



SW Portland Tool Library Project

Mission statement

Operate as a non-profit lending library providing short-term off-site tool use to members based in the Southwest, South and Northwest Portland quadrants as well as Downtown

What is a tool library

- History (from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tool_library)
"A tool lending library was started in Columbus, OH in 1976. Originally run by the city, the tool library is now operated by Rebuilding Together Central Ohio, a non-profit organization that works to preserve and revitalize homes and communities in Central Ohio. The RTCO Tool Library makes available over 4,500 tools free of charge to both individuals and non-profit organizations."
- Oldest Portland Tool Library (2004) is in North Portland (at the Historic Kenton Firehouse)

Key attributes

- Location TBD, minimum 200 sq. ft. secured and weatherproof
- Volunteer staff and board
- Hours: Saturday 9-2am, Tuesday 6-8pm
- Membership suggested donation: \$20
- Must be a member of service area based on utility bill and photo ID
- Tool lease period: 1 week
- Late fee: \$5 small items, \$10 large items
- No commercial use of the tools

Who benefits

- Community sustainability (reduce, reuse, recycle) - avoid buying/storing/divesting of single-use tools
- Community resilience - known local cache of tools, work with NET groups
- Tool libraries serve local areas. While this library is called SWPTL it will also serve the South/Northwest/Downtown Portland quadrants, but not preclude them from starting a more local library of their own

- Educational opportunities: city permitting and departments, what to ask your contractor, DIY, conservation

What tools would be available

- No gas-powered or equipped tools or hazardous chemicals
- Tools that are portable and can fit in space allocated
- High-demand tools - based on other Portland Tool Libraries: power miters, table saws, hand tools, garden tools, extension ladders (if space)
- Tools that do not incur high maintenance costs
- TBD if providing cordless tools due to: expense, lifespan, loss
- TBD other/adjacent: car/bike repair, books, seeds, kitchen/small appliances

How are the tools acquired

- Initial expectation is donations
- Acquire used tools where deals are found
- Acquire high-demand new tools as finances allow

Operating expenses

- Space lease cost and utilities
- Insurance
- Non-profit overhead via either sponsor organization or 501c(3) incorporation
- Website and computer
- Inventory software
- Tool repair
- Tool purchase

Operating income

- Membership donations
- Late fees
- Auctions for surplus tool donations
- Grants
- Fundraisers - branding such as t-shirts
- Sponsorships

Other considerations

- Washington and Clackamas (but not Multnomah) County Libraries are now starting to do local "Libraries of Things" - lending items that have more moving parts than media will have repair/replace component
- Not intending to compete with traditional rental companies – this is a different model