

Recycling at your business



In 2014, the Minnesota Legislature expanded the [recycling requirements](#) to include commercial buildings. Property owners with buildings in the seven-county metro area that contract for four cubic yards or more of trash per week must be recycling at least three materials by January 1, 2016.

The following information will help you understand the new requirements and provide resources to help you, and your tenants, have a successful recycling program.

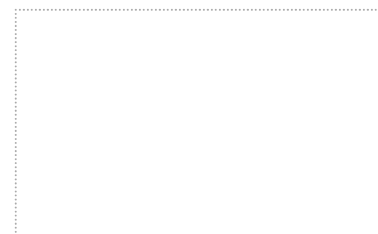
The value of recycling

Recyclable materials have a significant environmental and economic value. According to the [Statewide Waste Composition](#) study, approximately 75 percent of Minnesota trash is made up of paper, plastic, metal, glass, organics, and other materials that could be collected for recycling. That equals to about 1.2 million tons of recyclable materials thrown away every year; worth \$285 million. In addition to those lost materials, it costs Minnesotans about \$200 million to throw it all away. That's a total loss of nearly half a billion dollars.

Approximately 37,000 jobs in Minnesota are directly and indirectly supported by the recycling industry. And, using recycled materials to make new products can decrease energy inputs by 40 to 95 percent.

Who must collect

- Commercial buildings with one or more businesses classified in sectors 42 to 81 of the [North American Industrial Classification System \(NAICS code\)](#).
- Are located in Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington county.



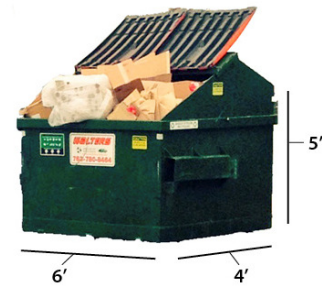
- Contracts for four cubic yards or more of trash collection per week.

What must be collected

A minimum of three recyclable materials must be collected:

- Paper: Office paper, cardboard, newspaper etc.
- Glass: Container glass
- Plastic: Identified by the [Society of Plastics \(SPI\) code](#), ranging from 1 to 7.
- Metal: Aluminum, tin-coated steel, ferrous, non-ferrous
- Organics: Food waste and non-recyclable paper - does not include yard waste
- Other recyclables that may require specialized collection, such as textiles

Single-sort (collecting multiple recyclable material types in one container) meets the requirement as long as three or more materials are collected.



Four cubic yard dumpster is approximately 6' wide, 4' deep and 4-5' high. It can hold about 60 trash bags.

Getting started - Know your waste

Every business will produce different types and volumes of recyclables. Before you work with a hauler, know what you're throwing away.

- What and how much waste do you or your tenants generate and throw away?
- What types of recyclables do you or your tenants throw away the most?
- Where would the recycling containers best serve your tenants, staff, and customers?

Setting up and promoting a successful recycling program

Customers, employees, and the community notice when businesses are environmentally friendly. Talk with your employees or tenants about your recycling program and get them on board.

Making recycling convenient will have a great impact on the success of your recycling program. Pair recycling bins with trash receptacles and place collection containers in easily accessible areas with clear signage.



Recycling can save you money

Have you ever considered that recycling can save you money? By increasing your recycling, you may be able to reduce the container size or frequency of your trash collection, saving on both state and local solid waste taxes that are only applied to trash, not recyclables. Contact

your hauler to discuss “right-sizing” your service and see what you might save on your monthly bill.

About the law - FAQs for building owners and businesses

Do you own a commercial building or business and have more questions about the law? We've included some answers to several frequently asked questions.

 Commercial recycling requirement FAQ (w-sw10-02)

Who is responsible for compliance with the requirement?

Is each business in a multi-tenant building required to have recycling?

Are buildings required to provide recycling to customers?

Businesses that provide a trash disposal for their customers should also provide a recycling opportunity for the recyclable materials generated onsite (e.g. plastic recycling for soda bottles at a food court).

Recycling programs are most successful and maximize the amount of material recycled when trash and recycling collection containers are co-located and have clear signage.

What about apartments and condos? What other business are required to recycle?

Can I save money by increasing my building's recycling?

What if my building isn't in compliance by January 1, 2016?

Resources

- [Minnesota DEED: A Guide to Starting a Business in Minnesota](#) (pages 89-93 contain recycling information)
- [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#)
 - [Waste and pollution prevention for businesses](#)
 - [Cost benefit analysis of school recycling](#)
- [Minnesota Technical Assistance](#) helps Minnesota businesses business reduce waste and prevent pollution
- [Minnesota Waste Wise](#) offers waste audits, guidance, and success stories.
- [National Waste and Recycling Association](#): Trade association for recycling companies
- [Recycle More Minnesota](#): Contacts for county solid waste staff
 - The [school recycling toolkit](#) is adaptable for businesses and gives step-by-step instructions for setting up a recycling program.
- [Recycling Association of Minnesota](#) provides education, resources, and networking opportunities
- [Rethink Recycling](#): Twin Cities metro area business recycling guide

County assistance

- [Anoka](#)
- [Carver](#)
- [Dakota](#)
- [Hennepin](#)
- [Ramsey or BizRecycling](#)
- [Scott](#)
- [Washington or BizRecycling](#)

Signage

Using consistent labels and bins throughout your building will help to increase participation and decrease contamination.

- [Recycling Association of Minnesota](#)
- [Rethink Recycling](#) offers printable pre-made signs or you can [customize your own](#).

County specific

- [Hennepin](#)
- [Ramsey/Washington](#) offers free labels for eligible businesses

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