

Fact Sheet 07

Waste Recycling

An introduction

This factsheet highlights some of the many recycling and reuse opportunities for businesses. Recycling materials reduces the waste going to landfill or incineration. Whilst it is likely you will have to pay for this service (as it is merely another form of waste management) you will save money on Landfill Tax, bin rental and waste collections. However, many businesses find that the less tangible benefits, such as customer satisfaction, staff recruitment and retention, publicity and image far outweigh the financial benefits.

Business waste accounts for 16 million tonnes, or around 80 per cent of solid waste generated in London. Around 50% of the commercial and industrial waste generated (excluding construction, demolition and extraction) is currently recycled.

The new Mayors strategy aims to increase this to 70% by 2020. As a whole, waste disposal costs London around £2 billion a year and every 1% reduction in waste cuts £20 million off the bill.

Does the law say we must recycle?

Businesses' key legal responsibility for dealing with waste is their duty of care. This requires them to ensure that they produce, store, transport and dispose of their business waste without harming the environment. The new Waste Regulations 2011 require you to consider the waste hierarchy when disposing of waste.

Other pieces of legislation place further responsibilities on businesses such as the:

- Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive
- Packaging Waste Directive

However, the main push for businesses to divert material from landfill through reuse or recycling comes from the Landfill Tax, a levy which must be paid on every tonne of waste sent to landfill. Notably, the tax is expected to rise from £56 per tonne in 2011 to £80 a tonne by 2014.

The increasing influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is also driving more businesses to extend their recycling activities, as demonstrating good environmental credentials becomes increasingly important when attracting good staff, customers and even investors.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2011/9780111506462/contents
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32084.aspx
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32206.aspx



Recycling services provided in partnership with Paper Round



Paper Round
BPR Group

Why can't I recycle plastic bottles like I do at home?

Domestic and commercial recycling arrangements are different, which can easily cause confusion as people may not be able to recycle the same materials in the workplace as they can at home.

Why can't we take our office waste to the local recycling bank?

Public recycling banks are not for business use. It is illegal to take your business waste and deposit it in a public recycling bank. You are not legally allowed to transport your own waste without a licence and the costs of domestic recycling is covered through Council Tax, which does not cover business waste, so any workplace recycling has to be paid for separately.

What can be recycled?

- Paper (including confidential waste)
- Plastic bottles
- Food & green waste
- Cardboard
- Batteries
- Toners & ink cartridges
- Glass
- Plastic vending machine cups
- Cans
- Fluorescent tubes
- Electrical waste
- Wood

The most obvious place to start is with paper. 70% of office waste is paper, most of which is high-grade white paper, the most sought after type for recycling.

How much will recycling cost?

The fluctuating prices of recyclable materials means that the cost of recycling often varies. The price you will receive for your recyclables or the amount you will have to pay for them to be collected will vary according to a number of factors including the type, quantity, quality and current market value of the material. However, you should be able to get a contractor to set your price for a contract period. Always remember to calculate the savings made through not having to pay Landfill Tax.



How can we find a recycling scheme that suits us?

1. Shop around for a recycling collection that is tailored to your needs. Invite recycling contractors to visit your business to suggest solutions and options. An increasing number of councils are providing business (sometimes known as trade) waste collection services.
2. Smaller businesses may have problems generating enough recyclables to warrant a contractor coming to collect. Recycling Clubs aim to bring together local businesses and recycle their materials collectively. If one of the companies has a large enough storage area, then storage problems for smaller companies could also be tackled. Collective recycling can also help businesses purchase waste management equipment, such as balers. Speak to other local businesses or collaborate through a local Trade Association or Chamber of Commerce.
3. Recycling of most materials is possible, but cost may be prohibitive for small volumes. Charities will often collect smaller quantities of more unusual items such as clothing, stamps, spectacles etc.
4. Some companies offer what is termed as a 'Complete Recycling Scheme' where bagged recyclables are collected in a single bin. This type of collection is especially suited for businesses with a mixture of small quantities of recyclables, and can overcome the need for minimum quantities and lack of storage space.

Questions to Ask a Recycler

- What authorisation or licenses does the company hold to collect, transfer and send to disposal the products in question? Ensure that you receive written confirmation of competency and conformity with relevant regulations.
- Will they be able to accept the amount of recyclables that we produce?
- How should materials be prepared (separated or mixed)?
- What are the costs/charges associated with the program – in detail.
- Will there be a rebate for any of the recyclables, if so under what conditions?
- How will the pricing structure work (fixed price or price tied to market prices)?
- Will they provide containers, promotional materials or training?
- Will recyclables be collected on a scheduled or on-call basis?
- How must materials be prepared (central or multiple pick up points)?
- Are document destruction or confidentiality assurances available?

Costs often decrease with volume – but never let recycling hide the priority aim of reducing the amount that you waste in the first place.

What about Reuse?

Waste reuse or exchange is a good way of making use of unwanted materials and is more valuable than recycling. There are both local and national waste exchanges, online and through local groups.

What can be reused?

The list is virtually endless but common materials include:

- IT equipment
- Furniture & carpets
- Clothing & textiles
- Paint
- Books & CDs
- Bicycles
- Mobile phones
- Various materials suitable for crafts

Long Term Success

Some recycling schemes flounder, through lack of attention, changes in key staff or under participation. Here are a few tips to keep yours as effective as possible:

- Get plenty of varied publicity - produce posters, flyers and use internal emails to remind everyone of how and what to recycle and how well its going.
- Produce clear, easy to read instructions by recycling bins and 'do not dispose of...' posters on general waste bins.
- Organise events, talks, training or visits to other organisations to spark enthusiasm.
- Ensure there is visible commitment from senior management.
- Do not allow exceptions, the recycling rules apply to everyone.
- Experience shows that any individual resistance from colleagues will reduce as the system gets underway and everyone sees how simple it is.

Where can I find further information?

Type of information	Link	What you'll find
Resources	www.letsrecycle.com	Guidance
	www.recycle-more.co.uk	
	www.fonesforsafety.org.uk	
	www.recycle-it.co.uk	
The Mayors Business Waste Strategy for London Nov 2011	Recycling Symbols & Free Posters	Signpost to business support
Service Providers	www.wastedirectory.org.uk	Directory
Recycling Symbols & Free Posters	www.recyclenow.com/what_i_do_today/start_recycling_at_2.html	Guidance and resources

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Factsheets available on our website – log on to www.insw1.com/greenbusiness for more information.

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| 01 The CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme | 05 Green Marketing |
| 02 Energy Management for Facilities Managers | 06 Introduction to Environmental Legislation |
| 03 Environmental Management Systems | 07 Waste Recycling |
| 04 Green Procurement | 08 Resource Efficiency |