

# RECYCLING

## IN THE ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, AND HVAC SECTOR

### FACT SHEET

#### ▶ CORRUGATED CARDBOARD DISPOSAL BAN

Corrugated cardboard is not garbage. Starting **April 1, 2018**, the landfill will **not accept** clean and dry corrugated cardboard.<sup>1</sup> Corrugated cardboard (pictured below) is defined as three or more layers of paper with the middle layer rippled or corrugated.



#### ▶ CHALLENGES TO RECYCLING IN THE ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, AND HVAC SECTOR

This fact sheet provides useful information to help electrical, plumbing, and HVAC trades keep corrugated cardboard out of the landfill and overcome typical recycling challenges, including: infrastructure barriers, managing subscription and recycling container costs, training employees on how and what to recycle, and minimizing contamination in recycling containers.

#### ▶ VALUE OF ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, AND HVAC RECYCLING

- **Cost Savings.** For every ton of garbage diverted from the landfill, \$34.75 in disposal costs is avoided. Collection fees must still be paid when recycling, but the tipping fee is often less than landfilling or non-existent. Sometimes recycling high-value, clean materials, such as cardboard and metal, earn businesses extra revenue.
- **Enhanced Your Business' Image.** Implementing a successful recycling program will show suppliers, customers, and employees that your business has a desire to be environmentally responsible.
- **Community Benefits.** Recycling helps delay the need for a landfill expansion, strengthen the local economy and protect the environment. For example, the energy required to recycle materials is far lower than the amount of energy it takes to produce new products with raw materials; for every 1000 tons of material recycled, two local jobs are created.

#### ▶ OVERCOMING RECYCLING CHALLENGES IN THE ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, AND HVAC SECTOR

- **Develop a Plan for Cardboard.** If your business does not currently recycle corrugated cardboard, begin planning as soon as possible (corrugated cardboard disposal ban effective as of

<sup>1</sup>LMC 8.32.040, Sect. C / Recyclable cardboard\* shall not be accepted by the City for disposal in the City's public sanitary landfills effective April 1, 2018. (\*Clean and dry corrugated cardboard.)

April 1, 2018). Discuss convenient options to contract on-site recycling with your current garbage or recycling collector, or search for better services by contracting a new collector. Every [garbage collector](#) is required to offer recycling services to their commercial customers at least twice per year. You may also choose to self-haul cardboard to a recycling processor (see Links & Resources below). Public recycling sites are provided for **residential** use and should not be used by commercial establishments.

- **Inspect Your Garbage.** Assess your garbage and make a list of recyclable and landfill items that are being generated in your facility. If you already have a recycling program in place, inspect recycling for contamination (the presence of garbage in recycling bins). Inspect all areas of your building, noting where certain types of recyclables are generated. Speak with experts (garbage and recycling collectors, Lincoln Solid Waste staff, and other professionals) on recycling options.
- **Assess Your Waste Transportation Method.** Most of your business' waste is likely generated away from your primary facility, so you may already have a plan in place to haul waste off of job sites. Assess this plan and decide how you can accommodate the separation of recyclable material and garbage. The most efficient method may be to haul all waste back to your facility and separate the material into central containers there.
- **Place Containers and Labels.** Designate hoppers, dumpsters, or roll-offs for specific materials that your business generates. All containers should be labeled clearly, with signage that is easy to understand for employees. Images of acceptable materials for each container will help overcome language barriers. Click [here](#) to get additional information on containers and signage.
- **Focus on Identified Products and Waste Streams.** Implementing a waste reduction plan for a business that generates a wide array of materials can be extensive. Consider first focusing on recycling one or two products that are most noticeable in your garbage stream, such as cardboard or ductwork. When your facility can consistently recycle these products, begin focusing on other materials.
- **Plan for Scrap Material.** Scrap metal and copper wiring can be taken to scrap yards. You may receive compensation for your material. To maximize efficiency, wait until you have a full dumpster load before scheduling a pickup from your recycling collector or consider having an employee regularly take small amounts of the material to avoid some collection service costs.



Recycling dumpsters with a cutout help reduce contamination (left). Scrap metal (center) and wooden pallets (right), among other things, can be collected and recycled (right).

- **Consider Compactors or Balers.** If your business generates large volumes of cardboard through packaging, it may be worth installing a compactor or baler. These machines compress

materials, save space and reduce the need for frequent recycling pickups. This can lower collection service costs and reduce the need to acquire additional dumpsters or roll-offs. Check with local recycling processors to learn how they can help provide baling equipment.

- **Continually Communicate with Employees.** Engage all of your staff and train them on how the new recycling program will work. Include recycling rules in new staff orientations and encourage all employees to become familiar with everyday recyclable materials and container locations in their workspace. Regularly update staff on recycling and garbage management in staff meetings.
- **Get Financial Assistance.** Take advantage of the City's [Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Program \(WRRAP\)](#), which provides rebates of up to \$750 to start a waste reduction program. Look for local or state grants to help with additional funding if needed, such as those provided by the [Nebraska Recycling Council](#).
- **Celebrate Your Success.** Create an atmosphere of pride by continually promoting the success of your recycling program. Report the amount of recyclables diverted from the landfill to employees and customers. Apply to the [Recycle Lincoln Leadership Recognition Program](#) and earn public recognition for your efforts.

## LINKS & RESOURCES

- **Commercial Recycling Self-Assessment and Waste Diversion Rate Calculator**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/commercial/self-assessment.htm>  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/commercial/waste-diversion-calculator.htm>
- **Corrugated Cardboard Disposal Ban FAQ**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/corrugated-cardboard.htm>
- **Guide to Selecting / Contracting for Garbage and Recycling Collection**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/commercial/fact-sheets/pdf/collection-contracting.pdf>
- **Local Garbage and Recycling Collectors**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/collectors.htm>
- **Nebraska Materials Exchange Program**  
<http://www.knb.org/exchange.htmls>
- **Nebraska Recycling Council**  
<http://www.nrcne.org>
- **Recycle Across America**  
<http://www.recycleacrossamerica.org/>
- **Recycle Lincoln Leadership Recognition Program**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/wrrap/recognition.htm>
- **Recycling Guidelines by Material**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/pdf/guidelines-by-material.pdf>
- **Recycling Processing Centers**
  - Firststar Fiber, 402-894-0003, <https://firststarrecycling.com/>
  - Mid-America Recycling, 402-476-8502, <http://www.midamericarecycling.com>
  - Recycling Enterprises, 402-421-6655, <http://www.recyclelincoln.com/>

- **Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance Program (WRRAP)**  
<http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov/wrrap/>
- For more information about recycling and Lincoln's corrugated cardboard diversion efforts, visit [recycle.lincoln.ne.gov](http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov), email [recycle@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:recycle@lincoln.ne.gov) or call the Recycling Office at 402-441-8215.