassed all aspects of the facility, including but not limited to sustainable sourcing policies, volunteer and community engagement programs, and reduction and diversion planning. This certification was the culmination of several years of close collaboration between the GBCI, waste haulers, partners, State Farm Arena leadership & staff, and volunteers. Quantifying and tracking State Farm Arena's waste reduction helped us to understand how much unnecessary waste was avoided before it was ever created. In addition to diverting the waste via recycling and composting, a large focus was put on reducing the amount of waste coming into the facility as well as reusing many items that are part of the Arena's standard operating procedures. Over the course of the year, over 1,900 pounds of paper waste was avoided by utilizing electronic tickets and parking passes. Many materials including serving ware, linens, and transport containers were reused across multiple events in the facility, further lessening the Arena's environmental impact. Throughout this milestone accomplishment, the Hawks and State Farm Arena were assisted by local vendors such as CompostNow, who provides commercial composting solutions, and Haulin' Glass Recycling, which provides glass

recycling services. Venue partners such as Levy Restaurants, the official venue's food and beverage partner, helped in the supply chain process, and Pritchard Sports & Entertainment, the venue's official housekeeping partner, also assisted operationally with the collection and sorting of all materials. Other businesses who were integral in the effort include Habitat for Humanity ReStore, Salvation Army, WestRock, Waste Management, SA Recycling, Lighting Resources LLC, Ecoworks Studio and Rubicon Global. The Hawks and State Farm Arena continue to lead the way in sustainable practices for sports and live event venues. In Feb. 2022, State Farm Arena teamed up with Billie Eilish and Live Nation to produce the first zero-waste sold-out event on Billie Eilish's "Happier Than Ever, The World Tour". In Jan. 2022, State Farm Arena announced that it diverted more than one million pounds of waste from landfills. In Nov. 2021, Novelis became the official aluminum recycling and proud sustainability partner on State Farm Arena. In June 2021, Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), the world's leading sustainability and health certification and credentialing body, announced that Game 4 of the Atlanta Hawks' first-round playoff series last May against the New York Knicks earned TRUE Silver certification, marking the first time a sporting event has received the designation. The game was sold out with 16,458 fans in attendance. In June 2019, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announced State Farm Arena, received the LEED Gold certification. At the time, then-USGBC and GBCI President and CEO Mahesh Ramanujam presented Hawks and State Farm Arena CEO Steve Koonin with the designation plaque during the Greenbuild Atlanta Cultivation event at the venue. "As a community asset, we know how important it is for us to practice what we preach when it comes to being a good corporate citizen," said Sofi Armenakian, Director of Sustainability and Operations for the Hawks and State Farm Arena. "While this is a great accomplishment, we believe this is just the beginning of a forever journey. We know fans, artists and staff want to come to a venue that's making a difference in the world and practicing sustainability at a high level." "Accomplishing this was only possible with an entire team effort," said Geoffrey Stiles, Hawks' Senior Vice President of Facilities and Events for State Farm Arena. "When we began our zero waste journey, we knew that the vision would take buy-in from everybody – our fans, partners and staff – night after night and event after event to make this happen. We are incredibly grateful to share this monumental achievement with them."

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