

# Commercial/Retail

Take a Closer Look at *Chicago Recycling*

**A**ll commercial establishments that are required to have a Chicago business license and contract for private garbage collection are required to have recycling programs under the Chicago High Density Residential and Commercial Source Reduction and Recycling Ordinance. This information sheet, together with the Recycling Guide (also available from the Department of Environment), will help you establish an effective commercial/retail recycling program.

The basic requirement for commercial establishments is to recycle three items. However, if you can demonstrate through a waste audit that one recyclable item constitutes more than 51 percent by weight of your waste stream, you can recycle only that one item. You must keep the waste audit results with your recycling plan for review by the Department of Environment. The Recycling Guide includes instructions on how to perform an acceptable waste audit.

The ordinance also specifies that a "source separated" program is preferable to "post-collection systems." The City recommends that the program you choose keeps recyclable items separate from regular trash. (In order to have a "post-collection" system, you must be able to show undue financial hardship and space constraint and provide to the City results of an analytical waste audit.)

## APPROVED RECYCLABLES INCLUDE:

- newspaper
- high grade paper
- mixed paper
- steel and bi-metal cans
- high-intensity discharge lamps
- magazines and catalogs
- glass bottles and jars
- aluminum cans, foil, and pans
- plastic film
- fats, oils, and greases
- corrugated cardboard
- plastic containers
- wooden pallets
- fluorescent bulbs

## SOURCE REDUCTION MEASURES:

- Offer customers reusable tote bags instead of disposable bags
- Use boxes, bags, and other packaging material made of post-consumer recycled materials
- Switch to wipeable or reusable signs
- Make double-sided copies
- Use reusable laser toner or copier cartridges
- Use long-lasting, energy efficient light bulbs with median life expectancies of 9000 hours or long-lasting, energy efficient fixtures
- Donate surplus food
- Change to cloth towel dispensers or warm air hand dryers in restrooms
- Provide educational materials to customers on source reduction
- Return shipping materials to vendors for reuse
- Buy supplies in bulk to reduce packaging
- Reduce packing on in-store materials

## ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR EDUCATING TENANTS/EMPLOYEES:

- Ask each tenant to assign a recycling coordinator and provide these coordinators with quarterly recycling updates or reminders
- Let tenants know that they need to encourage their employees to participate in the building's recycling program

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Recycles**



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