

# WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING

[ Take the responsibility ... ]

RECYCLE



*Mecklenburg County Commercial Recycling Guide*

## THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY COMMERCIAL RECYCLING PROGRAM

On January 1, 2002, Mecklenburg County, The City of Charlotte, and the Towns of Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Mint Hill and Pineville adopted an ordinance that applies to business entities that contract for greater than 16 cubic yards per week of garbage service. This Ordinance, entitled **“Mecklenburg County Ordinance to Require the Source Separation of Designated Material from the Municipal Solid Waste Stream for the Purpose of Participation in a Recycling Program,”** requires these businesses to separate corrugated cardboard and/or office papers from the rest of their trash for recycling and/or participation in a recycling program.

The Ordinance, also known as the Source Separation Ordinance or the Business Recycling Ordinance, is a very effective tool on many levels. It reduces the amount of paper and cardboard waste going into the County’s landfills, as well as provides an excellent way to encourage and teach healthy recycling habits in the workplace. It also positively feeds the local economy by providing a start-up base for many new recycling service providers.

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## SOURCE SEPARATION

### What is it?

It is the process of selectively keeping certain materials from getting into your trash dumpster. The Ordinance applies to office paper and corrugated cardboard, which you must **separate from your trash**.

#### **Q. Who has to comply with the Ordinance?**

**A.** Business entities that contract for 16 cubic yards or greater of trash collection service per week must comply with this Ordinance, unless that business qualifies for an exemption. A business entity includes all commercial, governmental, industrial and institutional entities, both for-profit and non-profit. This is a Mecklenburg County Ordinance that includes the City of Charlotte, Mint Hill, Huntersville, Davidson, Cornelius and Pineville.

#### **Q. What is required of the business?**

**A.** Businesses are required to keep corrugated cardboard and office paper separate from their trash for the purpose of recycling. A business is only allowed to commingle corrugated cardboard and office paper with the rest of their trash if they are contracting with a Certified Mixed Waste Recycler who will do the separation for them. Otherwise, once separated, these materials may not be mixed together.

#### **Q. How do I know if my business contracts for 16 cubic yards of trash service?**

**A.** To determine if your business contracts for this level of service, first look at your invoice for trash collection service. These invoices often specify the container size and frequency of collection. If you cannot find this information on your invoice, contact your waste hauler and ask them for the size of your container and frequency of collection. For example, an 8 cubic yard container picked-up twice a week qualifies your business for participation in the mandatory program.

#### **Q. Will the City or County come to haul away my paper and cardboard?**

**A.** No. You have two options. You can contract with a private hauler or recycler or you can deliver materials to any of the County's drop-off collection centers.

#### **Q. What are the exemptions to the Ordinance?**

**A.** (1) If you contract for less than 16 cubic yards of waste collection service per week. (2) If you generate less than 500 pounds of corrugated cardboard per month, you do not have to separate corrugated cardboard (500 pounds is about 5 cubic yards flattened). (3) If you generate less than 500 pounds of office paper per month you do not have to separate office paper (500 lbs. is about two 90-gallon roll carts full). Source separation is not required if doing business from a temporary location (e.g., street vendor, construction site, outdoor festival). Businesses may apply for an exemption for physical space constraints or be exempted if compliance with the Ordinance would require them to violate other codes or regulations.

**Q. What if I don't have room for a recycling container?**

**A.** If your business is located within the City of Charlotte, Cornelius or Pineville, the Zoning Code Ordinance now has a provision to help you recycle if you have space constraints. The minimum number of parking spaces required by the Zoning Code may now be reduced by up to three (3) spaces, if necessary, to provide space for the location and servicing of a recycling container.

**Q. What happens if I don't comply?**

**A.** Failure to comply with the Ordinance may result in civil penalties. If you're having trouble planning a recycling program, please do not wait until you receive a notice of violation to ask for help. Upon request, Mecklenburg County will provide technical assistance to any business to plan and develop a source separation program.

Visit [www.wipeoutwaste.com](http://www.wipeoutwaste.com) or call us at **704.432.3200** for more information.



## COMMERCIAL RECYCLING CENTERS



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## COMMERCIAL DROP-OFF CENTERS

Mecklenburg County's Solid Waste Department offers Commercial Drop-off Centers. These drop-off centers are free for business parks and small business owners that are exempt from the Ordinance because they do not generate 500 pounds of office paper and/or cardboard, but still want to participate in a recycling program. ***These centers only accept flattened cardboard and paper.*** Mecklenburg County will place the container at your facility and collect it free of charge. The container must be placed so it is accessible to other small businesses in your area.



**ACCEPTED MATERIALS:**



Cardboard



Magazines and Junkmail



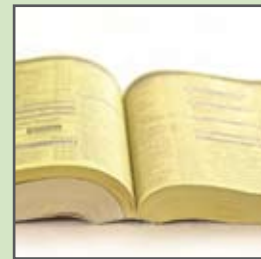
Envelopes



Newspaper



Office Paper



Phonebooks

## FULL SERVICE DROP-OFF CENTERS

The County's Full Service Drop-off Centers are generally opened to the public Tuesday-Saturdays, 7am-3pm. These Centers accept a wide variety of recyclables which are illustrated on the following page. These Centers also have full time staff available to assist you. **There are limitations on what businesses are allowed to drop off.** Visit our website at [www.wipeoutwaste.com](http://www.wipeoutwaste.com) or call 704.432.0400 for more information.



## ACCEPTED MATERIALS:



Appliances  
\* limit 4 per visit



Tires  
\* limit 5 per visit



Electronics and  
Computers  
\* limit 2 per visit



Motor Oil, Antifreeze  
& Oil Filters  
\* limit 5 gallons



Plastic Containers



Glass Bottles



Aluminum Cans



Paper, Newspaper  
& Magazines

## UNACCEPTED MATERIALS:



Wax Paper Cartons



Styrofoam of  
any kind



Ceramic Cups



Pizza Boxes

## SELF SERVICE DROP-OFF CENTERS

The unstaffed Self Service Drop-off Centers are available to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They are designed to offer flexibility as to when you can drop off your recyclable materials. These centers only accept certain recyclable materials which are illustrated on the following page.



## **ACCEPTED MATERIALS:**



Newspapers



Magazines &  
Junk Mail



Flattened  
Cardboard



Office Paper



Phonebooks



Plastic Containers



Glass Bottles



Aluminum Cans

## **UNACCEPTED MATERIALS:**



Tires



Motor Oil



Batteries



Paint Cans

## YARD WASTE AND COMPOST

Compost Central, North Mecklenburg, Hickory Grove and the Foxhole Recycling Centers accept yard waste from residents and businesses. Visit our website at [www.wipeoutwaste.com](http://www.wipeoutwaste.com) or call **704.588.9070** for fees and vehicle restrictions and more information.

### **ACCEPTED MATERIALS:**



Leaves, brush &  
Grass Clippings



Limbs less than  
5 feet in length



Pallets; unpainted  
& untreated

## GET YOUR MONIES WORTH, DON'T CONTAMINATE THOSE LOADS

Keeping your recycling containers free of contaminants is often a difficult task. Contents of recycling containers that are mixed with "waxed" cardboard, boxes with plastic, foil, cardboard with non-paper lining, garbage, trash, food, toys and/or wood are considered "contaminated" and are often sent to a landfill for disposal. When this happens, you are billed as if a garbage dumpster was serviced (at a minimum, additional transportation and landfill tipping fees will be added) and **YOU MAY NEVER NOTICE.**

Education is a key factor in limiting contamination. Educate anyone using the recycling container on ways to properly recycle. Make sure that only office paper, cardboard, and other recyclables are placed into the recycling container. You may also request that a lock be placed on your outside recycling containers to deter unwanted users.

***Remember, only the items that you want to recycle should be in your recycling container. If you have questions, contact your hauler.***

# SEVEN STEPS TO START A WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Today, waste disposal is just one of the many costs of doing business. Companies have seen a dramatic increase in the complexities and costs of waste disposal. As a result, more businesses are finding that waste management is an essential tool with beneficial environmental effects.

Waste management includes recycling, reusing, and reducing - which prevents waste in the first place. Employees can prevent large amounts of waste each day by making informed choices. The following steps will help your business.

## **1 OBTAIN MANAGEMENT SUPPORT**

*Get management to sign on from the beginning and keep them informed of all policies and changes. Their support is essential to get an ongoing commitment from employees.*

## **2 SELECT A WASTE MANAGEMENT TEAM AND/OR LEADER**

*The program leader or team manages the program and acts as a liaison with management, employees, maintenance staff and recycling vendor representatives. Choose a leader that is enthusiastic for a successful program.*

## **3 EVALUATE YOUR WASTE STREAM**

*Know what you can recycle before you begin. You may perform detailed waste analysis by sorting garbage or you may simply look into the employee garbage cans or into the building dumpster. Mecklenburg County has forms to help you analyze your waste.*

## **4 DEVELOP A PLAN**

*What options do you have for materials? What can be recycled? What can be reused? The team needs to involve management support to possibly change policies and purchasing methods. Get staff input and contact Mecklenburg County for industry specific information that can help.*

## **5 INVOLVE AND EDUCATE EMPLOYEES**

*Educate and involve the employees as soon as the program is initiated and the team is chosen. Motivate employees by various means, such as newsletters, contests, emails. The reward will be enthusiastic and creative participants.*

## **6 IMPLEMENT THE PLAN**

*Some steps can be started immediately while others will be phased in. Consider using pilot programs to identify any operational problems in the early stages. Remember to include employee education and involvement throughout the implementation. It's crucial.*

## **7 EVALUATE AND ADJUST**

*Are the goals being met? Do your first evaluation after the program is fully established. That can be as early as one month or as late as eight months. Keep accurate records and documentation. Inform employees of any changes and especially keep them updated on the program's success and progress.*

## **WE CAN HELP**

Get details for establishing and managing a business recycling program, list of recyclers & haulers, suggested questions to ask recyclers & haulers, free waste assessments, map of Drop-off centers, helpful fact sheets specific to various industries and much more!

### **BUSINESS RECYCLING INFO LINE:**

704.432.3200

### **COMMERCIAL WASTE REDUCTION PROGRAM**

704.432.0400

### **SOURCE SEPARATION ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM**

704.336.3461

### **BUSINESS RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

704.336.3777

### **SCHOOL RECYCLE PROGRAM**

704.336.3777

### **LITTER PREVENTION**

704.432.1772

[www.wipeoutwaste.com](http://www.wipeoutwaste.com)





RECYCLE



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OUT WASTE**

*Waste Reduction in Mecklenburg County*

[WWW.WIPEOUTWASTE.COM](http://WWW.WIPEOUTWASTE.COM)

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