

3.15.1 Retail/Warehouse: General Merchandise Stores

Tip Sheet #1

WASTE ORIGIN: **Recyclable Materials**

WASTE TYPES: Shipping/Packing Materials, Office Papers, and Food and Drink Containers

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING METHODS:

- ! **Office operations** can reduce or eliminate waste from the start:
 - ! Choose suppliers who provide **recyclable packaging and packaging** with recycled content in it, reuse shipping/packing materials;
 - ! Improve **purchasing and inventory management** to prevent overstocking unnecessary supplies that may have limited shelf life;
 - ! Remove company name from **direct mail** lists;
 - ! Make double-sided copies; reduce **number of paper copies** of receipts; use recycled copy and register papers;
 - ! Buy products or materials with **recycled content**; reuse materials that would have been tossed after one use;
 - ! Buy in **bulk quantities** when appropriate;
 - ! Save **polystyrene “peanuts”** to return to supplier for reuse, or donate;
 - ! Shred **non-recyclable paper** items for packing materials;
 - ! Enclose a **note in packages** asking recipients to reuse packaging materials;
 - ! Encourage employees to get involved in **waste reduction programs**; use incentives to involve staff; encourage suggestions to improve programs.
- ! **Make recycling easy** for staff and office patrons:
 - ! Provide **separate bins for trash**, one for paper/cardboard, and one for mixed recyclables;
 - ! Create a **list of waste items**, laminate it, and hang it in clear view to tell staff or patrons the exact destination of every item.
- ! Implement a **recycling and source reduction program** that can include the following key features:
 - ! Management must **support the program** by allocating staff time and supporting ideas generated by employees;
 - ! Select a **lead person** to act as contact to manage the program; duties could include planning, implementing, and monitoring the program;
 - ! Involve employees by **encouraging ideas** for waste and energy reduction, and encourage using e-mail and suggestion boxes for ongoing communication;
 - ! Keep **employees involved**:
 - ! **Publicize attained goals**, reward these efforts, and use promotions and incentives.
- ! Join forces with business neighbors to **create cooperative hauling** of trash and recyclables; sharing the same trash and recycling bins and disposal costs saves everybody money and promotes cooperation.
- ! **Donate** usable wastes and recyclables to community groups. This fosters goodwill, protects the environment, and is a positive marketing strategy:
 - ! Donate recycled aluminum cans to a **school’s environmental awareness program**; the

money can go to teach students about the environment.

- ! Contact area or local recycling companies about **possible free pick up** of collected recyclables on a regular schedule.
- ! Work with **state, city, or county solid waste officials** to get contacts and ideas for reuse and recycling programs; these agencies can provide technical or financial assistance in setting up a program.
- ! Use the phonebook and **network with other businesses** to learn about their programs.
- ! Use your recycling and source reduction efforts as a **marketing tool**:
 - ! Local business or government agencies frequently recognize these efforts by sponsoring ***awards and recognition programs.***

Sources:

Fact Sheet: *Waste Reduction Tips for the Office*, Inform, Inc., New York, NY.

Fact Sheet: *Popular Source Reduction Actions for Business*, Minnesota Office of Waste Management, October 1992.

Fact Sheet: *Business Waste and Recycling: A Guide for the Workplace*, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Waste Reduction and Recycling Program, Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste Management, June 1995, PUB-SW-128 95Rev.