

## DEP Recognizes The Westin Diplomat for a 42 Percent Recycling Rate



Cliff Wilson, DEP Deputy Secretary (right) presents Mauricio Gutierrez, Westin's Sustainability Chair, with a recycling recognition certificate for 2013 as (from left) David Twitchell, Director of Engineering, and Ed Walls, General Manager, look on.

On July 31, 2014, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection recognized [The Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa](#) for achieving a recycling rate of 42.1 percent. In 2013, this Hollywood, Florida 998

room beachfront resort recycled over 950 tons to become the first Florida hotel to be recognized for outstanding recycling efforts.

The Diplomat's sustainability successes started roughly 6 years ago with the formation of the Sustainability Committee comprised of hotel associates (called Ambassadors) with goal setting and accountability programs. Shortly thereafter a single stream recycling program was developed through a partnership with The Diplomat's solid waste vendor, Waste Management. Virtually all typical recyclables (paper / cardboard, plastic, metals, and glass) go into one large compacting dumpster, thus simplifying the efforts of the various players involved in managing the waste stream at this large resort complex. In 2012, this same partnership initiated an organics program, collecting food waste primarily from kitchens and prep into 90 gallon totes for pickup three times per week. Additionally, an effective kitchen grease reclamation program converts the grease into bio-diesel fuel. The Diplomat is paid the proceeds from that fuel source. Lastly, with the assistance of Starwood NA Supply Chain Regional Services, The Diplomat's negotiated landscaping contract includes language that requires all landscape trimmings from the lush resort grounds to be composted.

Attaining the Diplomat's sustainability initiatives, of which recycling is a large piece, really requires a team effort and a lot of diligence to keep the operational processes dialed-in. The team of over 1,000 Ambassadors at the Diplomat has been and will continue to be committed to reducing our carbon footprint and playing a leading role within the hotel industry towards sustainability.