

Section 2: How To Set Up a Recycling Program

All businesses in Montgomery County are required to recycle **mixed paper** (may be sorted by grade or type), **commingled materials** (aluminum cans and foil products, bi-metal steel/tin cans, glass bottles and jars, and plastic bottles and containers) which may be sorted by type, **yard trim**, **Christmas trees**, and **scrap metal**.

Many organizations in Montgomery County already are recycling. They have learned that establishing a successful recycling program involves eight basic steps.

You can benefit from their experiences.



1. Enlist the Support of Top Management

There is not much difference between tossing a piece of paper into a trash can and tossing it into a designated recycling container. But recycling will affect every employee in your company and require changing several procedures. So before you begin, enlist the support of top management.

For most companies, recycling can be implemented for very little time and money.

Most executives readily see the benefits:

- reduced supplies and materials expense
- reduced waste collection and disposal costs
- improved corporate image within the community
- an increase in employees' pride in their workplace
- a positive impact on the environment

Make sure upper management has a copy of the County regulation, Executive Regulation 15-04AM, or at least the helpful brochure, Questions and Answers About Business Recycling in Montgomery County that can be obtained by calling DSWS.

2. Identify a Recycling Coordinator

Just as with any other program in your organization, an effective recycling program needs leadership. Most companies appoint a recycling coordinator, often assigning the task to the office or facilities manager.



In many companies, recycling starts because one person volunteers for the job of recycling coordinator.

The coordinator should take responsibility for:

- selecting a recycling service company (refer to the list of recycling companies in Section 7 of this handbook, or look in the telephone directory under “recycling” or “scrap”)
- organizing the collection system
- getting employees involved
- tracking the progress of the program
- keeping files on contracts and weight receipts provided by recycling collection companies that show quantity of each material collected each month. Ask your recycling company to submit this weight report with invoices. Also make sure to obtain weight receipts of the solid waste that is collected for disposal. Executive Regulation 15-04AM requires businesses to maintain any contracts and invoices for collection and disposition of materials recycled for a period covering the most recent five (5) years. This documentation must be available upon request to the County for inspection and copying during normal business hours.

Depending on the size of your organization, the coordinator may spend anywhere from a day or two to a couple of weeks getting a recycling program off the ground. After the program has started, the coordinator should need only a few hours each month to oversee the program.

In addition to the coordinator, it's useful to have program monitors on each floor or in each department. Program monitors should have a good rapport with the staff and a thorough understanding of how the program works. Monitors are responsible for:

- making sure recycling containers are relatively free from non-recyclable trash,
- ensuring recycling bins are located next to any trash container(s),
- ensuring recycling bins are located near vending machines that dispense products in recyclable packaging,
- notifying the coordinator if a container is overflowing with recyclables or trash, and
- encouraging employees to participate in the program.

Montgomery County's business recycling staff offers training for both the coordinator and the program monitors. Call 3-1-1 or (240) 777-0311 for details.

Commonly collected paper grades

Waste paper dealers accept a variety of papers; ask your dealer what is accepted. This is a list of the most commonly collected papers.

Mixed paper: Includes acceptable paper items which are not separated by type, but are mixed and collected together. These items include white paper, colored paper, corrugated cardboard, boxboard, newspapers and inserts, magazines, catalogs, telephone directories, paperback books, unwanted mail, and other clean, dry paper. Remember to keep commingled materials (metals, glass and plastic) separate from mixed paper items.

Businesses may also recycle paper that has been separated into specific grades:

Hard white paper: Unprinted and uncoated white paper. This paper is usually found in print shops.

Computer printouts: Continuous paper (can be torn apart or shredded), usually solid white, or printed on a laser printer.

White ledger: White paper in single sheets or continuous white forms with black ink printing. May contain some colored ink, but not significantly colored. May include copy paper, letterhead, envelopes without windows or labels or any of the grades mentioned previously (such as computer printouts).

Mixed white paper: Combinations of the above.

Colored ledger: Same as white ledger, only the paper is colored. Carbonless forms are also in this grade.

Coated paper: Typically white paper with a glossy finish. Usually brochures or annual reports.

Mixed office paper: Any combination of the grades mentioned above.

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3. Understand Your Recycling Opportunities

Most organizations regularly generate materials that are required to be recycled under the County's business recycling regulations. They include:

Mixed paper.

Includes acceptable paper items which are not separated by type, but are mixed and collected together. These items include white paper, colored paper, corrugated cardboard, box-board, newspapers and inserts, magazines, catalogs, telephone directories, paperback books, unwanted mail, and other clean, dry paper. Businesses have the option of separating paper by type or grade.

Commingled materials.

Includes acceptable items such as those listed below that are not separated by type, but are mixed together in one container. Businesses have the option to separate for recycling collection any of these items.

Glass bottles and jars.

Clear, brown, and green glass bottles and jars.

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

Aluminum cans and foil products.

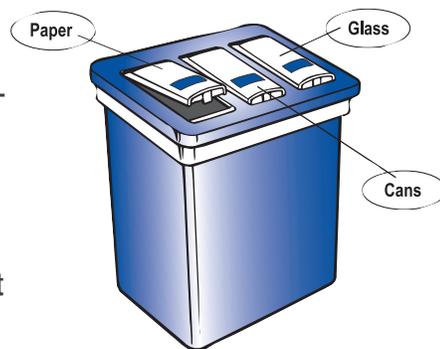
Aluminum cans, which usually contain soft drinks or beer, and aluminum foil.

Steel/bi-metal cans.

Steel/tin cans are usually generated by food service.

Plastic bottles and containers.

Any plastic bottle or container including tubs, jars, lids/caps, pails, buckets, flower pots, reusable containers and lids, and #1 PET thermoform packaging such as plastic clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, cups, domes and lids.



Yard trim.

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 most preferred option is to grasscycle or compost yard trim materials on-site, directly at the source. Only in instances where materials cannot be handled on-site, should they be transported off-site to a composting facility.

Christmas trees.

Scrap metal.

Acceptable items consisting of metal and/or predominantly metal materials. These items include washers and dryers, refrigerators, air conditioners, dishwashers, sinks, stoves, freezers, furnaces, hot water heaters, trash compactors, iron furniture, doors, cabinets, humidifiers/dehumidifiers, bikes, swing sets, aluminum lawn chairs, shower stalls, disassembled metals sheds, fencing, wiring, shelving units and more.

In addition to these required recyclable materials, your business may generate a large quantity of other materials that could be recycled. For example, your business may generate computers or wood pallets that can be recycled. Recycling all of the materials you can will reduce your waste collection and disposal costs.

If your organization generates quantities of recyclable materials too small to justify contracting with a recycling company, work with your building manager and/or neighboring businesses to set up a cooperative collection program. Your combined loads of recyclables can be cost-effective to collect.

You may consider having an employee transport materials directly to a private or non-profit recycling center or scrap dealer. By directly hauling your recyclables, your company may generate some revenue from selling your recyclables at a recycling center or scrap yard. (See Recycling Companies list in Section 7 of this handbook.) Executive Regulation 15-04AM requires all businesses that self-haul recyclable materials to a recycling center or scrap yard to obtain scale house tickets and provide these as documentation of quantity recycled for reporting requirements.

Your business may also self-haul its recyclables to the Montgomery County Shady Grove Processing Facility and Transfer Station located at 16101/16105 Frederick Road, Derwood, MD 20855. For a list of operating hours and current fees, please visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

4. Select a Recycling Company

The next step in starting a recycling program in your workplace is to identify a recycling service company who will either:

1. pick up your recyclables and transport them to markets for further processing, or
2. accept the materials your business takes directly to them.

Types of companies.

Several types of companies are available to pick up your recyclables:

- **Waste paper dealers** are well suited to companies that generate large quantities of office paper or corrugated cardboard containers.
- **Waste collection companies** offer pick-up service and transportation of recyclables to a private processing facility.
- **Specialty recycling firms** — some operating on a not-for-profit basis — also pick up recyclables, often in smaller quantities, and may sell and deliver recycled paper products to you.
- **Scrap dealers** pick up a wide range of materials, including waste paper, scrap metals, etc.
- **Recycling companies specializing in confidential materials** can ensure that these documents are handled appropriately to maintain security.

What recycling service companies do for you.

When you call a recycling service company, keep in mind that recycling is a business. Recycling service companies will pick up your recyclable materials; usually sort them and remove contaminants; often shred, crush, bale or compact them; may

warehouse them for a short period; and then sell and transport them to a re-manufacturer.

Markets are essential.

This last step — selling the materials — is really the most important. The recycling service company must be able to sell the recyclable materials at a price that will support the collection, processing, and transportation steps that occur beforehand. In addition, the marketing of materials is critical to the entire recycling process: to be truly recycled, the materials must be made into a new product. And someone must want to buy the new product made from recycled materials.

Be a smart shopper: Important questions to ask the recycling service company.

Because the recycling business is in a period of rapid growth, the arrangements you will be able to make with a recycling service company are subject to change. Depending on market conditions, some companies will pick up your recyclables at no charge, although they may require you to accumulate a large quantity to make the pick-up worthwhile.

Some will pay you for the recyclables. Others may charge a pick-up fee. The best way to find out what services are available is to call. See the list of recycling service companies in Section 7 of this handbook, or check your telephone directory.

Use a Montgomery County Licensed Collection Company.

Businesses that contract for recycling collection service must use a County-licensed collection 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 been provided with a copy, you may request a copy from your collector and they must provide a copy of their license within three (3) business days.

Businesses, property managers, and/or a responsible agent that contract for collection services with a Montgomery County Licensed Collector must maintain a copy of their collector's license.

Businesses that contract with a Montgomery County Licensed Collector may receive **notification** from their collector if the collector observes, or reasonably should have observed, recyclables mixed in with solid waste that have been set out for disposal. This notification will identify the location, name of responsible agent notified, date of offending observation, specific type of recyclable observed mixed in with solid waste for disposal, and a suggested remedy. Please note that under County regulations, haulers or collectors are not permitted to collect solid waste with recyclable materials mixed in without providing the above notification.

When you call a recycling service company, here are some important questions to ask:

- What are the specifications of your mixed paper recycling program?
- 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 recyclable materials? 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. Paper recycled as mixed paper should be reported separately from commingled containers recycled. 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?

5. Designate Collection and Storage Areas

In consultation with your recycling company, set up a system to collect recyclable materials to meet your business needs. The key to a successful recycling program is making it as easy and convenient as possible for employees to use. The less sorting, decision-making, and walking that is required, the more successful your program will be.

It is advisable to work with your custodial staff when setting up a collection system. This enables the custodian to work in the collection of recyclables, as well as trash, minimizing disruption to the existing collection system. When introducing custodians to the new recycling program, explain that they are handling

the same amount of materials; only now they are emptying the regular trash and the recyclable material into separate containers.

If you contract out your cleaning services, be sure to work with the contractor or site manager to set up a system that fits into the existing program. When renegotiating your cleaning contract, ask the contractors whether their staff is trained for recycling. Instructions for recycling in languages other than English may be required.

For most Montgomery County businesses, mixed paper, including office paper and corrugated cardboard boxes will be the most voluminous recycled materials and require the most storage space.

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Collecting Your Recycling Materials

The following are some suggestions about setting up recycling programs for your recyclable materials. These principles may apply to other materials, as well.

The owner or operator of each business must place containers for all required recyclable materials in adequate sizes and quantities in all locations where trash containers are located.

Recycling containers must be placed within reasonable and convenient proximity to all buildings and other uses on-site.

All recycling containers must be clearly labeled to indicate the appropriate material(s) to be placed inside for recycling.

Mixed paper

Three systems can be used to help employees capture mixed paper for recycling.

A designated recycling bin or container at each desk or work station is a highly effective means of collecting mixed paper (copier, letterhead, computer, note pad, and forms). The \$5 to \$10 initial cost of the container is easily recouped in convenience, time saved, and increased recycling results.



A desktop container or folder is an effective method of collecting standard size grades of office paper because it requires little extra thought by employees. Custodians may empty desktop containers or each employee may empty his or her own container into a larger central bin. An alternative to desktop containers are mini-waste baskets that are suspended from standard waste baskets or set next to waste baskets.

Central collection boxes require individuals to carry their recyclable mixed paper to a collection point some distance away. Central collection boxes work best when used to consolidate paper from desktide containers or in areas of high paper generation, such as 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 (aluminum cans and foil products, bi-metal steel/tin cans, glass bottles and jars, and plastic bottles and containers)

All food and beverage jars and bottles should be emptied and rinsed before they are placed in recycling collection bins. Collection of glass, plastic, aluminum, and steel containers may differ depending on a business' orientation.

Businesses that sell or provide food or beverages in recyclable containers for on-site

consumption must provide an adequate size and number of recycling containers to be used by consumers.

Recycling bins must also be located next to any vending machine that dispenses products in recyclable packaging.

The following are some options for collection:

Central location:

Businesses that are not food-oriented and thus probably do not generate a large quantity of these containers should designate a central area, near to where they are generated, for their collection. This could be an employee lounge, cafeteria, or kitchen. Remember, recycling bins need to be located near any vending machines that dispense products in recyclable packaging.

Commingling:

Businesses that do not generate enough of any one of these materials to justify separate collection bins for each may commingle these materials.

Ask your recycling company what type of collection it provides for commingled containers.

Sorting by material:

Businesses that generate a large quantity of any one of these materials (for instance, bars generate a lot of glass bottles) may want to sort recyclables by material type. This can be profitable, because markets usually are better for separated recyclables.

To help maximize participation, clearly label each side of the container with recycling arrows and a word describing the material collected in that container.

A simple picture of each recyclable container can help minimize confusion and, therefore, reduce contamination. In addition, you may use containers with specially designed lids that allow only certain shapes of recyclable containers to be deposited. For example, a box or container lid might have a 5" diameter hole for soda cans, glass, and plastic beverage bottles.

Yard trim

All yard trim materials generated on your property must be either reduced or recycled. You must ensure that your landscape contractor or grounds keeper is properly processing all yard trimmings.

There are a number of alternatives for handling grass, leaves, and brush.



Grasscycling:

Grasscycling is the practice of leaving grass clippings on the ground, rather than beverage them. It is an inexpensive, efficient method of putting the vital nutrients in grass back into the soil, which helps reduce 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. Find out what your landscape contractor or grounds keeper does with yard trim generated on your site. Explore with your grounds maintenance staff the best option for you business. (See Reducing and Recycling Yard Trimmings

sheet in Section 5 of this handbook.)

Getting Recycled Materials to the Storage Area

Some recycling service companies will pick up recyclables directly from your offices on a pre-arranged schedule. However, most companies will require you to consolidate the recyclables in a storage area. Check with your building 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 the storage container be covered, that the area have sprinklers, and that the materials be stored behind a fire wall.

Centrally located recycling containers should have lids to prevent contamination and minimize hazards such as fire.

Most recycling programs work best when integrated with existing custodial operations. Custodians collect recyclables from the recycling containers at the same time as they are collecting trash. Some companies alternate collection of waste and recyclables on different days. Many companies add the responsibility for picking up the recyclables into the custodial service contract when it is up for renewal. Be sure to include your custodial operations staff in any of your recycling efforts.

Minimize Contamination

In any recycling system, contamination is a serious concern. A contaminant is anything that doesn't belong in the recycling container. Contaminants can include plastic bags mixed in with recyclable materials or liquid left in an aluminum can.

As more companies recycle, the standards for accepting recycled materials will increase. Minimizing contamination should be an important part of your recycling system. Work with your recycling company to be sure you are collecting the right materials. Do not add new materials to your program until you have checked with your recycling company.

6. Promote the Program

Recycling requires individuals to change long-established habits and to 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 publicity program to keep that enthusiasm high.

Kick-off your program

Establish an official “start date” for your program 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. Prior to start-up week, many companies devote part of the weekly staff meeting to a short demonstration on how to recycle with the new system. After start-up, posters near the recycling containers are good reminders for staff.

Sustain the program

Your recycling program will be successful if you positively reinforce your employees' new recycling habits.

Report back to them on how the program is going, using specific details:

- List the quantity of recyclables collected

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- by your company over a period of 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 recyclables 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.

7. 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 will ensure that the program runs smoothly and your company is recycling as much as possible.

Things to consider:

Do custodians empty recyclable containers properly?

Once you have reviewed this section and consulted with a recycling service company, you may still have questions about setting up a program.

If so, call Montgomery County’s SORRT (Smart Organizations Reduce and Recycle Tons) Program at 3-1-1 or (240) 777-0311.

8. 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.

Don’t forget, businesses with 100 or more employees are required to submit an annual recycling and waste reduction report to the County. Be sure to submit your report by the due dates listed in Section 4 of this handbook.