

TIPS FOR REDUCING COMMERCIAL WASTE

FACT SHEET

The best solution for saving money on waste disposal costs is simple: Reduce the amount of waste being generated before it has a chance to enter the trash or recycling bin. This can be accomplished by looking ahead to your sources of waste and reducing consumption. Below are some tips for reducing waste at the source:

ADOPT GREEN PURCHASING POLICIES

- Choose to buy non-hazardous cleaning products.
- Consider purchasing refurbished furniture/equipment.
- Choose materials that list “post-consumer recycle content” on the label.
- Purchase durable materials and equipment that will have prolonged life.
- See the EPA’s [Comprehensive Procurement Guideline](#) Program for details on purchasing recycled products.

REUSE MATERIALS WHEN POSSIBLE

- Reuse (or acquire) unwanted supplies through the [Nebraska Materials Exchange Program](#).
- Send reusable inter-office mailing envelopes
- Designate an area for reusable office supplies and direct employees there before ordering more
- Clip stacks of one-sided, used paper together and use them as notepads

REDUCE PACKAGING

- Ask suppliers to send products with minimal packaging
- Request a system to return packaging supplies
- Request plastic shipping containers/crates in place of cardboard/wood
- When possible, buy in bulk to reduce the amount of cardboard entering your waste stream
- Avoid over-ordering and surplus

AVOID DISPOSABLE ITEMS

- Encourage employees to bring reusable items from home, such as lunch containers and coffee cups
- Get rid of disposable items in kitchens, cafeterias, and break rooms
- Provide reusable cups/plates/utensils. Ask employees to wash any dishware immediately after use
- Provide washable towels instead of paper towels

TAKE STEPS TO MANAGE PAPER AND PRINTING WASTE

- Consider using refillable printer cartridges if possible

- Set all printers to print double-sided by default
- Stop receiving junk mail. [Eco-Cycle](#) lists steps to get businesses off mailing lists
- Shred documents if possible to condense the material

LINKS & RESOURCES

- **United States Environmental Protection Agency Comprehensive Procurement Guideline**
<https://www.epa.gov/smm/comprehensive-procurement-guideline-cpg-program>
- **Nebraska Materials Exchange Program**
<http://www.knb.org/exchange.html>
- **Eco-Cycle “How to Stop Junk Mail in 6 Easy Steps”**
<http://www.ecocycle.org/junkmail>