

## 1.2 How to Use This Guidebook

This manual is a resource for small business counselors, extension agents, and others who have the opportunity to help small businesses understand the potential impacts of waste on the bottom line. There is something for every business in this guidebook. All businesses, whether manufacturers, private (and public) institutions such as medical and educational facilities, or retail and service businesses, will find useful information in this guidebook.

This book contains a number of sections of reproducible materials: brief tip sheets, case studies, check lists, and other information sources that can help businesses begin to understand opportunity related to waste reduction or elimination. In addition, the guidebook also contains reference information about public and private sector sources that the counselor or agent can use to direct their client for further assistance.

### Section 2.0 Overview of Waste Reduction Concepts and Opportunities

This section is intended primarily for the counselor or agent who may not be familiar with the concepts promoted in the guidebook. The intent is to provide adequate background so the counselor understands key concepts, strategies, and tools used by waste reduction and pollution prevention professionals. It is not expected that the counselor will become an independent expert on waste reduction, but rather an informed partner with waste reduction professionals. An important feature of this section is the use of numerous **brief examples** to illustrate concepts or applications.

Concepts emphasized include effective communication about waste as an economic issue, understanding the advantages and some of the barriers to waste reduction, and understanding the many dimensions of wastes and associated costs. A fundamental tool is the use of cost accounting concepts that include the environmental or waste-related costs that are real and often overlooked by businesses.

General principles of waste reduction are discussed along with an overview of environmental management systems that are increasingly important for manufacturers. This section also offers a perspective about the diversity of environmental regulations and how they can impact a client (Section 5.0 provides a more detailed regulations primer).

### Section 3.0 Small Business Waste Reduction Tip Sheets

Tip sheets form one of the **core resources** of the guidebook and were written to be short, easily read ideas for any client. The sheets can be reproduced and included with other handouts or materials that a counselor uses in an information packet. The tip sheet can also be used by the counselor as discussion points with a client.

Some tip sheets are generic, while others are very specific. For example, if the counselor is working with someone who is starting their own insurance office or law practice, the “Common Operations: General Offices” and “Common Operations: Groundskeeping/Landscaping” sheets are appropriate. The new owner of a hardware store could use the “Retail: General Merchandise Stores” and “Paint Retailers” sheets in addition to the common operations sheets that apply to office and landscape management. A small machine shop owner could benefit from the common operations sheets and the “Manufacturing Common Operations: Metal Parts Cleaning” tip sheet.

For most businesses, the counselor will find two or more tip sheets that will be suitable to include in an information packet for each client.

#### **Section 4.0 Small Business Waste Reduction Case Studies**

This section is another of the core resources of the guidebook and follows a similar format to the tip sheets of Section 3.0. While there are fewer case studies than tip sheets, the counselor will find examples that most clients will be able to relate to or appreciate in terms of the potential benefits of waste reduction. These sheets are to be used as supplements to the tip sheets, and can be included in the client information packet or as a for discussion in a counseling environment.

#### **Section 5.0 Environmental Regulations: A Small Business Primer**

Environmental regulations can be a substantial information burden for many small businesses. They need to know what regulations apply to them, but often don’t know or understand all of the applicable regulations. This section presents an overview of the major areas of Wisconsin environmental regulation, with the intent of providing the counselor and the client with a better understanding of the potential application of some regulations.

This section does not identify all specific environmental regulations that apply to businesses. Specific questions about regulations must be referred to the appropriate regulatory agency. This guidebook is intended to help counselors and their clients identify appropriate contacts to obtain that information. The appendices include information about where to find additional information or help from public and private sectors.

Materials in this section may be used as handouts for clients where a specific interest has been identified. For example, a small printing company or machine shop might find Section 5.3 “Determining Your Generator Status” helpful in assessing their hazardous waste status.

## **Section 6.0 Waste Reduction Checklists**

Six short checklists provide the counselor or the client an opportunity to review background environmental information about the business. The lists will help determine if there may be a need for additional information or referral. Each checklist is based on a specific area of environmental regulation such as land use, waste type, or worker safety issues.

The checklists are intended to be short assessments that can be conducted between the counselor and the business, or can be done by the business independently. Lack of time or client reluctance to sit through these questions with the counselor may be addressed by giving one or more of the checklists to the client to do on their own time. Follow up can then be provided to help the client find the information resources they need.

### **Appendices**

Appended materials consist largely of directory information, but also include fact sheets that could be provided to clients. The information in the appendices is intended to provide the counselor with appropriate contacts for referrals or sources of supplemental information that is needed by the clients.

Appendix A: promotional sheets to catch client interest in waste reduction through counseling contacts in marketing and/or program opportunities.

Appendix B: environmental regulation hotlines, fact sheets, and contact lists for consultants, environmental labs, environmental assessments, hazardous waste disposal, and materials exchanges.

Appendix C: background information on state and private sector programs and partnerships that were created to provide technical, educational, or other assistance to small businesses regarding environmental regulation.

Appendix D: reference list of information sources used to prepare this publication. Other sources of information are also listed.

### **Supplemental Information**

This section is composed of national lists of hotlines, labs, directories, agencies, trade associations, partnerships, and other potential sources of information for clients.

## **Companion Videotapes**

Two videotapes provide supporting information. The first video, "Cost Reduction through Waste Reduction: A Key to Competitive Success" provides an introduction to waste reduction opportunities and benefits through a series of case studies. The tape depicts both manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors, with national examples. This tape is intended for small business clients or audiences, and can be used in whole or in part, depending on client needs.

The second video, "Expanding Partnerships: A Comprehensive Approach to Small Business" provides the same core of case studies, but has an introduction and closing intended for the benefit of small business counselors.