



Waste Reduction and Recycling Opportunities for...

RESTAURANTS

FACT SHEET #3 from Washtenaw County Dept. of Planning & Environment - Solid Waste Program

Why reduce waste and recycle?

Washtenaw County has taken a close look at the types of waste being generated by area businesses. We've found that a lot of material is being dumped as a waste rather than utilized as a **resource**. The state of Michigan agrees, and actually requires through state law that 25% of waste generated by residences and businesses be prevented from landfill or incinerator disposal. In Washtenaw County, this means diverting nearly 75,000 tons of waste per year! This is a big job to tackle, and one that we cannot do alone. So we're asking for your help.

How can I help?

You can help by establishing a waste reduction and recycling program within your restaurant. You've already taken the first step by reading this brochure! Take a look around your restaurant. What kinds of things are being thrown away? Can any of them be separated out for recycling? Are any of them "Target Materials?"

What are "Target Materials"?

Washtenaw County has developed a series of "Targeted Materials Listings" for commercial businesses. The listings are specific to particular business sectors. For example, items commonly generated for recycling in restaurants may differ greatly from those generated in offices. Page two will provide to you the materials which should be targeted for recycling in restaurants.

Waste Reduction in the Food Industry

Each day, restaurants throughout Washtenaw County toss valuable materials into the trash. Many materials commonly generated in the restaurant industry, such as cardboard, plastics and metal cans, could be easily recovered for recycling. Washtenaw County is committed to making a difference in our business community. Please read on to find out how waste reduction and recycling could work for your organization.

Local Restaurant Leads the Way in Recycling!

SEVA Restaurant in Ann Arbor was recycling waste long before it became fashionable. Both management and employees of the restaurant were astonished with the amount of materials generated in restaurants that are simply thrown away. Believing that much of their waste could be recycled, they sought the advice of one local recycler, Recycle Ann Arbor (RAA). Like other restaurants, SEVA needed a low-cost program that would take little effort or storage space. RAA took a look at their waste stream and helped them design a program to suit their specific needs.

RAA provided information on what materials were recyclable, how they should be prepared, and why they needed to be prepared that way. SEVA employees then placed several color-coded collection bins in the kitchen and bar, built a small outdoor shed to store cardboard, and arranged for several roll-off containers. Finally, their collection system was implemented, employees were trained, and the program was off to a running start.

Nowadays, SEVA continues to have an integrated recycling program in place to recycle aluminum cans, glass, plastic and cardboard. Restaurant management claim 100% employee participation has been a key to their success, and their efforts have cut their waste literally in half.

What if I need more information?

There are many sources of additional information for recycling in restaurants. Please contact Washtenaw County Public Works at 994-2398 and ask to speak to the Solid Waste Coordinator. Additional printed materials, contact names, and case studies may be available to suit your particular needs.

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 Restaurant Recycling:

Newspaper



Cardboard



Plastics (HDPE, PET)



Metal Cans



Glass Bottles & Jars



Unused, Nutritious food



STEP 2: Consider Waste Reduction Alternatives

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

DISHES AND GLASSWARE

Reduce paper products by using reusable dishes and glassware. In the long run, they will pay for themselves!

FOOD STORAGE

Reuse large food containers for storage.

Use stainless steel containers for serving condiments in place of individual packets.

FOOD SCRAPS

Compost fruit and vegetative scraps. Some farmers will pick up vegetative waste to feed their farm animals or turn it into compost.

Donate unused, nutritious food to food bank organizations such as Ann Arbor's Food Gatherers who feed hungry people.

CLEANING MATERIALS

Keep oil temperature under 350° F., and skim crumbs off top to increase oil life.

Use low or non toxic cleaners.

Clean oven often to avoid using oven cleaners.

Use washable wiping cloths instead of disposables.

Purchase supplies packaged in recycled containers.

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.

There are many options for starting a recycling program. A good place to start is to talk with the person who is currently handling your waste removal, and ask what type of recycling services are available. Look for haulers who are flexible and willing to work with you to design a recycling program based on **your** needs. There are some basic questions you should be sure to ask, including:

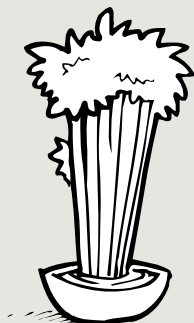
- What materials will they accept?
- What is the minimum amount they will accept?
- Will they provide recycling containers?
- How much will the service cost?
- Where will the recyclables be taken?
- Do they provide education materials such as training videos, pamphlets, etc.?
- Ask for references.

Companies who generate larger volumes of materials may find it preferable to work directly with a broker. Call DPW for an up-to-date listing of brokers in your area.

Fending off Food Waste

Does your restaurant generate large quantities of food waste? Food waste can be significantly reduced by taking a few simple precautions that will reduce either the initial waste or the spoilage. Following are a few waste reduction tips that may be helpful to your organization:

- Buy meats in bulk or in uncut form to be cut to size.
- Consider buying egg shelled in bulk to be used for general cooking or baking. This will increase your yield, since up to 30% of egg white stays with the egg shell when raw eggs are shelled manually.
- Rotate perishable stock at every delivery to minimize waste due to spoilage.
- Store raw vegetables in reusable airtight containers to prevent dehydration and spoilage.



- Cut off ends and immerse stalky vegetables like carrots or celery in warm water for fifteen to twenty minutes to prevent them from wilting.

• **Food Gatherers** is a local nonprofit organization that distributes otherwise wasted perishable food to shelters, soup kitchens, senior citizens' homes, etc. The food comes from a wide range of donors: restaurants, university dining services, grocery stores, bakeries, farms, and more. To date, the organization has collected and distributed nearly three million pounds of food throughout Washtenaw County. To find out more, call Food Gatherers at 761-2796.

How Can I Recycle More?

Washtenaw County is asking you to consider developing recycling programs for the "Targeted Materials" listed on page 2. There are, however, many other items in the waste stream which can be recycled.

White paper, computer paper, and mixed file stock are also generated in the restaurant industry and can be recycled. There are several drop-off centers throughout the County where these items can be taken for recycling. Contact DPW at (313) 994-2398 for information on the center located nearest you.

Additional materials, such as **food waste**, may also be recyclable, depending on the quality and quantity of materials you are generating. (See article at left.)

Need Assistance?

If you have any questions or need advise on how to start your own recycling program, please contact the Solid Waste Program at 734-222-6874. Our solid waste experts will be more than happy to help you!

FYI:

- Nearly 13.2 million tons of glass waste are generated each year. Food and beverage containers make up over 90% of this amount.
- Over 16 million tons of plastic waste are generated annually. Plastic waste constitutes 8.4% of the municipal solid waste stream. Approximately 2.2% of all plastics are currently recycled.

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

Recycling Haulers Servicing Washtenaw County

Action Disposal & Recycling	313-485-4666
Browning Ferris Industries, Inc. (BFI)	313-729-8200
Calvert's Roll-Off Container	313-994-5256
City Environmental Services, Inc.	313-292-0800
Daily Recycling of Michigan	313-654-9800
Dinverno, Inc.	313-892-3535
Laidlaw Waste Systems	313-292-5100
Mister Rubbish	800-971-7490
Recycle Ann Arbor	313-971-9676
Tiger Rose Trucking	810-437-9210
Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority	313-475-6160

This listing represents a partial listing of haulers who have indicated an interest in servicing businesses in Washtenaw County. This listing should not be construed as an endorsement of any particular company or program. If your company would like to be added to the listing, please contact the DPW at 994-2398.

