



Aiming for zero-waste includes repurposing store fixtures

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package-free, from beet and artichoke pierogis to vegan waffles. Customers are encouraged to bring their own containers or buy reusable ones at the store.

After a trial run with a pop-up shop, she and co-owner Alison Carr found a perfect location in a modern building on East Broadway that had the floor space they needed for a store named Nada. Outfitting the store became an effort to come as close to zero waste as possible, to live up to their shopping philosophy.

“People walk into our space, and they think it’s a beautiful new store, but actually the vast majority of fixtures in there are all second-hand. A little bit of paint and TLC goes a long way,” says Ms. Miller.



“Diverting used furniture from landfill eliminates the need to produce new products, thereby limiting further resource consumption and energy usage – and ultimately reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” she says.

For businesses looking to become green-building certified through programs like LEED, choosing to purchase recycled office furniture or fixtures is a way to earn credits to help them achieve certification, she adds.

“One of the best things we can do for the planet is to make use of items that already exist and not buy things new,” Ms. Miller says. “We were looking at Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace and second-hand auctions for what we could reuse. My dad used to work in retail and supply chain management for Hudson’s Bay and he suggested checking Sears stores that were closing.”

The department stores were selling everything that could be removed – displays, lighting and shelving.

“I wasn’t sure they would have anything in their big box stores that would fit the design of our store,” says Ms. Miller, “but we found many pieces that were the right size, and some could be made to look like new with just a simple coat of paint.”





The LED light bulbs were purchased for 25 cents each.

Leigh Collyer, principal at ZAS Architects + Interiors Inc. in Vancouver, which designed the store interior, says once they arrived at a store, “we were like kids in a candy store.”

reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

— Michelle Wasylyshen, national spokeswoman for the Retail Council of Canada.

The LED light bulbs, which are separate units, were purchased for 25 cents each. “We bought boxes of extras, so that down the road they can replace anything that burns out, so they won’t have to buy a light bulb maybe ever.”

The store’s checkout counter was built using a frame from a Sears store and wood from bed frames that had been returned to Ikea Canada as part of their Sellback program. “We found a large frame that fit perfectly for under \$100; to re clad it in wood and refinish it raised the cost to about \$500. But if you were buying new cabinetry and millwork, the unit might have been in the range of \$10,000,” she adds.



had originally been divided by a wall, with one half of the area being used as a café.

“Normally in removing a wall, the framing and insulation would be demolished and sent to landfill. However, it could be disassembled, and the steel studs of the framing provided enough material to build other internal walls and the insulation was reused for soundproofing. That in itself was a significant money-saver.” Ms. Collyer says.

Overall, I estimate if we had to buy everything new it would have cost an extra \$200,000, says Ms. Miller. So, it's a win for us and for the planet.”

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