

FACT SHEET #4 from the Washtenaw County Department of Planning & Environment - Solid Waste Program

THREE EASY STEPS TO A "GREEN" BUSINESS

STEP 1: Identify Your Target Materials

The following items should be included in your "Green Business" Management Plan. Your program should address these items at a minimum. There are likely many other materials which could be included, and we encourage you to investigate your options for those items as well.

Target Materials for Manufacturing Recycling:

Newspaper



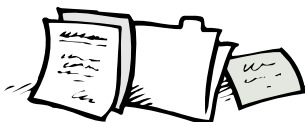
Cardboard



White Paper/
Computer
Paper



Mixed Office Paper
(colored, glossy, etc.)



Plastics
(HDPE)



Pallets/Wood



STEP 2: Consider Waste Reduction Alternatives

The best way to manage your waste is to not create it at all! Consider these ideas:

IN THE FACTORY:

- Substitute non-hazardous ingredients for hazardous materials if possible.
- Mix only the volume of material needed to fill an order.
- Purchase durable equipment and machines that can be easily repaired. Perform routine maintenance on all machines.
- Reclaim reusable parts from old equipment.
- Promote the importance of quality control. Encourage employees to set aside defective materials to be sent back to the supplier. According to Orr and Boss, a waste reduction consulting firm, waste from raw or defective materials can take up as much as 90 percent of a manufacturing plant's expenses.
- Encourage employees to develop and implement their own waste reduction ideas.
- Purchase materials in concentrates when possible.

IN THE SHIPPING DEPARTMENT:

- Request that products be shipped in reusable/recyclable containers.
- Use reusable/recyclable containers to ship your products.

- Reuse cardboard boxes or give them away to your employees.
- Reuse wood pallets. Those that are not in reasonable condition may be dismantled and used as fire wood or shredded for boiler fuel or landscaping mulch. Employees or the general public may use them for projects at home.
- Purchase products with minimal packaging.
- Shred or crumple newspaper or office paper and use them as padding in shipments.
- Reuse shrinkwrap as padding in shipments.

IN THE OFFICE:

- Use both sides of paper when copying documents.
- Use the back sides of draft copies for scratch paper.
- Print only the number of copies needed.
- Correspond through electronic mail if possible.
- Store information on disks rather than paper.

OTHER:

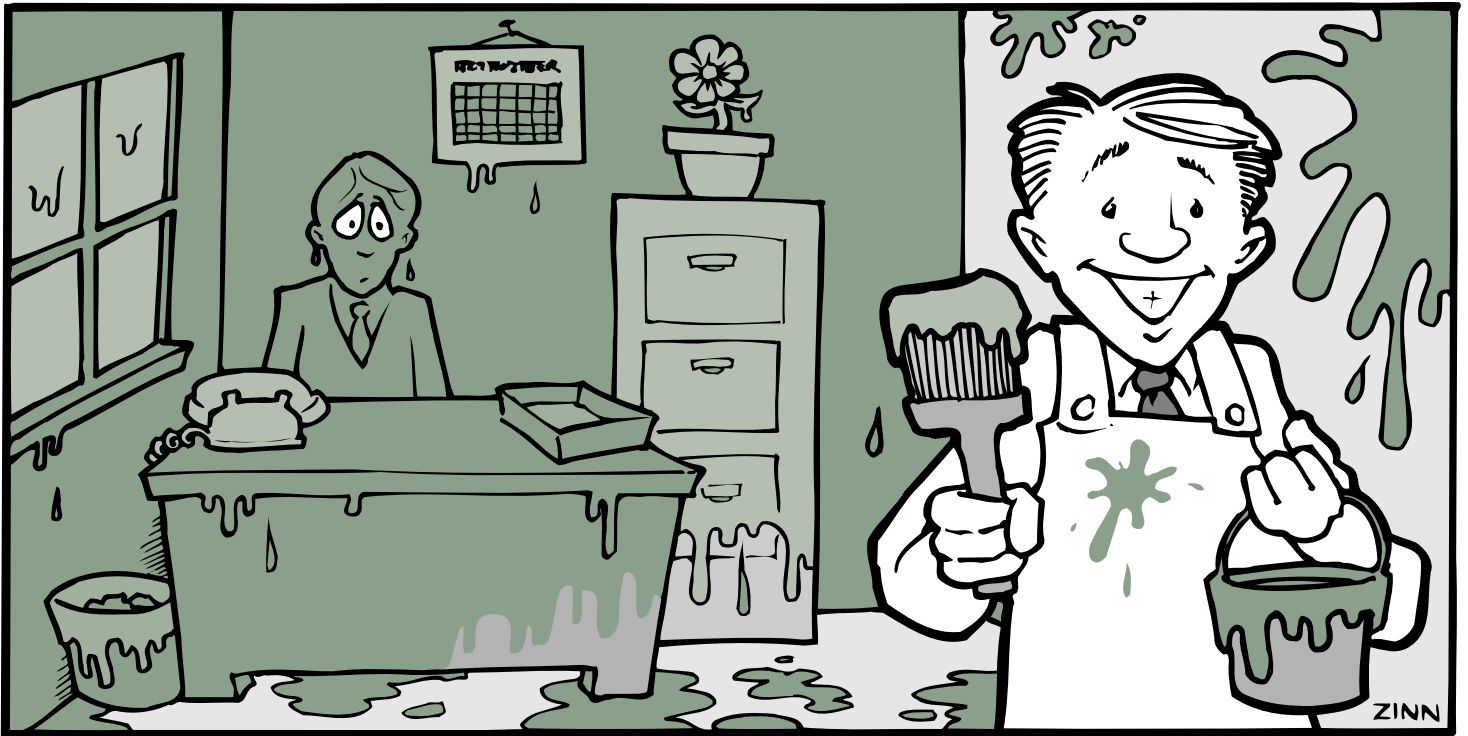
- Keep recoverable materials such as cardboard separate from waste. Compact or bale large quantities. Share compactors or balers with neighboring companies if you have small quantities.

STEP 3: Establish a Recycling Program

Each business is unique and has different needs to fulfill in a recycling program. Consider which items on the target materials list you would like to recycle.

Companies who generate higher volumes may find they can be paid for some materials. Call the DPW for an up to date list of materials, minimum quantities and vendors that serve your area.

There's more than one way to have a green business...



...look inside for other options.



Washtenaw County Department of Environment
& Infrastructure Services
PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION
P.O. Box 8645
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645