

Green Your Business

Recycling & Waste Reduction Guide

Where to start:

1. Contact your current permitted hauler to provide information as to the type of recycling
2. **Verify that you are implementing all checked measures.** Be able to verify products purchased by your business that are made with recycled content.
3. Review the waste reduction and recycling portion of the checklist and make sure to have supporting documentation for all measures checked off on your checklist. You'll be able to assess your business practices by going through the checklist. You may have the minimum number of required measures already in place. If not, there is information available with recommendations on how to implement other measures to meet Miami-Dade Green Business standards.

Please use the following resources to help your business implement and meet the Miami-Dade Green Business Waste Reduction standards.

Miami-Dade, along with Florida's other counties, is facing a challenge set by the State Legislature, which is to recycle 75% of the municipal solid waste of what would otherwise be disposed of in waste disposal facilities by 2010. In 2008, Miami-Dade County recycled 21% of the waste generated in the County. In order to increase our rate of recycling and support a healthy environment, we need the help of all business and residents to recycle, reduce waste at the source and make smart consumer choices. If each business does its part and the County continues passing product stewardship legislation that builds the infrastructure for recovering resources, Miami-Dade will be able to significantly reduce the amount of waste for disposal. Miami-Dade, through its Green Business program, is making a public commitment to reducing waste and leading the way for others to do the same.

There are three sections in the Waste Reduction portion of the Miami-Dade Green Business standards.

1. **Waste Diversion**
2. **Source Reduction**
3. **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing**

1. Waste Diversion

Reduce the amount of waste for disposal by establishing a recycling program that complies with Miami-Dade's recycling law. Which of the following items does your business recycle? A minimum of three (3) is required by law.

- High grade office paper
- Mixed paper
- Corrugated cardboard
- Wood
- Scrap production metals
- Steel
- Glass
- Textiles
- Plastics
- Aluminum

In order to achieve compliance, establishments must arrange to have their recyclables picked up by a Miami-Dade County permitted hauler. You can contact your current waste hauler or check the business section of the telephone directory for companies that provide recycling collection services. Once your program has been established, you can request an inspection by a Miami-Dade Solid Waste Enforcement Officer. You will also need to provide documentation for your recycling program. We will accept a letter from the permitted recycler or waste hauler outlining the type of program being provided. As an alternative, you may provide the service agreement between the permitted hauler and your business.

Because not all businesses are alike, you can apply for a “modified” recycling program. Visit green.miamidade.gov and click on Recycling for requirements of the modified recycling program.

Increase your waste diversion

Miami-Dade’s Green Business initiative requires compliance with the recycling law. There are several steps an applicant can take to ensure that less waste is generated, contamination is minimized and diversion is maximized. Use these tools to strengthen your waste diversion program:

- **Collection** - Participate in a recycling program that allows you to recover the most types of paper and plastic, glass, and metal containers. To recover all recyclable materials generated by staff, set up recycling bins at central, strategic locations (for instance - by large copier stations or in the employee kitchen) as well as at each desk. If your business shreds paper, ensure that shredded paper is properly contained according to the specifications of the company collecting the materials, or if collected by a document destruction service, follow their instructions.
- **Training** - Conduct regular training sessions for your staff advising them on materials that do and do not belong in the recycling bin. Send electronic reminders to your staff on items that you find are incorrectly placed in the recycling bin (such as coffee cups, soiled napkins, paper plates and garbage).
- **Signage** - Use signage to educate staff about materials that belong in the recycling bin. Below are some samples to print out and use in your business.
- **Strategies for items that do not belong in the recycling bins** - Batteries, electronics and fluorescent lights generated in commercial establishments must be disposed of properly by a permitted collection company. Scrap metal in large quantities may have a positive monetary value. You should check the business section of the telephone directory for companies that handle scrap metal.

For information on how to manage your business’ recycling program, please visit www.miamidade.gov/dswm/business_recycling.asp

2. Source Reduction

In addition to a robust waste diversion program, green businesses must also implement waste reduction practices listed on the green business standards. Use the tools below to learn more:

- **Use only durable dishes, both at your facility and for events.** Demonstrate your environmental commitment to reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce ongoing financial costs of disposable foodware.

For restaurants with takeout containers and cutlery see the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing section below. Absolutely no polystyrene (Styrofoam) can be used by a green business.

- **Send faxes electronically and scan documents.** A contemporary electronic fax system can conserve paper by storing fax messages electronically, thereby saving money and time. There are several kinds of fax software that enable users to receive and send faxes electronically.

Additionally, scanners make it possible to send more documents electronically -- reducing the amount of copies made and allowing for electronic archiving.

- E-mail, circulate or post documents instead of making a copy for everybody. **Set all company computers to print default double-sided.** You will save resources and money by reducing the amount of paper used. You can also instruct staff to use size reduction features or print multiple pages per sheet to further reduce paper consumption.

Be kind to others – reset the settings on the copier when you are done.

- **Sell or donate surplus or unwanted supplies and furniture.**

3. Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

The purchasing decisions your company makes should be responsible both upstream and downstream. The easiest way to make smart consumer decisions is to purchase products such as paper and office supplies that are made from recycled materials. If possible, build with reclaimed or [Forest Stewardship Certified](#) materials, buy [Fair Trade Certified](#) agricultural products, and local and organic produce and meats. We ask you to buy, contract, and get professional services from local and [Green](#) Business whenever possible.

- **Purchase paper products made from recycled paper.** For office paper the Miami-Dade Green Business Program minimum standard is 50% recycled content, however we encourage all businesses to purchase paper made with 100% recycled content. All collateral (business cards, letterhead and custom printed envelopes) and marketing materials should also meet this standard. Other paper products such as folders and sticky notes should also be purchased with the highest recycled content available. Purchasing chlorine-free office paper with at least 50% **post consumer waste (PCW) will qualify your business** for double-credit.

Additionally, many retailers are now also offering paper with up to 100% recycled content.

- **Purchase janitorial papers (paper towel, napkins, tissues, and toilet paper) with recycled content.** The current standard is 35% recycled content for these products; however, we strongly encourage businesses to purchase the highest recycled content available. Purchasing chlorine-free janitorial paper with at least 35 % PCW, will qualify your business for double-credit.

Any business that uses a plotter or large format printer will be required to purchase large format paper with a minimum 35% recycled content.

- **For restaurants and caterers, be sure all take out containers and cutlery are recyclable or compostable**
- **Retail stores and restaurants that give bags to their customers should purchase paper bags made with a minimum 40% recycled content although 100% recycled content is recommended. Because plastic bags are hard to recycle (they can't be put in Miami-Dade's blue recycling cart) and are problematic for the environment, Miami-Dade Green Businesses are asked to find alternative products.**



When remodeling or renovating your office interior, source products made from recycled content or reclaimed materials.