



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

The New Jersey WasteWise Bulletin

Newsletter of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Winter 2022
*WasteWise ... improving your bottom line and the environment
through waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement.*

Businesses Still Critical to Success of Recycling

Discussions about recycling often focus on residential recycling, but recycling in the commercial sector has always been critical to the success of New Jersey's recycling efforts. Owners and operators of businesses need to understand this and be aware that recycling is mandated not only in the residential sector, but also in the commercial and institutional sectors. In fact, this recycling requirement for New Jersey businesses has been in place since the signing of the New Jersey Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act in 1987.

More specifically, New Jersey's recycling rules (N.J.A.C 7:26A-10) state that generators (which includes businesses) must keep all materials designated for source separation in the municipal recycling ordinance stored separately from solid waste; and they must place these specified recyclable materials for collection in the manner provided by the ordinance. In addition, the rules require business owners or operators to report the tonnage of designated recyclable materials collected for recycling from their premises, as directed in the municipal recycling ordinance.

Lastly, it is not only important for businesses to recycle, but also to keep their recyclable materials clean and free of contaminants. Recycling industry officials have noted that recyclable materials generated by the commercial sector often have a high percentage of contamination, which reduces the marketability of the materials, increases processing costs, and negatively impacts the economic viability of recycling programs. Thus, businesses must continue to improve their programs and educate staff about the importance of recycling correctly.

Office Recycling and Waste Reduction Tips

Tip #1 - Recycling programs are more likely to succeed when they are supported by a "green team," a group of volunteers from various departments of a company or organization that come together to champion internal environmental programs.

Tip #2 - Place recycling and trash bins together in common areas. Placing these bins side by side encourages people to make informed decisions about their recyclables and trash.

Tip #3 - Use uniform recycling containers throughout your office. Recycling bins with specialized lid openings help staff identify the correct bin as do signs and labels with both text and pictures of recyclable items. Keep signage and branding simple and consistent.

Tip #4 - Continuous multi-faceted educational and promotional initiatives (including the use of social media) remind staff about recycling program requirements.

Tip #5 – Purchase products with less packaging or with no packaging at all. Request that office deliveries be shipped in returnable containers and return the emptied containers back to the supplier. Ask vendors to take back packaging.

Tip #6 - Encourage staff to use reusable plates, silverware, cups and coffee mugs.

Tip #7 – Use the "Pull printing" approach to office printing to reduce paper consumption and waste. The way pull printing works is by sending a print job to a secure server that then delivers or "pulls" the job to a printer when it is authenticated at the device by the user.

Did You Know...

- The Li-Cycle company has developed a technology for recycling all types of lithium ion batteries, the rechargeable batteries found in many appliances and electronic devices. The company has a plant in Canada and another under construction in Rochester, NY. Learn more at <https://li-cycle.com/>.
- The Northeast Recycling Council is accepting comments on its minimum post-consumer recycled content model legislation for plastics until Feb. 11, 2022. Visit <https://nerc.org/> for more information on this initiative.
- Habitat ReStores are independently owned reuse stores operated by local Habitat for Humanity organizations. ReStores accept donations and sell a constantly changing inventory of diverse merchandise to the public at a fraction of the retail price, while diverting reusable household items and building materials from area landfills. For more information, visit <https://www.habitat.org/restores>.
- Clean plastic produce and bread bags, grocery bags, ice bags, dry cleaning bags, reclosable zipping bags, cereal box liners, case overwrap, newspaper sleeves, and bubble wrap can all be recycled with plastic shopping bags at the supermarket.
- Humanscale's Smart Ocean office chair is made with almost two pounds of recycled fishing net derived from ocean cleanups. For more information visit <https://www.humanscale.com/index.cfm>.
- Sustainable Jersey has grants available to municipalities, schools and school districts for sustainability projects. Visit <https://www.sustainablejersey.com/> for detailed information.
- Check out some of the top-rated reusable straws at <https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-reusable-straws/>.
- Mazza Recycling Services, Ltd., winner of a 2021 NJDEP Recycling Award, opened a state-of-the-art single stream recycling processing center in 2020 at its site in Tinton Falls. Take a virtual tour of the operation at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJLAqk3pbbQ&t=15s>.

Don't be a Clueless Contaminator

Keep these items out of your curbside recycling bin



#RecycleRightNJ



Aluminum Cans: Hot Issues

The recycling of aluminum beverage cans has been an integral part of local recycling programs for decades. While they do not represent much in terms of tonnage, they are typically the most valuable material in the curbside recycling stream. Two key issues affecting aluminum can recycling have emerged over the last year.

Plastic Contamination - A number of new beverage products packaged in aluminum cans feature a plastic labeling sleeve around the can and/or a plastic tab top. These plastics are contaminants in the aluminum recycling process. These contaminants are also fire hazards in the aluminum recycling system. Bales of aluminum that contain these plastic contaminants will be rejected by recycling markets. Consumers should remove and dispose of plastic sleeves and tab tops in the trash.

Crushing and Flattening - While seemingly benign, the crushing and flattening of cans by residents is another issue getting the attention of the recycling industry. Crushed and flattened aluminum cans are more difficult to sort at recycling processing facilities as they tend to bypass sorting systems and contaminate other recyclable material streams. Consumers are asked not to crush and flatten their aluminum cans before putting them in their recycling container.



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<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/wastewise/brbn03.htm>
www.epa.gov/wastewise