Seattle Public Utilities’ new North Transfer Station (NTS), which has been under construction since 2014, is now open for business.

The NTS, located at 1350 N. 24th St, is an environmentally friendly state-of-the-art $108 million facility that aims to provide superior recycling and reuse capabilities along with safe and efficient handling of the city’s garbage.

According to SPU, the new station is expected to serve Seattle’s mounting solid waste demands for at least the next 50 years.

The facility is a huge improvement over its predecessor (affectionately known as “the dump”) which operated at the same location for more than half a century. The NTS has a separate building for recyclable and reusable materials and an increased capacity on the tipping floor to handle garbage, food and yard waste. That means more materials recycled and less going to the landfill.
The old north station, built long before recycling was introduced, was designed to process all solid waste only as garbage. Today, Seattle recycles almost 60 percent of its solid waste, separating it into multiple waste streams. Space is required, however, to do this work efficiently.

“This facility allows us to have less of an impact on the environment, while safely and sustainably handling the increasing waste demands of our growing city,” says SPU General Manager and Chief Executive Officer Mami Hara.

In addition to its environment-friendly design, according to Hara, the new station provides greater safety for utility workers and the public. SPU designed and constructed the NTS and will be responsible for its operation.

“Customers played an important role in the design of the building, and I’m appreciative of their collaboration and thoughtful recommendations,” says Hara.

The NTS features two green roofs and porous pavement to slow storm water, solar panels to generate electricity, and translucent panels to allow natural light in the tipping building and the recycling center. Other features include recycled roofing shingles and ground-up asphalt paving, as well as a public-art sculpture made from salvaged rebar from the old station.

According to SPU, the NTS, which is unique in its proximity to residents and a growing urban village area, was constructed and designed to minimize sight issues and preserve view corridors.

Additional details about the new transfer station’s features include:

- **Better customer safety.** The NTS has flat floors for unloading and sorting. Without an open pit, customers are safer and at less risk for slips and falls. Regular self-haul customer traffic paths are separated from the garbage trucks, improving both safety and system efficiency.
- **More capacity and efficiency.** There is dedicated space at the NTS to process more recycling. Residential and commercial haulers will use separate entrances to improve traffic flow and customer safety. New customer routing will decrease lines that extend onto adjacent streets.
- **Cleaner and Greener.** The NTS includes more covered and enclosed
spaces, a better ventilation system, automated rolling access doors, and entrance and exits designed to reduce noise and odor impacts to the neighborhood.

- **Space to create community.** East of the NTS, SPU has created more than an acre of open space that not only buffers the adjacent neighbors from the station, but also includes a play area for children, a sports court, an open lawn, walkways and static exercise stations.

- **Public art.** The new station includes new public art (made from material recycled from the old transfer station, of course!) by artist Jean Shin.

- The facility will be LEED Gold certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. Solar panels produce up to 150 kilowatts of electricity used on-site, and green stormwater infrastructure, including green roofs and pervious paving, reduce stormwater runoff.

- Two 90-ton compactors were salvaged from the old station, rehabilitated and reused in the new NTS rather than purchasing new ones.

- Inside the station, a second-floor gathering room includes informational displays and an overview of tipping floor activities for public education.

SPU is hosting an Open House event for the community to see the new NTS this Saturday, December 10, from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. All are welcome.