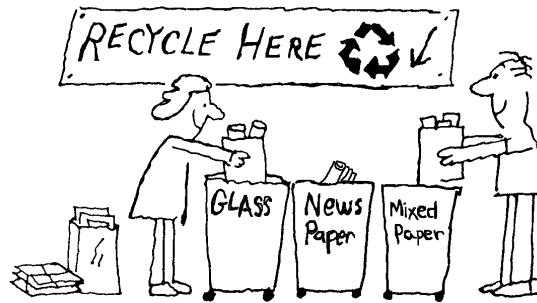


Recycling at Work

6 Steps to Increase Participation in Your Recycling Program





This Guide was prepared by the Resource Venture in July 2004. The Resource Venture is a program of the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Seattle Public Utilities.

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Seattle's Recycling Regulations

Five days a week, Seattle spends more than \$500,000 to send 17 million pounds of garbage to a landfill, where that garbage will sit for thousands of years. About 25% of that garbage is made up of recyclable paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic bottles and yard debris.

Why waste a good thing? That's what Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels and Seattle City Council members asked in December of 2003 when they passed recycling regulations that aim to save residents as much as \$2 million each year and keep future garbage bills low.

Which materials are regulated?

Beginning January 1, 2005, City of Seattle Ordinance 121372 prohibits:

- Businesses from disposing of paper, cardboard and yard debris in the garbage. Exception: commercial customers without adequate space for recycling and no opportunity for sharing recycling containers with contiguous businesses or apartments (as determined by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) inspection).
- Residents (both single-family and multi-family) from putting paper, cardboard, glass and plastic bottles and jars as well as aluminum and tin cans in their garbage containers. Exception: food soiled and contaminated paper and cardboard.

Where does your recycling go?

Your recyclable paper, cardboard and aluminum, tin, glass and plastic bottles and jars are processed, bundled and sold to manufacturing plants around the Northwest and all over the world. Recycled paper and cardboard are turned into everyday useful items like boxes, tissue paper and newspaper. Fifty percent of all American-made polyester carpet is made from recycled plastic bottles. Recycled plastic bottles are also made into many other products, including t-shirts, fleece clothing, toys and, of course, new bottles. Aluminum cans are used to make cars, appliances and new cans. Manufacturers can make a new can out of a recycled aluminum can in as little as 90 days!



Frequently Asked Questions

Why did the City of Seattle adopt these bans?

The bans were adopted when – after 15 years of voluntary recycling and educational programs – it was clear that the City of Seattle would not reach its 60% recycling goal. The business community's decreasing recycling rate is seen as one reason for the City's failure to reach it. Consequently, recyclable paper and cardboard (a large portion of the disposed commercial waste stream) and yard trimmings (prohibited from residential garbage since 1989) were targeted. The City's last "officially" recorded recycling rate was 40% in 2002.

The mandatory recycling requirements are one element of a set of strategies to get Seattle back on track in reaching the 60% recycling goal. Other program offerings include expanding the existing, free recycling service for small businesses to all businesses in the City and putting in place a voluntary collection service for post-consumer food scraps for interested restaurants, grocery stores and food processors.

How will the City enforce these bans?

1. Education in 2004: SPU began an informational outreach program regarding these new recycling requirements in March 2004.
2. Tagging in 2005: SPU inspectors will place informational notice tags on garbage cans and dumpsters with significant amounts of recyclable materials throughout 2005.
3. Enforcement in 2006: Beginning January 1, 2006, a business with significant amounts of recyclable materials in their garbage will have up to two warning notices mailed to the garbage subscriber at the business before a civil fine of up to \$50 is sent.

What is considered “significant amounts of recyclables?”

A garbage dumpster or self-haul vehicle's load containing more than 10% recyclables by volume based on a visual inspection by an SPU inspector, contractor or transfer station worker.

How can recycling reduce our total disposal costs?

- Recycling generally reduces a business's total disposal costs. The savings in lower garbage bills normally covers any fee you may pay for recycling collection. When you keep recyclable materials out of the garbage, your waste container will be less full. Don't pay to have empty space hauled away. Rather, ask your garbage hauler to reduce the size of your container and/or pick it up less frequently.
- Not all recyclers charge a fee for recycling. Generally, if a business or building generates a large quantity of materials that the recycler can resell at a good price, then the recycling company will pick up the materials for free. In these cases, you may also get a rebate for the value of these materials. Keep in mind, however, that recyclable materials are commodities and, as a result, their value fluctuates.
- Commodities that some recyclers will purchase are white office paper and cardboard. If your building generates large quantities of these materials, call a variety of recyclers to find out which one will give you the best price for your materials.

Will my business incur additional expense from paying my janitorial service overtime to sort through the garbage and pull out recyclables?

The City is not expecting janitorial services to sort through the garbage in order to pull out paper and cardboard that tenants throw away. The City does expect individual businesses to provide employees with recycling containers for recyclable paper and cardboard and to educate employees about the City's recycling requirements.

In addition, the City will not hold a business responsible if the public throws paper and cardboard into their street-side, non-locking garbage containers or for recyclables placed in trash cans. Hotels will not be held responsible for recyclables placed in garbage cans by their guests provided that the hotel has a recycling system in place for guests with posted instructions.

In a multi-tenant building, who will be held responsible for paper, cardboard or yard debris that is thrown in the garbage dumpster?

Whether the property manager, building owner or individual tenant is held responsible for keeping cardboard, paper and yard debris out of the garbage depends on which one is the garbage subscriber for the account. If the **building owner** pays the garbage bill and provides solid waste services for all of the building tenants, then he/she is the garbage subscriber. If the building owner contracts with a **property management company** and that property manager pays the garbage bill and provides solid waste services for all of the building tenants, then the property management company is the garbage subscriber. If an individual **tenant**, like a restaurant, sets up its own, independent garbage account, then the tenant is the garbage subscriber.

Your business or building is complying with the recycling ordinance if you:

1. Provide all employees / building tenants with recycling containers for recyclable paper and cardboard.
2. Instruct tenants to recycle paper and cardboard.
3. Maintain less than 10% recyclable paper and cardboard by volume in your garbage container.
4. Compost yard debris. If your business / property generates yard debris, either have it hauled away for composting or compost it on-site.



How do I educate my staff so they will recycle correctly?

Education, signage and container placement are the most effective ways to encourage your staff to recycle. The City contracts with the Resource Venture, a non-profit program of the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, to provide free assistance to Seattle businesses to help them reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.

The Resource Venture offers signage, in multiple languages, that you can place on recycling containers. These signs list what materials can and cannot be recycled and how to prepare them for recycling. The signs are appropriate for containers located at each employee's desk or workstation, next to printers and copy machines, in staff lounges and in conference rooms. The signs and other publications are available for download at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/rec-ord/index.php. Hard copies are available upon request. Contact the Resource Venture at (206) 389-7304 or help@resourceventure.org.

6 Steps to Increase Participation in Your Recycling Program

STEP 1: Select a Recycling Coordinator

An effective business recycling program needs an enthusiastic coordinator with organizational experience and good communication skills. If your recycling program does not have a coordinator, then select a staff member who is interested in recycling, has good staff rapport and understands recycling and City of Seattle recycling requirements to reevaluate your recycling program.

STEP 2: Gain Management Support

Even though you already have a recycling program, continued support from upper management is crucial if your program is to succeed. Commercial recycling will be mandatory as of January 1, 2005, and it's important for everyone to know that upper management is serious about complying with Seattle's new ordinance.

STEP 3: Determine What Else to Recycle

If you're already recycling paper, cardboard and yard debris, why not expand your program to include other materials like aluminum cans, plastic bottles, toner cartridges, scrap metal, batteries and packing peanuts.

STEP 4: Evaluate Your Collection System

A simple and convenient collection system will result in greater employee participation. Make sure all recycling containers are well-marked and placed at every desk and in common work areas (where large quantities of material are generated). This will enable you to collect the greatest volume of recyclables.

STEP 5: Educate Your Staff

If your employees don't know which materials are recyclable or where to recycle them they will likely toss them in the garbage. Education is an important part of every successful recycling program because well-informed employees will actively participate. Don't forget to train new employees about your company's recycling and waste prevention programs.

STEP 6: Promote Your Program

Don't stop once you've trained employees. Reinforce the recycling habit in your company. Use your employee newsletter or send out emails with information about how the program is doing. Let staff know what volumes they are recycling and address any problems.



Increasing Participation in Your Recycling Program

Now that you are familiar with the six steps, each will be discussed in more detail.

STEP 1: Select a Recycling Coordinator

An effective business recycling program needs an enthusiastic coordinator with organizational experience and good communication skills. If your recycling program does not have a coordinator, then select a staff member who is interested in recycling, has good staff rapport and understands recycling and City of Seattle recycling requirements to reevaluate your recycling program.

The coordinator is responsible for:

- Getting more recycling containers (if needed), distributing them to employees and placing them next to shared copiers and printers, in the staff lounge and conference rooms.
- Creating a promotion and education campaign and answering questions.
- Working with department supervisors to help them encourage employee participation.
- Tracking and reporting on the progress of the program.
- Acting as liaison with the recycling company and the janitorial staff.

If you own or operate a large business and this is too much work for one person, organize a company-wide or building-wide Green Team. A Green Team is a group of employees or tenants that are responsible for planning, setting up and maintaining a business's waste prevention and/or recycling programs.

The Team should represent a cross-section of the employees or tenants of the facility. In multi-tenant situations, this might mean a representative of each company in the building; in large institutions, this might be a representative from each department. Whatever the makeup, it is essential for you to recognize that an integrated approach to planning will assure a successful program.



STEP 2: Gain Management Support

In the long term, support from upper management and your co-workers is key. After all, you can't do it alone; you need the participation of all employees to make your program successful.

- Have your company's president email a support-building memo to staff stating the importance of recycling to your company and requiring them to participate.
- Recruit volunteers from various departments for a "Green Team."

STEP 3: Determine What Else to Recycle

If you're already recycling paper, cardboard and yard debris, why not expand your program to include other materials like aluminum cans, plastic bottles, toner cartridges, scrap metal, batteries and packing peanuts.



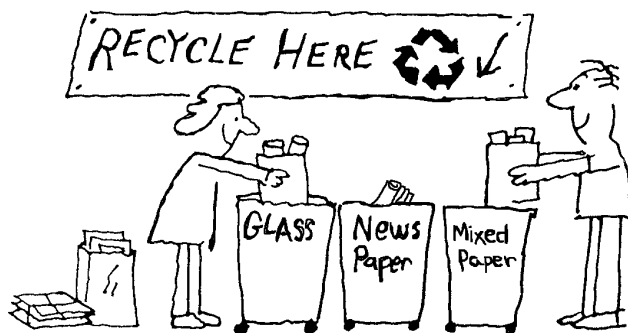
First, check with your recycling hauler to see if they recycle any materials you may not know about. Then, visit the Resource Venture's online Recycling Database, located at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/find-a-recycler/index.php, to see if there are materials you're throwing away that could be recycled. The database lists recycling options for more than 200 different materials, like scrap metal, computers, cell phones, toner cartridges, office furniture, pallets and more. If you're not sure what your company is throwing out, then take a quick peek in your garbage dumpster.

STEP 4: Evaluate Your Collection System

A simple and convenient collection system will result in greater employee participation. Make sure all recycling containers are well-marked and placed at every desk and in common work areas (where large quantities of material are generated). This will enable you to collect the greatest volume of recyclables.

Below are some tips for improving your collection system:

- Place garbage cans and recycling containers *next to each other*. Take a tour of your company's staff lounge, conference rooms, mail room, shared copiers and printers and workstations. If you find that recycling containers and garbage cans are not next to each other—move them.
- Tape a sign listing what materials can and cannot be recycled on every recycling container. Signage may be obtained by calling your recycling hauler, by calling the Resource Venture at **(206) 389-7304** or by downloading signage from the Resource Venture's Web site at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/rec-ord/index.php.



STEP 5: Educate Your Staff

If your employees don't know which materials are recyclable or where to recycle them they will likely toss them in the garbage. Education is an important part of every successful recycling program because well-informed employees will actively participate. Don't forget to train new employees about your company's recycling and waste prevention programs.

Training Sessions

Person-to-person communication is the best way to educate employees. A 10-15 minute recycling education session at a staff meeting is more effective than an email, resulting in less confusion and greater participation.

- Schedule training sessions for management and employees so that everyone understands what materials are recyclable and where the containers are located.
- Let them know they are expected to use resources carefully and participate in the office's waste reduction programs.
- Check out the Resource Venture's Waste Prevention & Recycling Publications Web page for information you may want to hand out at the training session. (www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/publications/index.php)
- Distribute a deskside recycling container sign to all staff and tell them to tape it to their container.
- Include ways that staff can prevent waste and reuse supplies at work. Read the **Preventing Waste in the First Place** section on pages 9 and 10 for ideas.
- Make sure staff know who to contact with questions.

New Employee Orientation

Have new employees spend 10-15 minutes with the recycling coordinator or a Green Team member to learn how and where to recycle and reuse materials in the office. Give them a list of recyclable materials and answer any questions they may have.



STEP 6: Promote Your Program

Don't stop once you've trained employees. Reinforce the recycling habit in your company. Use your employee newsletter or send out emails with information about how the program is doing. Let staff know what volumes they are recycling and address any problems.

Below are some ideas to keep them interested and motivated.

- ❑ Send out an email once a month educating staff about different aspects of resource conservation and pollution prevention. Use these reminders to encourage staff to recycle when they purge files, for example. The Resource Venture's Employee Education & Training Web page located at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/get-started/education/index.php has links to several Web sites where you can copy and paste tips and facts.
- ❑ If your company has an employee newsletter or intranet, talk to the publisher about adding a "recycling" or "conservation" column.
- ❑ Post a conservation fact sheet in the bathroom. This is an effective way to educate your coworkers about all kinds of resource conservation and pollution prevention issues. Insert a one-page educational fact sheet into a plastic sleeve and tape it inside bathroom stall doors and above urinals at eye level. Work with other interested employees to change the fact sheet monthly. If you don't have time to create your own bathroom stall fact sheet, download and print the Resource Venture's at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/get-started/education/index.php.
- ❑ Include recycling on staff meeting agendas to clear up problems and keep the program visible.
- ❑ Give awards to those who do a particularly conscientious job of keeping the recycling program neat and tidy, recycle large amounts of material or propose waste prevention ideas that save money.
- ❑ Add new materials to your recycling program, like toner cartridges, computer diskettes, CDs, fluorescent lights, batteries, office furniture, scrap metal and more. The Resource Venture maintains an online Recycling Database with more than 200 different types of business waste. Simply visit www.resourceventure.org and click on "find a recycler" in the quick jump menu for a list of recycling companies by waste material.
- ❑ Sign up for the Resource Venture's Email Updates and biannual newsletter, *Solutions* at www.resourceventure.org. Resource Venture Email Updates are designed to provide Seattle businesses with useful, timely information on local resource conservation and pollution prevention topics in between issues of our newsletter. You can use these tips in reminder emails or in your own company newsletter.
- ❑ Keep your employees motivated by promoting the amount of materials recycled and/or the amount of money saved through the waste prevention and recycling programs. Once they see that their efforts really make a difference, they'll be more inclined to participate and encourage others to do the same.

The Resource Venture is committed to helping Seattle businesses prevent waste and recycle. If you need additional assistance, contact us at **(206) 389-7304** or help@resourceventure.org or visit our Web site at www.resourceventure.org. We are a program of the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Seattle Public Utilities.

Preventing Waste in the First Place

Now that you have set up your recycling program, you may want to look around your office or facility and see how you can prevent waste in the first place. Waste prevention is even more beneficial than recycling. Activities such as reuse not only reduce collection costs, but also cut down on supply expenses. Here are some suggestions you can put into practice.

General Waste Prevention Strategies

- Order supplies, trade publications and marketing materials more precisely.
- Designate a book shelf as a “reuse station” where employees can leave and take unwanted office supplies and other materials.
- Donate used or discarded goods and equipment that you no longer need.
- Negotiate with suppliers to provide goods in returnable, reusable or recyclable packaging. Ask your suppliers not to over package orders.
- Reuse foam-packing peanuts from incoming shipments for outgoing mailings. Or, return them to a packaging store in your neighborhood. Shredded paper also works well as packing material.
- Repair rather than replace equipment.
- Use durable, reusable products in place of disposables, e.g., ceramic coffee mugs in the lunchroom and cloth hand towels in the restrooms.
- Advertise surplus and reusable items through a free listing service like the Industrial Materials Exchange (IMEX), Reusable Building Materials Exchange (RBME), the Share House or Freecycle. You can find links to these exchange programs at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/other-resources/index.php.



Ideas for Preventing Waste in the Office

- Give each employee instructions on how to print on both sides of the paper. Download the Resource Venture's sample instructions at www.resourceventure.org/rv/issues/waste/get-started/education/index.php. Modify the instructions to work with your software and printer, if necessary.
- Post a list of paper-saving copy ideas at every copier. Download *The Paper-Smart Office: Tips to Work By* at the Web site listed above.
 - Reuse single-sided paper for drafts and note pads. Establish a draft paper tray near laser printers and copy machines so that single-sided sheets can be reused.
 - Before running a large number of copies, do a one-page test of copier settings. Remember to clear features when finished.
 - Avoid making extra copies. Make extras later if you need them.
 - Revise forms to reduce form length and eliminate unnecessary duplicates.
 - Create a central filing system instead of maintaining duplicate personal files.
 - Proof documents on the computer screen before printing.



- Circulate only one copy of memos and reports, or post in a central location. Better yet, make them available through email.
- Share publications, or photocopy excerpts for distribution, rather than ordering several copies of the same publication.
- Use outdated letterhead for in-house memos, documents and drafts.
- Keep your mailing list up-to-date by requesting corrections and offering the recipient the option of being removed.
- Join the EcoLogical Mail Coalition and stop receiving unwanted mail sent to former employees.
www.ecologicalmail.org
- Purchase remanufactured office equipment.
- Purchase computer printers that do not discharge unused sheets of paper, or make adjustments in existing hardware and software.
- Purchase rechargeable batteries for all business applications.
- Use remanufactured copier, printer and fax toner cartridges.



Purchasing Practices

- Establish purchasing guidelines to encourage waste prevention (durable, concentrated, reusable, high quality).
- Consider length of warranty and availability of repair services when purchasing equipment.
- Substitute less toxic materials for toxic materials (e.g., vegetable-based inks, water-based glue, markers and paint).
- Replace cardboard boxes and interoffice envelopes with a durable counterpart for shipping to branch offices, stores and warehouses.
- Return, reuse and repair wooden pallets and crates.

Management Involvement

- Promote paper reduction in your company. Build awareness with contests and signs. Publicize implementation of ideas and the related savings.
- Provide management support that gives departments the authority to examine their paper use and make changes.
- Have a "File Cleaning Day" where the whole office collects single-sided documents and makes them available for rough drafts and scratch pads.

