



Recycle at Work

WASTE LESS

There's something even better for the environment than recycling: waste prevention. When you adopt ways to eliminate waste, your business will use fewer materials and use existing materials more efficiently. Generating less waste not only reduces environmental impacts but may also lower your business's operation costs.

Getting started

- Identify opportunities. Look in your garbage and recycling containers: What is being disposed of that could have been reused or not used in the first place?
- Determine how purchasing decisions can prevent waste.
- Ask all staff for suggestions to cut back on waste; they are the experts in business operations and may have helpful ideas unique to their specific tasks.

PUTTING EASY TIPS INTO ACTION

Paper

- Cut back on printing by reviewing, sharing and storing documents electronically. Identify key workplace operations that could benefit from cutting back on paper. Set all printers and copiers to print on both sides of paper.

- Request training from your copier technician – newer machines have many paper-saving features.
- Reuse paper: Collect single-sided paper to use the other side as draft or scratch paper.
- Reduce junk mail: Cancel unwanted or duplicate subscriptions.

Office supplies and furniture

- Set up a collection area in your workplace for binders, file folders and other items available for reuse. Establish a protocol for employees to check this area before ordering new supplies. For large businesses or agencies, consider posting items to an internal web site.
- Ask a Recycling Specialist for donation resources in your community.

continued

For more information
Visit www.RecycleAtWork.com or
call Metro Recycling Information
at 503-234-3000.

Fact sheets were created by Metro and your local governments to help reduce waste in the business sector. Printed on recycled paper. 09150



Recycle at Work
from Metro and your local governments

Food and dishes

- Help fight hunger by donating surplus food. Find a list of agencies near you at www.forkitover.org.
- Provide durable dishes for employees, or ask them to bring their own. Assign responsibilities for keeping dishes clean.
- Challenge employees with a waste-free lunch day: everyone packs a lunch that produces no waste.

Packaging

- Assess what is being used in your workplace that is individually wrapped. These items could be bought in bulk, eliminating unnecessary packaging and shipping.
- Work with your vendors to choose products with no or minimal packaging.
- When shipping materials, use packaging with the least amount of material. For example, use a padded shipping envelope instead of boxes.

LEARN MORE ABOUT WASTE PREVENTION

Waste-reduction tips and resources

www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=526

Waste-reduction strategies

www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/cwrc/strategies/index.htm

Success stories

www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/cwrc/success/index.htm

Waste-preventive packaging

www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/packaging/index.htm

Sources

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
City of Portland