



SONA VIRTUAL ZERO WASTE GUIDE

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04/16/2026

THE CHALLENGE



Eco Desk demand is growing



622

Eco Desk contacts
FY 2025–26 to date. (*average
1230 annually*)



**After
hours**

Many calls & web
inquiries arrive
after staff are gone for the day



Manual

Every contact
logged by hand —
time-consuming and tedious

SONA



A Virtual Zero Waste Guide — available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



24/7 Availability

Residents get answers after hours, on weekends, and on holidays — no hold times or delayed responses.



Jurisdiction Routing

Identifies whether the caller is in an incorporated city or unincorporated County and routes accordingly.



Escalation to Staff

Routes complex or sensitive questions directly to the Eco Desk — Sona only answers zero waste questions.



Automatic Logging

Every conversation is logged to a Google Sheet automatically — name, contact, ZIP, topic, and outcome.

PRIVACY & SAFETY



Sona is purpose-built — not a general-purpose AI and not connected to the open internet.



Not ChatGPT or Gemini

Sona runs on a dedicated platform (CustomGPT.ai) using only ZWS-approved content. It cannot browse the web or access outside information.



No image processing

Image Processing is disabled. Sona cannot create, receive or analyze image files



No data sharing or training

Conversation data is not shared with third parties and is not used to train any external AI model.



Can be turned off instantly

If any issue arises, Sona can be disabled on the ZWS website in minutes — no technical expertise required.

SONA'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT



Sona's footprint is minimal — and its mission impact is significant.

0.9 mi

Equivalent to driving less than
1 mile per year
(est annual CO₂ footprint)
Source: EPA Greenhouse Gas
Equivalencies Calculator

\$1,788

Annual platform cost
(Standard plan)

Equity

Accessible to residents
who can't navigate the website




Helping residents dispose of hazardous materials properly
prevents far greater environmental harm than Sona's minimal energy use.

PILOT RESULTS & BOARD ACTION



- ✓ Pilot ran March 19 – April 8, 2026 (3 board members tested)
- ✓ Queries tested across all major topic categories
- ✓ Jurisdiction routing (Inc/Uninc) performed as designed
- ✓ Escalation to Eco Desk triggered correctly for edge cases
- ✓ Automatic logging confirmed — every session captured
- ✓ Cites source URLs
- ✓ Continuous refinements underway

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

-  Provide input of full public launch of Sona on zerowastesonoma.gov
-  Authorize use of the Standard plan
-  Live demo available upon request



QUESTIONS