

OFFICE WASTE REDUCTION BRIEFING PAPER: DOWNSIZING PAPERWORK; INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY



INTRODUCTION

This office waste reduction briefing paper is for anyone who works in an office setting, whether it be:

- ✓ a small, independent business
- ✓ a group of diverse businesses in an office building
- ✓ a large facility with a variety of waste concerns.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING: IT'S NOT ONLY GOOD BUSINESS - IT'S ALSO THE LAW

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Law requires businesses and property owners to:

- ✓ provide separate containers for the materials banned from landfills and incinerators (see below);
- ✓ regularly educate the occupants and users of the business' facilities about the recycling program;
- ✓ organize the collection and delivery of the recyclables to a recycling facility.

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Law bans the following items from Wisconsin disposal facilities:

PAPER

- ✗ office paper ¹
- ✗ newspaper ¹
- ✗ magazines ¹
- ✗ corrugated cardboard ¹

OTHER MATERIALS

- ✗ major appliances
- ✗ waste tires ^{1,3}
- ✗ lead-acid vehicle batteries
- ✗ yard wastes ³
- ✗ used motor oil ³

CONTAINERS

- ✗ aluminum containers
- ✗ steel containers
- ✗ bi-metal containers
- ✗ glass containers
- ✗ plastic containers ^{1,2}
- ✗ polystyrene foam packaging ²

¹ Grandfathered Incinerator Exception: Residents located in an area served by an incinerator licensed prior to May 11, 1990, and under contract on January 1, 1993, for at least one year with incinerator, may send their combustible items (newspaper, magazines, cardboard, office paper and plastic containers) to the licensed incinerator. However, all residents and businesses must recycle noncombustible items (metal and glass containers). Check with your local recycling coordinator or solid waste manager to see if your business is located in an area served by a grandfathered incinerator.

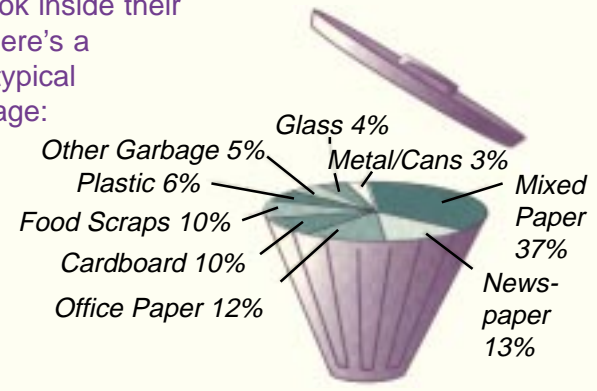
² Variance: The DNR has granted a variance for the collection and disposal of plastic containers #3-#7 and foam polystyrene packaging from January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1996. Check with your local recycling coordinator to see if these containers are being recycled in your area.

³ Except when burning for energy recovery.

WHAT'S IN MY GARBAGE ANYWAY?

Before you begin to organize a waste reduction or recycling program, assess what you throw away.

Some companies do in-depth waste surveys; others just look inside their dumpsters. here's a sample of a typical office's garbage:



WHERE ARE YOU ON THE LEARNING CURVE?

Businesses go through a "learning curve" in developing an environmental management program:

1. Initially, a business organizes a **recycling program**.
2. Second, the business moves into **waste reduction, reuse and buying recycled**.
3. Eventually, the business uses a **cooperative approach** that shares resources with other businesses for mutual benefit.

Because each business is at a different point on the learning curve, we've designed this briefing paper to address the different stages-flip to the page that best addresses your current issues!



RECYCLING

You can put together a successful recycling program by taking a simple, step-by-step approach. The lists below are condensed from DNR's Business Waste Reduction and Recycling Guide.

WHERE DO ALL MY RECYCLABLES GO?

To start your recycling program, you should:

- ✓ secure management support
- ✓ select a recycling coordinator
- ✓ analyze your waste stream

Your next step is to locate markets and vendors for your recyclables:

- ✓ Consult the Yellow Pages or contact your local recycling office to find recycling centers or specific material haulers.
- ✓ Find a vendor for the materials through the DNR's Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory - a comprehensive listing of more than 500 organizations that buy or accept over 270 recyclable materials. Call (608)267-7566 or (608) 266-3358 for ordering information.

GENERAL PAPER RECYCLING: AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE GROUP CASE STUDY

American Family Insurance, a large insurance provider based in Madison, has a solid office recycling program at its corporate headquarters building—especially for paper:



Paper collected: White paper, newspaper, magazines, corrugated cardboard

- ✓ Each employee has a bin for collection of office paper.
- ✓ Copy rooms have multiple bins for magazines, newspaper and colored paper.
- ✓ During the move to their National Headquarters in 1992, American Family organized a campaign to donate one pound of food to a local charity for every pound of paper collected for recycling. The 5-month campaign collected over 85,000 pounds of paper, resulting in a \$12,000 donation to an area food pantry

RETURNS:

Earnings: \$57,899 from paper recycling (1995 figures)
Savings: \$18,227 in tipping fees
Volume of paper recycled:
878,407 lbs (1995 figures)

CONTACT:

Rita Garczynski, American Family
(608) 242-4100



GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT

Here are ideas for motivating your staff and/or building tenants to become master recyclers!

- ✓ It's important to continually remind employees about the details of your recycling program.
- ✓ Recycling bins with uniform colors and labels help staff remember which bins are for which recyclables.
- ✓ Appoint one person within each department to be the point-person who can answer recycling questions.
- ✓ Work with your hauler and custodial staff to identify contamination problems and collect suggestions on program improvement.
- ✓ Designate a "green bulletin board" to announce updates and promote recycling events.
- ✓ Recognize individual employees or departments for their participating in the program.

RECYCLING EDUCATION AND PROMOTION: LAND'S END CASE STUDY

Lands' End, a catalog company based in Dodgeville, has been recycling since the 1980's. Some components of its recycling education program:

- ✓ Each employee receives an attractive and easy-to-understand waste reduction and recycling guide.
- ✓ The company's internal newsletter and electronic bulletin board includes recycling updates.
- ✓ Staff are encouraged to call an "environmental hotline" with recycling questions.
- ✓ Employees can attend periodic training meetings about the recycling program.

After one year of waste reduction and recycling education, the company saw these results:

RETURNS:

Sent 55% less waste to the landfill
Increased paper recycling volume by 54%
Increased cardboard recycling by 31%

CONTACT:

Lisa Mullen, Lands' End
(608) 935-4274



COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

If you share an office building or even a neighborhood with other businesses, think about working together on recycling. It is easy to start cooperative efforts, whether it is cooperative hauling, donations, waste exchanges, or cooperative purchasing. These kinds of arrangements can

- ✓ reduce expenses (e.g. raw material, transport, storage, or disposal costs)
- ✓ raise revenue
- ✓ increase the overall efficiency of all businesses involved



USING WASTE AS FEED-STOCK: BELOIT CORPORATION CASE STUDY

One company's trash can be another business' treasure! The Beloit Corporation in Beloit paid to have its mixed office paper hauled away, until it discovered a cost-saving strategy:

- ✓ In 1992, the business began giving the mixed paper to Beloit Box Board, a manufacturer of chipboard.
- ✓ The Beloit Corporation no longer pays the tipping fees for the paper, and pays no transport cost, since Beloit Box Board's plant is adjacent to the Beloit Corporation's plant.

RETURNS: Volume of waste reduced/recycled: 5,500 pounds of paper fiber per week

CONTACT: Robert Clark, Beloit Corporation (608) 364-7079

COOPERATIVE HAULING AND EDUCATION: PLAZA EAST OFFICE BUILDING CASE STUDY

The Plaza East Office Center, a large office building in downtown Milwaukee, is a success story in large office-building recycling:

- ✓ Every employee of all 75 tenants in the office building are given desk-side recycling bins for mixed paper, which they empty into a central paper bin within their suite.
- ✓ The building's janitorial service takes all of the recyclables to the loading dock, where the contracted hauler picks them up.
- ✓ The hauler and management company cooperate to present training sessions for new tenants on a regular basis. The company and hauler also provide educational brochures for tenants.

RETURNS: Earnings: \$831 per month from paper

CONTACT: Jan Kusko, Plaza East Office Center (414) 347-6900

COOPERATIVE BAILING: MOORE BUSINESS FORMS CASE STUDY



A baler is a considerable investment for any company.

Some businesses have made partnerships to bale and haul recyclable, thus cutting down on labor, transport, and equipment costs.

One example is Moore Business Forms in Monroe.

- ✓ Since 1993, Moore has partnered with Industrial Combustion, Swiss Colony, Monroe Evening Times, and the Monroe School District to bale their paper waste together.
- ✓ Moore charges the other institutions for the labor to bale the paper waste, or simply collects the revenue generated from the other company's waste as compensation for the use of Moore's baler. Every business wins - none of the other four businesses has to purchase or maintain a baler, and Moore collects extra revenue from the mixed paper.

CONTACT: Dick Leitzen, Moore Business Forms (608) 329-9216

WASTE EXCHANGES: GREATER BELOIT MATERIALS EXCHANGE CASE STUDY

The Beloit Materials Exchange (or BMEx) is a service that finds new homes for surplus materials generated by business, industry, and non-profit organizations



throughout Wisconsin. Businesses can call, mail or fax BMEx to list either available or wanted items; such exchanges are often no-cost or low-cost.

Exchanges have included:

- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Computer equipment
- ✓ Textiles and paints
- ✓ Packing materials
- ✓ Office furniture
- ✓ Chemicals

RETURNS: Savings/earnings (over a 4-month period): \$12,300, based on the value recipient placed on exchanged material.

Diversion from Landfill (over a 4-month period): 19,600 lbs of solid waste, 177 gallons of liquid waste

CONTACT: Teresa Zapranoff, Beloit Materials Exchange (BMEx) (608) 365-8835

The number of waste exchange programs in Wisconsin is steadily growing. Call the Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center (608-262-0385) for more information about waste exchange services.



WASTE REDUCTION AND REUSE

Now that your recycling program is in place, it's time to reduce and reuse your waste. Cutting down on waste by reducing and reusing not only improves your environmental record, it also improves your bottom line and can increase the overall efficiency of your business. Below are some approaches and case studies to help your business or building cut down on its waste.

PAPER

- ✓ Use both sides of paper whenever possible and make double-sided copies.
- ✓ Keep one-sided scrap paper for draft copies, informal notes, or scratch paper.
- ✓ Edit documents on the computer rather than printing draft copies.
- ✓ Carefully evaluate quantities needed for reports and publications.
- ✓ Update mailing lists regularly to reduce wasted mail.
- ✓ Use Post-it™ notes or reusable transparencies to send faxes, instead of a full-page cover sheet.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

- ✓ Set up a storage/exchange area for reusable office supplies such as envelopes, file folders, binders, shipping boxes, and packing material.
- ✓ Rent, borrow, or share equipment you use infrequently.
- ✓ Purchase rechargeable batteries for employees' use in beepers, flashlights, calculators, etc.
- ✓ Use a cloth-towel dispenser or hot-air dryer in the restroom.
- ✓ For the kitchen area and catered events, use washable utensils, tableware and napkins; avoid disposable products such as paper towels, single-serving creamers and sugars.

REUSABLE MUGS

If your office is large enough to have its own cafeteria, start a reusable mug program.

- ✓ Give a discount on beverages if employees use their mug.
- ✓ Choose coffee vending machines that are for mugs as well as disposable cups.

COMPUTERS

Because of the widespread use and continual upgrading of computers in today's workplace, computer recycling and reuse has become one of the hottest topics for a business' recycling coordinator. An expanding number of reconditioners, brokers, and scrap metal dealers in Wisconsin, the U.S. and other countries accept:

- ✓ disk drives
- ✓ modems
- ✓ monitors
- ✓ printers
- ✓ toner cartridges
- ✓ whole computers



Consult the Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory (see the "Recycling" or "Resources" section of this briefing paper), or order Resource Recycling's "Directory of U.S. and Canadian Scrap Computer Processors" (call 503-227-1319 for information).

INTERNAL REPORTING: NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Installing an electronic reporting system may seem on unwieldy task, but it can do wonders for reducing your company's paper use and increasing its overall efficiency.



Northwest Mutual Life Insurance Company discovered that it was generating a vast amount of paper waste—just for internal reporting. Since instituting their computerized reporting system, they conserve a substantial amount of paper each year.

RETURNS: Waste reduced: 40,000 sheets of paper per year

CONTACT: Bruce Herro, Northwestern Mutual (414) 299-1576

THE TELEPHONE: A FORGOTTEN TOOL

The next time you start to write a short memo, consider the telephone instead.

- ✓ Many paper documents can be conveyed as phone conversations.
- ✓ Your voicemail system may have many of the same features as your email system—you can forward or save messages, create distribution lists, etc.

This simple method can cut down on paper use, computer energy use, and your own time.



BUYING RECYCLED

The other half of an effective waste reduction and recycling program is buying recycled. As important as it is to recycle, it is also significant to create markets for recycled products!

STARTING A BUY RECYCLED PROGRAM

- ✓ Secure management commitment for buying recycled products.
- ✓ Organize cross-departmental teams to research and coordinate buying recycled.
- ✓ Educate co-workers about recycled products
- ✓ Evaluate your current purchases for opportunities to buy recycled (see the Questions for Your Vendor to the right).
- ✓ Revise the specifications, policies, and procedures of your purchasing protocol to support buying recycled.
- ✓ Set goals for buying recycled and phase in products.
- ✓ Assign employees to test specified products
- ✓ Promote the new recycled products internally.
- ✓ Monitor your overall program and the market for recycled products.



WISCONSIN TISSUE CASE STUDY

Wisconsin Tissue is a large paper product manufacturing company in Menasha. In 1993, the company formed an



internal Buy Recycled Task Force. The Task Force

- ✓ researched what kinds of products could be purchased that had recycled content;
- ✓ looked into potential barriers to using recycled products
- ✓ developed a Buy Recycled Policy outlining the company's preference for recycled content products;
- ✓ conveyed this policy to all suppliers.

In addition to using recycled content office supplies and papers, Wisconsin Tissue manufactures napkins, facial and toilet tissue, towels, and other products from recycled paper.

INVESTMENT: Purchased \$54.5 million of recycled content products in 1994. Three mills use 450,000 tons of recovered paper annually.

CONTACT: Jeff Johnson, Wisconsin Tissue (414) 727-8814

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR VENDOR

Quad/Graphics, a printer based in Pewaukee, has made a commitment to use "green purchasing" guidelines, and encourages its employees and other businesses to do the same (when price, quality, and performance are comparable). The following general tips on buying recycled are from a Quad/Graphics guide:



- ✓ Find out whether a recycled version of the desired product is available;
- ✓ Reduce waste - ask vendors about how packaging can be cut down;
- ✓ Be aware - consider both the economic and environmental costs of the product (e.g. manufacturing, packaging, transportation, disposal, etc.).

Buying recycled relies on your business' relationship with your various vendors. Following is a list of questions from Quad/Graphics for your vendors:

- ✓ Is the product recyclable? What market is available for the recyclable product?
- ✓ Can the vendor re-use pallets, cardboard boxes, and other shipping materials?
- ✓ What waste by-products result from the use of this product? How can the waste be prevented?
- ✓ What is the energy efficiency of the product? Is there a more energy efficient product available?
- ✓ Ask yourself: "Is it good for business? Is it good for the environment?"

CONTACT: Chris Rynish, Quad/Graphics (414) 246-2081

FINDING RECYCLED PRODUCTS

The Buy Recycled Business Alliance (BRBA) offers an extensive guide listing products with recycled content. For more information, call BRBA at 1-800-619-2722.



RESOURCES

WASTE REDUCTION AND POLLUTION

PREVENTION ASSISTANCE:

These resources will help you find what you need to put together your office waste reduction/recycling program.



WasteCap Wisconsin-A public-private partnership that offers site visits, seminars and technical assistance to Wisconsin businesses.

Contact: (608) 267-3131

Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin-A non-profit association of government representatives, recycling services, businesses, and individuals. Contact: (608) 277-1978

Buy Recycled Business Alliance-A broad-based group of businesses and organizations committed to increasing the purchasing of recycled content products. BRBA can provide guidance on setting up a Buy Recycled Program within your own company; seminars and workshops; industry-specific guide; and recycled product fact sheets.

Contact: 1-800-619-2722

DNR's Bureau of Cooperative Environmental Assistance-This section of DNR has a variety of programs and resources regarding what many different industries can be doing to prevent pollution and help their bottom line. Contact: (608) 267-9700

DNR's Waste Management Bureau-This section of the DNR offers technical and financial resources to businesses concerning waste reduction and recycling. Contact: (608) 266-2111

Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful-KGMB is a Milwaukee-based non-profit that promotes environmental education among the general public and businesses. Contact: (414) 272-5462

Southeast Wisconsin Solid Waste Reduction Coalition-A coalition of local governments, state agencies and non-profits from southeast Wisconsin. Its goal is to reduce the amount of waste generated by both the residential and business communities of Southeast Wisconsin. Contact: (414) 896-8300

Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center-SHWEC provides education and technical assistance programs to businesses on waste reduction, recycling, and pollution prevention. Contact: (608) 262-0385

Wisconsin Waste Reduction Coalition-A coalition of government, private and non-profit groups coordinating waste reduction education

PUBLICATIONS:

WasteCap Wisconsin's Business Waste Reduction and Recycling Resources - A brief fact sheet that lists state, regional, and national resources to strengthen your waste reduction or pollution prevention initiatives. 6 pages. Publication #SW-399-96. Contact: (608)267-3131

Business Waste Reduction and Recycling: A Guide for the Workplace - A specific, step-by-step guide that helps any business design and implement a waste reduction and recycling program. 60 pages. Publication #SW-128 95Rev. Contact: (608) 267-7566

DNR's Greatest Hits - A listing of DNR's most helpful waste reduction and recycling publications, including those for businesses. 2 pages. Contact: (608)267-7566

GRANTS INFORMATION

DNR Waste Reduction and Recycling

Demonstration grant - If your business is planning to demonstrate an innovative waste reduction idea, you can apply for grants covering 50% of the project costs. Contact: (608) 266-9426

Recycling Market Development Board grants, loans and rebates - RMDB funds projects to expand the market demand for recyclable materials. Contact: 1-800-991-5523

Produced by WasteCap Wisconsin, a public-private partnership between Wisconsin businesses and the Department of Natural Resources. WasteCap's mission is:

- ✓ to coordinate a business-to-business peer exchange to promote waste reduction and recycling; and,
- ✓ partner with private and public sectors to evolve into a non-governmental organization.

For more information, contact:

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