

Recycling is one of the most concrete, tangible activities in which a business can participate to reduce waste disposal costs and quantities. Besides diverting waste from landfills, recycling has several other benefits. Recycling – the reprocessing of used materials into new products or materials – uses significantly less energy, water, and materials than creating a product from virgin raw materials. This reduces the burden on our natural resources and reduces the generation of pollution. Recycling also can save you money if you divert a significant quantity of material from your trash dumpster.

What Can I Recycle?

The Anchorage Recycling Center, at 6161 Rosewood Street (off Dowling Road), collects most of the recyclables in the Anchorage area. See pages 6 and 7 for a list of recyclables accepted at the Anchorage Recycling Center. For more information about the Center, contact them at (907) 562-2267.

The guidelines listed on pages 6 and 7 reflect current practices at the Recycling Center and are subject to change. If you have any questions about what is currently accepted for recycling, please call ahead.

You also may check the web version of this document, which will be updated periodically at www.greenstarinc.org/guideindex.htm.

Besides the materials listed in the table, other companies in Anchorage also recycle or reuse numerous additional materials, such as batteries, toner cartridges, foam “peanuts,” and tires. See Appendix C for a detailed list of additional materials and where they can be recycled. See Chapter 11 for information about recycling services and containers.

Did You Know...

- If lined up bumper to bumper, a string of trash trucks hauling the nation’s daily waste could reach halfway to the moon.
- Alaskans generate 6 pounds of trash per person each day. The national average is 4.4 pounds.
- Anchorage residents diverted 21,584 tons of waste from the landfill through recycling in 1996. This was about 14% of the year’s waste generation. In comparison, Seattle recycles approximately 50% of its waste stream. The national average is about 27%.

Did You Know...

- Most recyclables are shipped Outside for recycling, but glass, tires, and some newspaper remain in the Anchorage area for recycling.
- Glass separated for recycling in Anchorage is made into abrasive blast media and newspaper is made into hydromulch, insulation, and animal bedding.
- Americans use 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour, only a small percentage of which are recycled.



The Anchorage Recycling Center maintains two areas for recycling:

- 1) The Drop-Off Bins are open to the public 24 hours a day. Materials accepted here include corrugated cardboard, newspaper, magazines, mixed paper, aluminum cans, steel cans, and glass bottles.
- 2) The Scrap Yard is open during business hours (9 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday). Materials accepted here include aluminum cans for buy-back, scrap metals for buy-back, aluminum foil products, #1 and #2 plastic bottles and jugs, and plastic bags and film.

Another recycling drop-off site is located at the Anchorage Regional Landfill in Eagle River. To reach the site, exit the Glenn Highway at Eagle River Loop/Hiland Road and go west to the landfill. Drop-off of recyclables is free and is accessible just to the right of the scale house when entering the landfill. This site is open only during regular landfill hours (Monday through Friday, 7:30am - 5pm, and Saturday, 8am - 5pm) and accepts newspaper, mixed paper, flattened corrugated cardboard, aluminum cans, and glass bottles.

Why Recycle?

When starting a recycling program or enhancing an existing program, keep in mind the benefits that recycling can bring, as well as the costs. Here are a few things to consider when you are determining the economic feasibility of your recycling program. Even if the numbers don't come out in your favor every time, consider the non-monetary benefits of recycling, including the benefits to the community and the environment.

Benefits or Savings

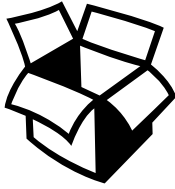
- Reduced disposal costs.
- Revenues from recyclable materials if market is strong.
- Reduced labor costs associated with waste handling.
- Positive public image in community.
- Purchasing and operational efficiencies related to monitoring waste generation and disposal more closely.

Costs

- Additional labor costs associated with handling recyclables.
- Additional bins, balers, and other equipment.
- Employee training and education.
- Hauling costs if the materials market is weak.



Recyclables Accepted at the Anchorage Recycling Center



Corrugated Cardboard

Accepted: Corrugated cardboard boxes and pizza boxes – some tape and staples are acceptable. Brown paper grocery bags are accepted with cardboard. Please empty and flatten boxes.

NO: No waxed cardboard (fish or produce boxes). No wood pallets. No wet, moldy, or food-contaminated boxes. No paperboard (also known as boxboard or grayboard), which includes cereal boxes and beverage holders.



Newspaper

Accepted: Newspaper and any other paper that is delivered with the paper, such as paper inserts.

NO: No paper or plastic bags. No plastic inserts. No string or twine.



Magazines

Accepted: Glossy magazines, glossy catalogs.

NO: No phone books, newsprint catalogs, hard cover books. No paper or plastic bags.



Office Paper

Accepted: Paper generated by typical office activities, such as white and colored paper, envelopes, window envelopes, stickies, copy paper, non-carbon forms, index cards. Shredded paper is acceptable, but not “confetti” shred. Staples and paper clips are okay.

NO: No newspaper, glossy paper, cardboard, paperboard, manila folders, paper towels, paper plates or cups, tissue paper, coated paper, magazines, groundwood paper (the type in paperback books), paper ream wrappers, or hanging file folders. No binder clips. No paper or plastic bags.



Mixed Paper

Accepted: Most paper not accepted as office paper fits this category, such as paperboard (cereal and cracker boxes, toilet tissue and paper towel rolls), glossy paper, manila folders, ream wrappers, hanging file folders, paper egg cartons, paperback books, gift wrap. Staples and paper clips okay.

NO: No wax-coated paper (milk cartons, waxed corrugated, fish boxes). No paper plates or cups, napkins, tissues, paper towels, or food wrappers. No hard cover books. No binder clips. No paper or plastic bags.



Telephone Books

Accepted: Telephone directories are accepted during a two-week period in May each year. Contact the Recycling Center for specific dates.

During other times of the year, include phone books with mixed paper.

NO: No catalogs. No paper or plastic bags.

Recyclables Accepted at the Anchorage Recycling Center

Aluminum Cans

Accepted: ARC will purchase aluminum soda, beer, and juice cans at market value at the scrap yard, open during business hours, or cans may be deposited in the drop-off bins any time. Cans should be empty and rinsed.

NO: No steel cans. No paper or plastic bags.

Tip: To distinguish from steel, aluminum will NOT stick to a magnet.



Aluminum Foil and Tins

Accepted: Aluminum foil must be clean. Tins include pie tins, TV dinner trays and other aluminum foil trays. These also must be clean. Foil must be brought to the Recycling Center during business hours.

NO: No food contamination. No paper or plastic bags.



Steel Cans

Accepted: Steel cans include food and some beverage containers.

NO: No aerosol cans or paint cans. No paper or plastic bags.

Tip: Add metal lids from glass jars to this category. To distinguish from aluminum, steel WILL stick to a magnet.



Other Scrap Metals

Accepted: The Anchorage Recycling Center will purchase scrap metals for market value at its scrap yard, open during regular business hours. Metals are separated into numerous categories. Acceptable metals include aluminum, copper, brass, steel, and lead, among others. Contact the Recycling Center for more information.



Glass Bottles

Accepted: Mixed colors of container glass, including food and beverage containers. Rinse and remove lids. Metal lids can be recycled with steel cans. NO: No auto glass, plate glass, ceramics, pottery, china, mirror glass, light bulbs, or Pyrex. No paper or plastic bags.



#1 PET Plastic Bottles

Accepted: PET (#1) clear and tinted bottles (check for the neck) including soda and water bottles. NO: No tubs or cups, such as yogurt, butter, whipped topping containers, paper or plastic bags, caps or lids.



#2 HDPE Plastic Jugs

Accepted: HDPE (#2) white and colored jugs (check for the neck) including milk and detergent jugs. NO: No tubs or cups, such as yogurt, butter, whipped topping containers, paper or plastic bags, caps or lids.

Plastic Bags and Film

Accepted: Plastic grocery bags, stretch wrap, shrink wrap, newspaper bags, drycleaner bags. Bags and film must be clean and dry. NO: No cellophane, snack food bags, six-pack rings, or paper bags.



TEN STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL RECYCLING

To create a successful recycling program in your workplace, follow these steps:

1. Start by designating a person to be responsible for the recycling program. This may be a custodial person or a staff member who has an interest in making recycling work. This person needs to care about recycling, be able to instill this in others, and have time to concentrate on recycling issues. This person also must have some authority to delegate and make decisions within the workplace.
2. Next, create a team around this person. He or she cannot create a successful recycling program alone. Designate someone from each department or each area so that all aspects of your business are represented in recycling planning. It may be three people or 30 people, depending on the size of your business.
3. Conduct a waste assessment. This is a fancy way of saying - Take a look around your workplace and see what you throw away. You can do this on your own or enlist the assistance of an outside consulting firm. Green Star can help you conduct a waste assessment.
4. Determine what materials are recyclable. Check with the recycling center and review the lists in this guide.
5. Decide what to start recycling. Based on what is accepted locally and what you learned during your waste assessment, you should be able to generate a short list of materials that are most practical to recycle. What do you generate in the largest quantities? Are these materials recyclable in your area?
6. Collect the materials where they are generated. This involves placing desktop or under-desk recycling bins for paper products at each work station, bins for office paper near copiers, containers near printers to collect toner cartridges, bins for glass and aluminum in kitchen areas, and bins for scrap metal near metal-generating activities.
7. Designate a centralized collection point for recyclables. This will most likely be a series of dumpsters or rolling carts near a loading dock or other easily accessible area.

Did You Know...

- Americans throw away enough aluminum to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet every three months.
- The energy saved from recycling one aluminum can will run your TV for three hours.
- Recycling aluminum takes only 5 % of the energy needed to manufacture it from raw materials.
- Recycling steel cans takes only 25% of the energy used to produce them from raw materials.
- Americans throw away enough iron and steel to continuously supply all the nation's automakers.
- Approximately 113,000 cans are recycled per minute in America.

8. Work with waste and/or recycling haulers to develop a pick-up schedule for the materials. This may take some time to perfect as you determine the generation rate. Collecting too often is a waste of your money and the hauler's time; collecting too infrequently leaves recyclables piling up at your place of business. See Chapter 11 for information about recycling collection services or you can deliver recyclables to the Anchorage Recycling Center yourself for no charge.
9. Educate your employees about the recycling program and involve them in planning. The program won't work if the staff doesn't know what to do. Recycling training should be conducted on a regular basis with updates, refreshers, reminders, and positive feedback to ensure that employees feel like they are key to the success of the program.
10. Keep track of what you recycle. Keeping records can help in several ways: 1) it helps to justify the program economically to upper management, 2) it shows where improvements could be made, and 3) it helps to motivate staff to continue improving the program.

Did You Know...

- Americans use enough cardboard to stack football-field-sized bales to the top of Mt. McKinley every 15 years.
- Americans throw away enough office and writing paper annually to build a wall along the highway twelve feet high stretching from Portland, Oregon, all the way to Anchorage.
- The average American uses 550 pounds of paper each year. If they recycled it, each person would save about 4.6 average-sized trees.
- Paper takes up as much as 50 percent of all landfill space, including the Anchorage landfill.
- A fifteen-year-old tree produces about 700 paper grocery bags.
- Every week, more than 500,000 trees are used to produce the two-thirds of newspapers in the U.S. that are never recycled.

