HOW TO RECYCLE OFFICE PAPER

In DOUGLAS COUNTY

Get management on board.
A workplace recycling program does more than help the environment and yield potential cost savings. Done right, a recycling program boosts morale and facilitates teambuilding, especially when there is visible management support behind it. To be sure you get that support, target the right decision makers and gather all the necessary information:

- Program costs/savings,
- Public relations opportunities, and
- Environmental benefits.

Find a market for what you plan to collect.
Collection is just the first step in recycling. How will the paper you collect in your workplace connect with the recycling stream? Contact Countywide Solid Waste Programs of Douglas County, we can help you target the right items for collection; maintain cost-effective collection schedules; identify and correct potential contamination issues; and maximize the benefits to your program.

Organize your collection procedures.
Your goal here is to make it as easy as possible for your fellow employees to participate (and participate correctly) while meeting the requirements of your market. In many cases, custodial staff will play a key role in emptying recycling containers and preparing materials for pickup or delivery. Consider:

- How often the containers should be emptied and by whom?
- How/where will collected materials be stored prior to transfer to market?
- Who will be responsible for making sure the right items are ending up in the recycling bin?

Pick the right collection containers.
Place containers as close as possible to where recyclables are generated. Recycling containers should be easy to recognize.

- In an office setting, place a clearly marked recycling container at every desk.
- Place larger collection containers in common areas (roughly one for every 15-20 employees).
- Wherever possible, place recycling containers next to regular waste containers to facilitate separation.

Design an efficient collection system.
Your collection system may sort different grades of paper, or you may choose a system where all papers are mixed. Make the program easy for the employees to participate.

Introduce the program with a BANG!
The ultimate success of your office recycling program will depend on the cooperation of your employees. That’s why education and promotion are so important. A few suggestions are:

- Use posters/flyers to announce the program is coming,
- Issue a kick-off memo,
- Hold a brief program orientation,
- Issue a recycling newsletter
- Hold a kick-off day event to get people’s attention.

Publicize the program externally.
Office recycling programs are an excellent way to enhance your company’s image in the community and among your customers. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- Issue a news release to announce the start of your program and challenge other businesses in the community to start similar programs.
• Use “We Recycle” on your company stationary.
• Include “We Recycle” messages in your advertising.
• Include your recycling program in all materials describing your corporate social responsibility goals.

Monitor and promote the program for continued success.
Once the program is successfully underway, it should become a routine part of office life. However, it is important to continuously monitor results and reinforce the program with regular promotion. Encourage greater employee involvement by soliciting suggestions for program improvement.

WHAT CAN BE RECycled
White and colored paper • White and colored envelopes with windows • Booklets • Manuals • Fax and telex copy paper • Carbon-less forms • Greeting cards • Adding machine tape • Post-it notes • Soft-covered books with white pages • Time cards • Manila folders • Telephone directories • Magazines • Newspapers • Flyers

NOT ACCEPTED IN RECYCLING BINS
Pizza boxes • Coffee cups • Candy wrappers • Tissues • Paper towels • Carbon paper • Brown and Kraft envelopes

Facts About Paper and Paper Recycling
• Statistics show the following:
• In 2008, the amount of paper recovered for recycling averaged 340 pounds for every person in the US.
• In 2009, a record-high 63.4% of the paper consumed in the US was recovered for recycling. It was the first time the number was over 60%.
• 40% of all waste going to landfills is paper. Every ton of paper recycled saves more than 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.
• One million tons of recovered paper is enough to fill more than 14,000 railroad cars.
• More than 37% of the fiber used to make new paper products in the United States comes from recycled sources.
• 87% (approximately 268 million) of Americans have access to curbside or drop-off paper recycling programs.
• Using old paper to make new paper uses 30 to 50 percent less energy than making paper from trees.

For more waste reduction & recycling information contact:
COUNTYWIDE SOLID WASTE PROGRAMS
OF DOUGLAS COUNTY
(509) 886-0899