

Business Recycling Program Manual For Recycling Coordinators



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Introduction

Montgomery County has a strong commitment to preserving natural resources and protecting the environment. As part of this commitment, the County has established a goal of reducing waste and recycling 70 percent of all waste generated by 2020.









This manual was created to support the County's business recycling efforts to help business recycling coordinators set up, maintain, and monitor their recycling, waste reduction, and buying recycled efforts. The manual addresses the most commonly asked questions and provides a step-by-step process to ensure your business is in compliance with the County's recycling requirements.

What Are Montgomery County's Recycling Requirements?





In 1993, Montgomery County enacted Executive Regulation (ER) 109-92AM, which made business recycling mandatory and required businesses to report their recycling progress to the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS). In a continuing effort to increase recycling, the County modified the existing requirements and enacted ER 1-15. This regulation affects all businesses and property owners, managers, employees, and recycling and refuse collection companies. Additional materials must now be recycled by businesses, and new reporting and program requirements have been implemented.

All businesses must recycle the following materials:

Mixed Paper (may be sorted by type)

-  • White and colored paper
-  • Magazines and catalogs
-  • Corrugated cardboard
-  • Newspapers and inserts
-  • Paperback books
-  • Telephone directories
-  • Other clean, dry paper
-  • Unwanted mail

Commingled Materials (may be sorted by type)

-  • Glass bottles and jars
-  • Aluminum cans and aluminum foil products
-  • Plastic bottles and containers including tubs, jars, lids, pails, buckets, flower pots, plastic durable containers, and #1 PET packaging such as plastic clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, domes, and cups
-  • Bi-metal (steel/tin) cans

What is a Business?

Any enterprise, individual, corporation, partnership (limited or general), sole proprietorship, or other entity or person, including institutions, health care facilities, construction sites, the Federal Government and other government agencies, to the extent authorized by law.

Note: Broken glass and glass that is not food packaging, such as light bulbs and windows, ARE NOT acceptable in most conventional recycling programs.

For more information on the specifics of your recycling program, call your recycling collection company.

Remember, most types of plastics are now recyclable.

Examples include:

- Water bottles
- Milk jugs
- Buckets

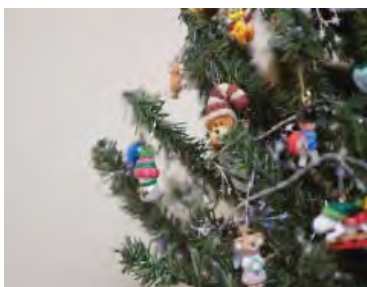


Scrap metal must be recycled by businesses.

Scrap Metal

- Appliances (washers, dryers, hot water heaters, air conditioners, furnaces, humidifiers/dehumidifiers, refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, stoves, trash compactors, etc.)
- Sinks
- Iron and aluminum furniture
- Doors
- Metal shelves, filing cabinets, desks, chairs, etc.
- Bikes
- Swing sets
- Shower stalls
- Disassembled metal sheds

Christmas Trees



Christmas trees. Remove all ornaments, lights, tinsel, and garland from live trees before recycling.

Yard Trim

- Grass
- Leaves
- Garden trimmings
- Brush

If you have substantial green space on your property or are in a horticulturally oriented business, you probably have leaves, grass, and brush that must be reduced, composted, or recycled. The preferred option is to grasscycle or compost yard trim materials directly at the source. Only when materials cannot be handled on site should they be transported to a composting facility.

Recycling Collection Service

Montgomery County does not provide recycling or refuse collection services to businesses. Instead, businesses must either contract recycling collection services with a licensed Montgomery County collector or may self-haul recyclable materials to a recycling facility.

A list of service providers can be found in the County's Business Recycling Regulation Handbook. Copies of the Handbook can be obtained by visiting the County's website at: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling. Also, check your local Yellow Pages.

Even if your business has a recycling program in place, you will need to ensure your program is in compliance with the County's recycling regulations. Per ER 1-15, businesses are required to recycle additional materials (as defined above). Check your current contract and amend it as necessary.



Yard trim. Compost your leaves and grass. Try grasscycling.

Seven Steps to Create a Successful Business Recycling Program

1. Enlist Support of Top Management

Although there isn't much difference between tossing a piece of paper into a recycling bin instead of a trash container, recycling will affect each employee in your company and some operational procedures may need to be changed. So, before you begin your program, enlist the support of top management. Most executives readily see the benefits of recycling:

- Reduced supplies and materials expense
- Decreased waste collection and disposal costs
- Improved corporate image within the community
- Increased workplace pride
- Improved natural environment

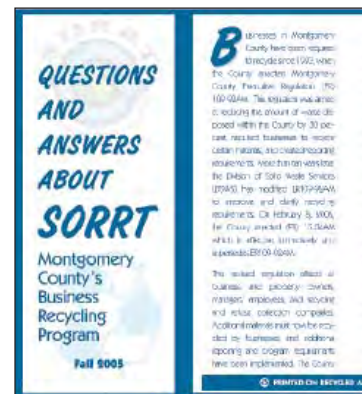
Make sure that upper management has a copy of the County's Recycling Regulation, ER 1-15 and the brochure, *Questions and Answers About Business Recycling in Montgomery County*. Both can be obtained by visiting the county's website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

Property owners/managers of multi-tenant facilities are required to provide recycling collection services and storage space for recyclable materials for their tenants. If you are a tenant, check with your property manager to learn about your recycling program. If your property manager does not provide recycling services, call DSWS at 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311.

2. Understand Your Recycling Opportunities

Just as each business is unique, so are the type and amount of recyclable materials that a business creates. For example, offices produce large quantities of paper, while restaurants generate a significant amount of commingled containers, such as glass bottles and jars and plastic bottles. In addition to the materials that the County requires your business to recycle, other types of recyclable materials, such as computers or wood pallets, may be generated at your workplace. Recycling as much of the materials your business generates as possible will help reduce your overall waste collection and disposal costs.

Where should you begin? Conducting a waste audit will help you identify the recyclable materials in your waste stream. Such an evaluation can involve any or all of these methods:



Brochures explaining the County's recycling requirements are available for businesses.



Did you know... Recycling one aluminum can will save enough energy to power a television set for three hours?

Important Questions to Ask Recycling Service Providers:

- What are the specifications of your mixed paper and commingled material recycling programs?
- What is the minimum amount required for a pickup?
- Do you provide “scheduled” or “on-call” pickups?
- What other recyclables will you pick up?
- Will you pay for our paper or other recyclables? If so, what pricing structure will be used, and what is the frequency of payment?
- What is the allowable level of contamination?
- Will you pick up from within our offices or only from a loading dock?
- Are you willing to sign a long-term (one year or more) contract?
- Can you provide monthly tonnage reports on the amount of recyclables collected for each material for County reports?

Note: Reports must provide tonnage data for each material. Ask your recycling service company to report by weight (pounds or tons), not volume.

- What services can you provide in helping us set up a program?

EXAMINE YOUR FACILITY RECORDS

To gauge your business’ current waste generation and removal practices, review these types of records:

- Purchasing, inventory, maintenance, and operating logs
- Supply, equipment, and raw material invoices
- Equipment service contracts
- Repair invoices
- Waste collection and disposal records and contracts
- Contracts with recycling collection companies and/or facilities
- Records of earned revenues from recycling

CONDUCT A FACILITY WALK-THROUGH

A walk-through is a relatively quick way for you to:

- Examine the type and amount of waste your business produces
- Identify waste-generating activities and equipment
- Detect operational inefficiencies
- Observe the layout and operation of various departments
- Discover space and containers that might be available for storage
- Assess current waste reduction efforts
- Collect other information through discussions with employees/management

PERFORM A WASTE SORT

A waste sort involves collecting, sorting, and weighing a representative sample of your business’ waste. The goal of the sort is to identify each waste component and calculate its percentage of the total amount of waste your business generates. It can focus on all of your waste or it can target specific areas.

Each audit activity has its own advantages. While a records examination or walk-through provides you with valuable data, a waste sort lets you observe the connection between the types of waste generated and the actual waste-generating activities or processes. Remember to document all the information gained through the audit. It will be used when you develop and evaluate your program.

If you discover that your organization doesn’t generate enough recyclable material to justify contracting directly with a recycling company, work with your neighboring businesses to set up a cooperative collection program. Your combined loads of recyclables can be cost-effective to collect. Or, for some companies, self-hauling materials can help you meet County requirements while generating additional revenue from selling your recyclables to a recycling facility or scrap dealer.

Note: ER 1-15 requires all businesses that self-haul recyclable materials to a recycling facility or scrap dealer to obtain scale house tickets and provide these as documentation of quantity recycled for reporting requirements.

3. Select a Recycling Service Company

What type of services should you expect from a recycling company? In general, recycling service companies pick up recyclable materials; sort by type and remove contaminants; often shred, crush, bale, or compact materials; warehouse them for a short period; and then sell and transport them to a remanufacturer.

Some companies may pick up your recyclables at no charge, although they may require you to accumulate a large quantity to make the collection worthwhile. Some may charge you a collection fee. Others may pay you for the recyclable materials your business generates.

The best way to determine which services are available for your specific business is to call a number of recycling collection companies. See the list of recycling service companies in Section 7 of the Business Recycling Regulation Handbook, or check your telephone directory.

ENSURE THAT YOUR COLLECTION COMPANY IS LICENSED IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

If you contract with a recycling collection company, you must use a company that has a license to collect and transport recyclable solid waste in the County. Collectors are required to provide a current copy of their Montgomery County Collector's License to each of their customers at least once annually. If your business has not received a copy, you may request one from your collector, who must provide it to you within three business days of your request. Businesses, property managers, and agents that contract for collection services with a Montgomery County licensed collector must also maintain a copy of their collector's license.

4. Designate Collection and Storage Areas

The key to any successful recycling program is to make it as easy and convenient as possible for employees and customers to use. The less sorting, decision-making, and walking that is required, the more successful your program will be.

COLLECTING YOUR MATERIALS FOR RECYCLING

Montgomery County requires that business owners or operators place adequately sized containers for all required recyclable materials "on site" where trash containers are located, and within reasonable and convenient proximity to all buildings and other uses on site. In addition, these recycling containers must be clearly labeled to indicate the appropriate material(s) to be placed inside for recycling. Remember, there must be a recycling container next to each trash receptacle.

Here are some suggestions for providing easy recycling opportunities at your workplace:

Recycling Cost Factors

A variety of factors will influence the cost of setting up your recycling program, ranging from the purchasing or leasing of additional containers for storing recyclable materials to hiring a collector to transport materials to an off-site processing facility.

Although there may be new costs involved in establishing your program, a well-planned program with active employee participation can actually provide appreciable long-term cost savings, especially when education and waste reduction become an integral part of the recycling effort.

When your business makes a serious commitment to recycling, it is taking valuable recyclable materials out of the waste stream and giving them new life as valuable raw materials to remanufacture into new products. This practice is important for the sustainable health of the overall business community and economy. Moreover, depending on the types of material being recycled, the market conditions and demand for those materials, and the volume of materials being recycled, there may be valuable rebates available to your business. These rebates may further reduce the overall cost of both recycling and trash disposal for your business.

As you negotiate service contracts for recycling and trash collection services, carefully review the full range of cost options, as well as the potential to reduce the size and number of trash containers, as you implement your recycling program.



Minimize Contamination

In any recycling program, contamination is a serious concern. A contaminant is anything that doesn't belong in the recycling container.

Minimizing contamination should be an important part of your recycling program. Work with your recycling company to be sure you are collecting the right materials, and never add new materials to your program until you have checked with your recycling company.

- *Ensure that you educate your business' staff and customers on what can and cannot be recycled.*
- *Monitor the recycling containers periodically for contamination.*
- *Send out frequent reminders if contamination seems prevalent.*
- *Clearly label all containers. Use photos /icons as well as words.*

In addition, you may want to use containers with specially designed lids that allow only certain shapes of recyclables to be deposited. For example, a box or container lid might have a five-inch diameter hole for soda cans and glass and plastic bottles.

MIXED PAPER

- Individual collection sites: A recycling container at each desk or workstation or on the desktop are highly effective for collecting mixed paper. Alternatively, mini-recycling containers suspended from or set next to standard wastebaskets can be used.
- Central collection containers: Consolidate paper from desk containers with areas of high paper generation, such as in the copy and mail rooms. These containers are also useful for collecting lower volume recyclables, such as glass, plastics, and cans.

For bulkier items such as corrugated cardboard boxes, it may be necessary to collect boxes separately from mixed paper and then break down cardboard boxes to fit into the central collection containers with other mixed paper.

COMMINGLED MATERIALS

The following materials can be mixed together and placed in the same container:

- Aluminum cans and foil products
- Bi-metal (steel/tin) cans
- Glass bottles and jars (green, clear, and brown glass)
- Plastic bottles and containers including tubs, jars, lids, pails, buckets, flower pots, plastic durable containers and #1 PET plastic packaging such as deli trays, cake domes and plastic cups

The methods that you use to collect glass, plastic, aluminum, and bi-metal containers may differ depending on your type of business. If your company sells or provides food or beverages in recyclable packaging for on-site consumption, you must provide an adequate size and number of recycling containers to be used by your customers. Recycling bins must also be located next to any vending machine that dispenses products in recyclable packaging. All food and beverage jars and bottles should be emptied and rinsed (if possible) before they are placed in recycling collection bins.

Here are some options for collecting commingled materials:

- Central location: Businesses that are not food-oriented and do not generate a large quantity of commingled materials should designate a central area for the collection of these materials. This could be an employee lounge, cafeteria, or kitchen. Remember, recycling bins need to be located near any vending machines that dispenses products in recyclable packaging.
- Sorting by material type: If your business generates a large quantity of any one material type, you may want to sort recyclables because markets are usually better for separated recyclables.
- To help maximize participation, clearly label each side of a recycling container with recycling arrows and a word describing the material that

is to be placed in that container. A simple picture of the material can help minimize confusion and reduce contamination.

YARD TRIM

All yard trim materials generated on your property must be either reduced or recycled. You must ensure that your landscape contractor or groundskeeper is properly processing all yard trimmings, but here, too, you have a number of alternatives for handling grass, leaves, and brush.

- **Grasscycling:** The practice of leaving grass clippings on the ground, rather than bagging is an inexpensive and efficient method for returning vital nutrients to the soil and reducing the need for chemical fertilizers.
- **Composting:** A compost pile turns yard waste into humus, an excellent soil conditioner. Piles can be housed in relatively inexpensive bins on your business' property.

To explore your options, find out what your landscape contractor, groundskeeper, or grounds maintenance staff does with yard trim generated at your site.

SCRAP METAL

Businesses are required to recycle scrap metal. Make sure that you notify all contractors of scrap metal recycling. Make it a part of any construction/demolition contract. Call a scrap metal recycling company for specifications. Your business may either obtain collection services for scrap metal or self-haul to a scrap metal recycler.

STORING YOUR RECYCLABLES

Although some recycling service companies will pick up directly from within your offices on a pre-arranged schedule, most will require you to consolidate and store recyclables in a central location. Check with your building facility manager to ensure compliance with local fire codes before selecting a storage area — this is particularly critical to paper storage. To minimize fire hazards, fire officials recommend that storage containers be covered, that the collection area have sprinklers, and that the materials be stored behind a firewall.

5. Promote Your Recycling Program

Recycling requires individuals to change long-established habits and make a little effort to do things differently. Most employees will be enthusiastic about recycling. However, your program will be more effective if you develop a positive, upbeat educational program to keep that enthusiasm high.



Compost bins are available for your business.

Work with Your Janitorial Staff

Most recycling programs work best when they're a part of existing custodial operations, and a number of collection approaches are effective. Some custodians collect recyclables when they collect trash, while others collect waste and recyclables on different days. If you are initiating your recycling program, you can add the responsibility for picking up the recyclables into your custodial service contract when it is up for renewal.

When introducing custodians to the new recycling program, explain that they are handling the same amount of materials, only now they are emptying regular trash and recyclable materials into separate containers.

If you contract your cleaning services, be sure to work with the contractor or site manager to set up a system that fits into your existing program.

When renegotiating your cleaning contract, ask the contractors whether their staff is trained for recycling and if recycling instructions in languages other than English are required.



Businesses must set up recycling programs within 30 days of opening a business.



Scrap metal must be recycled.



Computers are recyclable too. Contact a computer recycling company or call DSWS at 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311 for information.

HAVE AN OFFICIAL KICK-OFF

Establish an official program start date and let your employees know well beforehand that it is coming. Then, kick off the program with a little fanfare. A kick-off memo or flyer signed by the chief executive can highlight the benefits of the program and explain the separation and collection procedures. Before start-up week, many companies devote part of their weekly staff meeting to a short demonstration on how to recycle properly. After start-up, posters near the recycling containers and in employee lounges are good reminders for employees.

Montgomery County can help with your educational efforts; from providing supplies, such as container labels and posters, to providing on-site employee training. Call the SORRT (Smart Organizations Reduce and Recycle Tons) Program at 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311 to find out how we can help your business' recycling program.

MAINTAIN YOUR RECYCLING PROGRAM

Your recycling program will be successful if you positively reinforce your employees' recycling habits. Report to them on how the program is going, using specific details. Some ideas include:

- List the quantity of recyclables collected by your company over time.
- Provide information that tells employees the value of their recycling efforts. "Dollars saved," especially if the money is donated to a popular charity or office fund, is one effective measure. "Trees saved" is another popular and effective measurement tool.
- Let employees know if too much of the wrong types of materials are being mixed in. Remind them what is and what is not acceptable.
- Consult periodically with your custodial staff to get their input and feedback on the program. Their insight will enable you to make changes to the program, if necessary.
- Congratulate employees for a job well done. You may even wish to recognize or reward departments or floors with the best participation.

6. Monitor Your Recycling Program

Once you have established your recycling program, it will practically run itself. However, periodic check-ups and quick corrections of any problems that arise will ensure that the program runs smoothly and your company is recycling as much as possible.

To help monitor your program, assign recycling coordinators for each floor or department. For small businesses, send periodic reminders via e-mail to keep everyone informed.

7. Renegotiate Your Waste Disposal Contract

Now that you are recycling and generating less trash, renegotiate your waste-hauling contract! Ask for a smaller trash container or less frequent pick-ups.

Filing Your Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Plan

Montgomery County businesses are required to submit a Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Plan in accordance with ER 1-15. This Plan is designed to provide the County with a basic picture of how your business is, or will be, recycling and reducing waste to meet the County's 70 percent recycling goal.

- If your business already recycles the required materials, simply document what you do by completing the information requested on the Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Plan form. For a copy of the Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Plan form, visit the County's website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling, or call 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311.
- If your business is not yet recycling, information on how to set up a recycling program is available through the SORRT Program. Please call 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311 to receive information. Even if you do not currently have a recycling program in place, your business still must file a plan.

Completing Your Annual Recycling Report Forms

All large and medium-sized businesses and property owners of multi-tenant facilities in Montgomery County are required to submit an Annual Recycling and Waste Reduction Report (referred to as the Annual Report). In addition, small businesses may be required to submit an Annual Report upon DSWS request. The purpose of the Annual Report is to provide the County with information on what type and how much material a business recycles in a calendar year. The Annual Report also provides the County with information on waste reduction and buying recycled practices of County businesses. The County will aggregate and then report all of this information to the State of Maryland as required by the Maryland Recycling Act.

To determine the annual quantity of material your business is recycling and disposing as waste, consult with your collection company. It should be able to provide you with all the information you'll need to complete the Annual Report. If your collection company cannot provide this information, you may need to estimate the quantity. To estimate quantity, you will need to know the number and size of central collection

Annual Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Report Due Dates:

- Large businesses (250 or more employees): On or before February 1st.
- Medium businesses (100-249 employees): On or before March 1st.
- Small businesses (less than 100 employees): Initially due within 60 days of receiving a written request from DSWS. From that time forward, small businesses must prepare and submit reports on or before March 1st each year.
- Property owners of multi-tenant facilities: On or before March 1st.

Please note: Failure to file an Annual Report to the County is a class B violation of Montgomery County Code and is subject to a fine of up to \$150 levied each day the report is late.

How to File:

Annual Reports can be mailed, faxed, or completed online.

Mail: DSWS
Attn: SORRT
101 Monroe St., 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Fax: 240-777-6465

Online: montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling



Bales of paper ready to be recycled.



Commingled materials mean that glass bottles and jars, aluminum cans and foil products, bi-metal cans, and plastic bottles are mixed together in the same container.

containers and the frequency of collection for each material. A conversion table is available from DSWs by calling 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311.

The County recommends tracking this data monthly and adding it together when you are preparing your Annual Report. Ask your collection company to provide monthly tonnage reports (weight receipts) along with its invoice for services. Businesses are required to maintain copies of contracts or invoices for inspection and copying by the County for verification purposes.

Property managers of multi-tenant properties are required to file Annual Reports to cover the facility they manage in their entirety. Include a list of all tenants, including on-site contact, number of employees, and square footage occupied for each business.

If your business has several locations throughout the County, you may file one Annual Report to cover all sites. However, you must include the address, on-site contact, number of employees, and square footage occupied for each site.

Annual Reports will be reviewed, field verified, and audited by the County through an on-site evaluation. The County will provide a letter to each business indicating the recycling rate as calculated by the data provided in the report.

Waste Reduction – Make It Your Priority

Reduce Waste – Save Money and Resources

Reducing the amount of waste your business generates makes good business sense, because every pound of waste you generate costs your business money. For example, by simply eliminating paper memos or a layer of shipping material, you will save money on procurement, handling, and disposal costs.

Waste reduction benefits the environment, too. It helps conserve natural resources and slows the depletion of valuable landfill space. It also decreases the pollution associated with the manufacturing of products. In addition, reducing the amount of hazardous constituents in goods can diminish potential management problems at landfills and incinerators when these items are discarded.

WASTE REDUCTION BENEFITS YOUR BUSINESS

Reducing waste has many environmental advantages. But it also offers numerous advantages to your business. These include:

- Economic benefits: Potential economic advantages of waste reduction include reduced waste disposal fees, savings in material and supply costs, revenues from marketing reusable materials, and savings from more efficient work practices.

- Enhanced corporate image: Your enhanced corporate image as an environmentally conscious business can attract and maintain customers. Research shows that more consumers and businesses consider a firm's environmental record when making purchasing decisions.
- Improved employee morale. Your employees may appreciate your efforts to prevent waste. This heightened morale could increase employee enthusiasm and productivity.
- Compliance with County recycling regulations and goals. Montgomery County has set a goal of recycling 70 percent of all waste generated by 2020. But recycling alone will not achieve this ambitious goal. Businesses will have to reduce the amount of waste they generate to make the 70 percent goal a reality.

YOUR BUSINESS HAS MANY WASTE REDUCTION OPTIONS

Waste reduction activities include, but are not limited to:

- Reusing a product or package in its original form
- Changing purchasing, management, consumption, or waste-generation practices to lower the amount or toxicity of waste generated
- Increasing the lifespan of a product or package
- Reducing or eliminating the amount or toxicity of the material used and ultimately disposed

The more activities you implement, the more waste you'll reduce. Try adopting a few at a time. Once you get started, you'll see just how easy it is to integrate waste reduction into your work practices.

ENCOURAGE YOUR SUPPLIERS TO REDUCE WASTE

Your waste reduction efforts can reach beyond the walls of your business. Encourage suppliers to minimize the amount of packaging used to protect their products, or seek new suppliers who offer products with minimal packaging. Work with suppliers to arrange for returning shipping materials such as crates, cartons, and pallets for reuse.

PREVENT PAPER WASTE

Most likely, paper is one of the largest components of your solid waste stream. There are many ways businesses can use paper more efficiently, including:

- Sending messages via electronic mail
- Printing fewer copies of reports; using special tracking features to edit reports electronically
- Posting memos in a central location for all employees to read
- Storing computer documents on disk rather than making hard-copy files
- Using smaller fonts to save space
- Making note pads from scrap paper



*Did you know...
Recycling one ton of paper saves
17 trees?*



*Instead of using styrofoam or
paper cups, use reusable mugs.
Ask your employees to use
reusable mugs whenever possible.*

Request Your Supply Vendors To:

- *Ship products in appropriately sized boxes.*
- *Use shredded paper or newspaper instead of packaging peanuts to protect contents.*
- *Take back packaging materials for reuse when they make their next delivery.*

To ensure the success of your waste reduction program don't forget to:

- *Obtain the support of top management.*
- *Establish a waste reduction team to help implement and maintain your program.*
- *Establish realistic, measurable goals for waste reduction.*
- *Keep employees informed of your efforts.*

GETTING STARTED

A waste reduction program is most successful when everyone is aware and involved. When setting up your waste reduction program, remember to include:

- **Top-down support** – As with your recycling program, the success of your waste reduction effort is greatly enhanced by the support of top management. Top management should endorse your effort at its onset. Once the program is operational, managers should continue their support by endorsing program goals and encouraging employee commitment and participation.
- **Your waste reduction team** – Establish a team of employees to help plan, design, implement, and maintain your waste reduction program. Be sure to appoint a team leader who is knowledgeable and motivated about waste reduction. This person will act as a liaison between management, employees, and the waste reduction team.
- **Goal setting** – Perform a waste assessment to collect data on your current waste collection and disposal procedures and the types and amounts of waste produced. From this baseline information, work with management to establish and record realistic, measurable goals for waste reduction. These goals might include collecting revenues from the exchange of materials or reducing inefficiencies in operations.
- **Employee involvement** – Keep employees informed of the program and actively encourage their participation. To emphasize the program's high priority, begin with an announcement from the owner or chief executive officer. The announcement should:
 - o Introduce employees to waste reduction
 - o Explain how waste reduction can benefit both the business and the environment
 - o Ask employees to periodically report to management about the status of the program
 - o Gather and analyze information relevant to the design and implementation of the program
 - o Outline the design and implementation stages of the program
 - o Encourage employees to offer suggestions to the waste reduction team leader

In addition, distribute emails and reminders periodically to maintain employee support and participation. Consider offering incentive awards to employees who are most committed to waste reduction.

Selecting, Implementing, and Monitoring Waste Reduction Options

Here are a few suggestions on how you can get your waste reduction program under way.

- List, analyze, and choose appropriate waste reduction measures for your business. The information you collect during your waste assessment will be helpful here. Use your findings to list all the possible waste reduction measures you feel would be most effective. The list should be compiled based on the goals of your waste reduction program.
- Assess your list for feasibility. Determine if your options substantially reduce waste collection and disposal costs, reduce purchase costs, have low start-up costs, or boost employee morale. Remember that successful programs can be designed around complementary options that take advantage of their different strengths. For example, the cost of implementing an expensive option could be offset by savings from another option or its own overall benefit.
- Implement your ideas. You may want to build your program slowly, a few options at a time. This way, your staff isn't overwhelmed by changes in procedure, and you'll have an opportunity to identify, assess, and solve any problems in the program's early stages.
- Inform your employees. Be sure that all employees are aware of your waste reduction program, and know their role in it. In addition, update staff as your program evolves. Encourage them to submit new ideas on increasing your program's efficiency.
- Evaluate your program regularly since waste reduction is a dynamic process. Keep track of its successes, identify new areas for waste reduction, identify areas for improvement in your current program, and be sure to provide documentation to the County in your recycling plan and annual report.
- Resolve to consider waste reduction in all your future business practices.

Close the Loop! Buy Recycled!

The recycled product manufacturing industry has grown rapidly due to an ever-growing supply of recyclable material and demand for recycled-content products. As demand has grown, the variety of these products has expanded, while the cost to consumers has declined.

To keep recycling viable, businesses need to progress beyond recycling by buying recycled-content products. This step is known as "closing the loop" – in effect, completing the recycling process.



Reduce your waste by implementing a waste reduction program at your office.

The Three R's:

Reduce
Reuse
Recycle



This symbol indicates a product contains recycled content.

Pre-Consumer vs. Post-Consumer: What's the Difference?

These two terms are used to indicate the source of recycled material that goes into recycled-content products.

Examples of pre-consumer materials include materials generated by converting rolls of paper into envelopes, unsold newspapers and magazines, and plastic materials generated during production that are not used by consumers. Most industries already recover and use a large percentage of pre-consumer waste because it tends to be cleaner, easier to use, and higher in value. In the paper industry, nearly 90 percent of pre-consumer waste is recovered by manufacturers and therefore does not enter into the solid waste stream.

Post-consumer materials are the materials that have been used and then recycled by consumers at home, work, or school. Look for the highest percentage of post-consumer content as possible. Therefore, purchases of recycled products must emphasize the use of post-consumer materials to create markets for these materials.

Why Buy Recycled?

- Ensures there are markets for goods that contain recycled materials. When your business buys recycled, it helps ensure the success of Montgomery County's recycling program.
- Helps create long-term, stable markets for recyclable materials, which ultimately drives down the consumer prices of these goods. Today, many recycled-content products already cost less than their counterparts made of virgin materials.
- Reduces our dependence on virgin raw materials and often saves energy over virgin manufacturing processes. It also can reduce air and water pollution.
- Makes a difference in how your customers and clients see you. Many businesses now are demanding recycled-content products from their vendors. Some consultants are finding buy recycled clauses in their clients' contracts.
- May save your business money because it can reduce your procurement costs over the long term.

How to Buy Recycled at Your Business

ESTABLISH A POLICY

The first step to setting up a buy recycled program is to establish a policy that will lay the groundwork for all of your purchases. Your policy can include all or some of the following elements:

- A general preference for recycled products.
- A price preference, whereby your business is willing to pay a higher price (such as 5 or 10 percent or greater) for recycled paper or recycled products.
- A set-aside or goal for a certain percentage of total purchases to have recycled content.

To be successful, everyone must subscribe to and play a role in enforcing the policy. Management should establish the policy and evaluate it for changes when necessary. Purchasing agents and buyers must integrate the policy into their procurement practices and procedures, and monitor recycled products for their effectiveness. Other staff can play a role by specifying recycled products in print bids, publicizing the buy recycled policy, and providing feedback on successes (and failures) of recycled products.

RESEARCH THE MARKET

Buying recycled may be a new concept for your business. Like anything new,

it will require you to do a little research to determine what is right for you. There are three considerations to keep in mind when shopping for recycled goods:

- **Availability** – The first place to look for information is from your current vendors. They are familiar with your business and should know your needs. If they can't help you, ask around within your industry or read trade journals — many of the latter have published helpful information about buying recycled.
- **Quality** – Don't be put off by the outdated notion that recycled products are inferior. Increased demand and major changes in technology have resulted in improved products that are competitive in quality with virgin goods.
- **Cost** – Another mistake is to assume that recycled products are more expensive than equivalent virgin products. In fact, some recycled products are already less expensive than their virgin counterparts. Comparison-shopping, bulk purchases, competitive bid processes, and calculating the life-cycle cost of a product are the best ways to control costs.

REQUIRE CONTRACTORS TO USE RECYCLED PRODUCTS

Many of the products and services your business obtains are secured through contractual arrangements and grant agreements. These provide excellent opportunities to expand your buying power by encouraging your outside contractors to use recycled products. For example, you can require printers to use recycled paper and nontoxic inks for all printing jobs, or request that any organization doing business with you use recycled products.

PURCHASE COOPERATIVELY TO REDUCE COSTS

Cooperative purchasing is an old concept that has a new application: purchasing recycled products. Cooperative purchasing is a system by which similar businesses save money by pooling their purchases into a single bid instead of buying products individually. If some recycled-content products cost more than your buy recycled policy's limit, consider purchasing them through cooperative arrangements. Businesses that participate in cooperative purchasing arrangements buy off the same contract, so definitions, percentages, and standards are the same.

Cooperative purchasing may sacrifice a bit of your purchasing authority, but its benefits include:

- Lower unit costs
- Increased volume of recycled purchases
- Increased buying recycled participation among more businesses
- Increased availability of recycled products



Glass bottles and jars are made into new glass bottles and jars.



Athletic area created from recycled rubber tires.



Cardboard is baled and sold to manufacturers who will turn it into new cardboard boxes.



Producing recycled paper takes 40% less energy than producing paper from virgin wood pulp.



Every year 25 million tons of materials are recycled from old vehicles.

EVALUATE WHICH PRODUCTS YOUR BUSINESS CAN USE

The paper industry was one of the first to market its products as containing recycled content, so most of the early buy recycled efforts concentrated on procuring recycled paper, especially printing and writing papers. However, many of today's office products are available with recycled content, so your recycled content purchases conceivably could extend to all aspects of your business.

To determine which products fit your business needs, follow these three steps:

- Review current purchases to determine which recycled products are already being purchased.
- Check product specifications to determine if the maximum amount of recycled materials (and percentage of post-consumer content) is being requested.
- Examine product and contract lists to determine where you can substitute recycled products for virgin products or include recycled products in future bids.

When to Publicize Your Effort

Continually mention your buy recycled program in reports and send out news releases about the type and quantity of recycled products purchased. The publicity is good for your business and it will encourage other businesses to develop similar programs.

How to Track Your "Buy Recycled" Program

As you implement your program to buy recycled products, establish a record-keeping and evaluation system. It will help you monitor the success of the program, allow you to publicize your efforts, and simplify how you exchange information with other businesses. Set up a system to designate each recycled product in your purchasing reports (a separate code number or other distinction will suffice). The following work sheet outlines the information you will need for your records.

Reduce waste, recycle, and buy recycled today. It all makes good business sense.



WORKSHEET FOR RECYCLED PRODUCT PURCHASES

Product or Service Purchased _____

Number of Units Requested _____

Contract Number _____ Duration of Contract _____

Buyer _____

Using Department _____

Percentage and definition of recycled content requested in bid.

Pre-consumer _____% Post-consumer _____% Total recycled content _____%

Bidder (circle successful bidder)

Bidder	Pre-consumer	Post-consumer	Total	Price
1.				
2.				
3.				

Price Preference Paid (if any) _____

Was this a cooperative purchase? _____ If yes, list participants below:

Total dollars/units purchased (vendors should be required to provide information on actual usage).

Was there any good feedback from users?

For more information on business recycling:

To learn more about business recycling, waste reduction, or buying recycled, contact the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services.

Montgomery County, Maryland
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Solid Waste Services
Waste Reduction and Recycling Section
SORRT Program
(Smart Organizations Reduce and Recycle Tons)
101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Phone 3-1-1 or 240-777-0311

Fax 240-777-6465

TTY Maryland Relay 7-1-1

Website: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling



This information is available in an alternate format by calling Gabriela Monzon-Reynolds at 240-777-6486.



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