



Business Recycling Toolkit



The Importance of Business Recycling in Joplin

The City of Joplin is invested in a healthy and environmentally clean community, values its' businesses, and wants to support businesses in a green community. This Green Business Toolkit (Toolkit) is intended for businesses interested in reducing waste generation and increasing recycling. The goal of the Toolkit is to provide businesses with information and resources to add a recycling program to their operations.



Table of Contents

Benefits of Starting a Recycling Program	3
How to Start a Program Step-by-Step Approach	4
Evaluate Your Current Waste Management System	4
Calculate Your Recycling Container Size and Pickup Frequency	6
Create a Program Budget	7
Contact a Recycling Hauler or Service Provider	8
Modify Your Trash Dumpster Corral to Accommodate Recycling	9
Purchase Appropriate Recycling Containers and Signage	10
Train Staff and Raise Awareness	11
Measure, Track, and Improve	11
Forms & Resources	12
Waste Audit Form	13
Recycling Container Size and Pickup Frequency Calculator	15
Program Budget Form	16
Regulations on Commercial Recycling Dumpsters in the City of Joplin	18
Commercial Recycling Haulers Serving the City of Joplin	19
Template Action Plan	20
S.M.A.R.T. Framework	21



Benefits of Starting a Recycling Program

While starting a recycling collection program costs money, recycling may save your business money over time. As with trash collection service, haulers pay a fee to “tip”, or unload, materials at a solid waste facility. However, the fees for tipping recyclables are often much less than those charged for trash. “Avoided disposal fees” is the term used to describe the money that is saved by not disposing of recyclables in trash. These savings may be able to offset any new collection costs.

When you set up a recycling program, the amount of trash you generate will decrease in proportion to the amount of recyclables you divert through recycling. Instead of paying for the empty space you’ll see in your trash dumpster, ask your hauler to “right-size” your service level by reducing the size of your dumpster and/or picking it up less frequently to reduce your costs.

How to Start a Program: Step-by-Step Approach

This section outlines a practical, step-by-step approach to launching an effective recycling program, from assessing the current waste stream to tracking recycling program progress and making continuous improvements.

Note: It is important to designate a program lead to assign responsibility and maintain accountability. Utilize the Template Action Plan provided in the Resources section below to make a plan for establishing your recycling program by assigning a responsible party, additional supporters, and a timeframe to each task. In addition, the S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) Goals Framework in the Resources section can be used to establish what you want to achieve with these program efforts.

1

Evaluate the Current Waste Management System with a Waste Audit

The first step is to conduct a “waste audit” to familiarize yourself with what trash and recycling is generated at your business to design the most effective recycling program. A waste audit is an analysis of the types and quantities of waste that your business generates, and where that material is generated. The waste audit may be based on visual inspection to capture the information with less effort and less safety risk than a more detailed hand sorted and weighed waste characterization.

A Waste Audit Form is provided in the Resources section of this Toolkit and includes the following elements. The Waste Audit Form is intended to be completed as the user reads through this section.

- **Identify current waste management collection system details.** Identify the trash company servicing your business, the size of your trash collection containers, whether your trash corral can accommodate recycling containers, the frequency of trash collection service, and the cost of trash collection service.
- **Identify material types and quantities.** Identify what types and quantities of materials (i.e., paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum, glass, food waste) are generated in each operational area of your business (i.e. warehouse, office, kitchen, public-facing, breakroom).

- **Inspect your dumpsters.** Locate your business's trash dumpsters and complete a visual inspection of the contents. Evaluate the containers the day before they are collected so that the containers are full. Use good judgment regarding safety and do not touch the waste.
- **Conduct a visual inspection of the building's interior.** In addition to reviewing the dumpsters, walk through the building with janitorial staff and talk through business activities to identify the material types and quantities of materials generated for disposal. Some materials currently disposed of in trash containers could instead be collected in recycling containers (e.g., cardboard, office paper, plastic, aluminum, glass). Visually estimate the percentage of the waste stream in trash containers that could be collected in recycling containers.



- **Interview janitorial staff.** Talk with janitorial staff about how waste is collected and managed, including how janitorial staff move material from inside your facility to dumpsters outside of the facility. Collecting and managing recycling may need to be added to their contract if janitorial staff is outsourced.
- **Identify potential partners.** Your business may not generate enough recycling to justify having recycling collection service by itself, however you may be able to combine your materials with those of nearby businesses to collectively generate enough volume to obtain service. If in a shared space, you and other nearby businesses may already all pay for one trash bin and corral. Identify and engage other partners such as your property management company or neighboring businesses with shared trash/recycling resources.

2 Calculate Your Recycling Container Size and Pickup Frequency

Using the results of the Waste Audit, estimate the recycling container size and frequency needed by following the example provided below. The example is for a hypothetical business that has one 4-cubic yard trash dumpster that is picked up twice per week, and an estimated 40% of material in the existing trash stream that is recyclable.

- **Trash volume per pickup:**
4 cubic yards x 200 gallons/cubic yard = approximately 800 gallons.
- **Weekly trash generated:**
800 gallons x 2 pickups/week = approximately 1,600 gallons/week.
- **Weekly recyclables generated:**
1,600 gallons x 40% = approximately 640 gallons/week.
- **Total potential volume per pickup:**
640 gallons x 1.15 (to give 15% extra buffer) = approximately 740 gallons/week.

In the table below, find the range that includes your number from the final step above and select the corresponding container size and pickup frequency.

Weekly Recyclable Volume (Including Buffer)	Recommended Container Size	Recommended Pickup Frequency
Up to 45 gal/week	96-gallon cart	Every other week
45-96 gal/week	96-gallon cart	Weekly
96-200 gal/week	2-yard dumpster	Weekly
200-400 gal/week	4-yard dumpster	Weekly
400-800 gal/week	6-yard dumpster	Weekly
600-1,600+ gal/week	8-yard dumpster	Weekly

Note: Carts and dumpsters are intentionally sized with extra capacity to allow for cardboard, uneven stacking, and to prevent overflow.

- **Consider space constraints** while deciding the size and number of containers needed for recycling. This includes the locations of collection containers outside the building or in loading docks, and where material inside the building will be consolidated for the new service providers.
- **If you would like to perform a more in-depth waste composition** where you actually sort, measure, and weigh your trash and recycling, the Johnson County Green Business Program's Waste Audit Form can be a useful tool to begin thinking about a business's current waste stream. <https://www.jocogov.org/sites/default/files/files/2021-09/dhe-waste-audit-form.pdf>

3 Create a Program Budget

The program budget should account for the primary cost categories associated with a recycling program, including containers and equipment, contractor or hauler costs, and internal labor and operations. **When developing the program budget, consider the following cost categories and funding needs:**

- **Containers and Equipment:**
 - › Indoor bins (e.g., deskside bins, central bins)
 - › Signage and labels (e.g., bin decals, posters, wall-mounted guides)
 - › Equipment if needed (e.g., balers)
- **Contractor/Hauler Costs:**
 - › Monthly or per-pickup collection fees
 - › Startup charges
 - › Contamination or extra pickup fees (if applicable)
 - › Fuel or environmental surcharges
 - › Required minimum service levels (e.g., minimum number of carts)
- **Internal Labor and Operations:**
 - › Staff time to set up the program
 - › Ongoing labor for internal movement of recyclables (e.g., janitorial staff emptying office bins into a central cart)
 - › Training time for employees or custodial staff
 - › Monitoring/spot checks to reduce contamination
 - › Recordkeeping/invoice monitoring

4 Contact a Recycling Hauler or Service Provider

You will need to hire a company to provide recycling service at your business. If your current hauler offers recycling services (not all do), it is often advantageous and most cost-effective to add this service through them. If your current hauler doesn't offer recycling, or if you would like to make sure that you are getting the best services and rates available, contact local recycling companies that handle commercial recycling. A list of recycling service providers is provided in the Resources section titled Commercial Recycling Haulers Serving the City of Joplin. **When reaching out to potential recycling service providers, consider the following topics:**

- Discuss pickup schedules, accepted materials, contamination policies, costs, and what revenue your business may receive from any of the materials.
- Verify the hauler provides documentation or reporting on recycling volumes.
- Use pricing, container options, and service recommendations provided by haulers to finalize the recycling program budget.



5 Modify Your Trash Dumpster Corral to Accommodate Recycling if Needed

If recycling containers are added to an existing trash enclosure, the dumpster corral may need to be evaluated and modified to allow for adequate space, access, and compliance with local requirements. **As part of this process, complete the following steps:**

- Review existing trash dumpster corral conditions. If the corral is already crowded or difficult for trucks to access, modifications may be needed. **Businesses should evaluate:**
 - › Available space inside the corral for a recycling container. In some cases, downsizing trash container capacity can create space for recycling.
 - › Access for collection vehicles, including gate swing, turning radius, and overhead clearance.
 - › Condition of enclosure elements, such as gates, fencing, walls, and concrete pad.
- Confirm City Requirements and Site Constraints. **Before making any physical changes, businesses should:**
 - › Review applicable city requirements for dumpster corrals (refer to the Regulations on Commercial Recycling Dumpsters in the City of Joplin section in the Resources section of this toolkit)
 - › Confirm whether permits or approvals are required for expanding, relocating, or modifying the corral
 - › Identify any site-specific constraints, such as property line setbacks, fire lane or emergency access requirements, or stormwater drainage features
 - › Confirm container dimensions, access roads, and servicing requirements with the hauler before making any dumpster corral modifications
- Install clear signage and labeling. **Recommended actions include:**
 - › Labeling trash and recycling containers clearly
 - › Installing signage inside or near the corral
 - › Using visuals or color-coding where possible



6 Purchase Appropriate Recycling Containers and Signage

Selecting the right recycling containers and signage is critical to encouraging proper use and minimizing contamination. **When choosing containers, consider the following best practices:**

- Choose bins that are clearly and consistently labeled and color-coded for different materials (e.g., blue for recycling).
- Use images whenever possible indicating what materials can be recycled. Customize your labels to only show the accepted items that are generated at your facility. An example is provided below.



- Use lids with openings such as holes or slots to indicate what materials (can/bottles or paper, respectively) should be placed in recycling bins. An example of lids with both shapes are provided below.



- Place containers in high-traffic and high-waste areas like breakrooms, copy stations, and loading docks. Consider centralized collection points to streamline pickup and reduce contamination.
- In each location, place bins in pairs (e.g., one trash bin with one recycling bin of the same size and shape).

7 Train Staff and Raise Awareness

Effective training and awareness are key to helping employees understand and actively participate in recycling programs. **Take the following actions to educate employees and encourage participation:**

- Educate employees on what can and cannot be recycled, and how to sort materials properly.
- Host kickoff meetings, share posters, and send out digital guides or videos
- Encourage participation by explaining the environmental and economic benefits of the program.
- Highlight recycling successes to motivate ongoing engagement.



8 Measure, Track, and Improve

Measuring and tracking recycling performance is essential for understanding progress and identifying opportunities for improvement. **To maintain and improve recycling efforts, follow these key measurement and tracking activities:**

- Set baseline metrics from the initial waste audit and track progress monthly or quarterly.
- Monitor contamination rates and adjust training or bin placement as needed. Check in with custodial staff regularly to learn what they are seeing in the recycling and trash containers they service, if there are certain areas of the building where they see more contamination in the recycling or more recyclables in the trash, or if they are experiencing any issues with the service provider.
- Share results with staff to celebrate milestones and encourage continued engagement.



Forms & Resources

The following pages provide businesses with a waste audit form, recycling container size and pickup frequency calculator, program budget form, local regulations on commercial recycling dumpsters, the commercial haulers that service the City of Joplin, a template action plan, and a framework for goal setting.

Waste Audit Form

Current Waste Management Collection System Details	
Trash Hauler	
Size of Current Trash Collection Containers (in gallons or cubic yards) ¹	
Size of Trash Corral/Capacity to Fit an Additional Container for Recycling	
Cost of Trash Collection Service (per month or per quarter)	
Frequency of Trash Pickup (e.g., twice/week, once/week, once every two weeks, etc.)	
Janitorial Staff – Company and Contact Information	

¹If you do not know the size of your trash containers, contact the service provider or look for a data plate attached to the container with model or size information to search online.

Material Types and Quantities per Area of Business	
Area of Business (i.e. warehouse, office, kitchen, public-facing, breakroom)	Material Types Generated (i.e., paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum, glass, food waste)

Visual Inspection – Estimated Percent of Trash and Recycling	
Material	Percentage of Total in Trash Containers
Trash	
Recycling	
Total	100%

Waste Audit Form

Discussion Notes with Janitorial Staff

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Potential Partners

Property Management Company and Contact	
Neighboring Business	
Neighboring Business	
Neighboring Business	

Recycling Container Size and Pickup Frequency Calculator

Recycling Container Size Calculator				
Step	Value	Calculation	Result	Units
A	Trash volume per pickup	(Trash container cubic yard capacity) x (200 gallons/cubic yard) =		Gallons
B	Weekly trash volume generated	(Gallons from A) x (# of pickups per week) =		Gallons/Week
C	Weekly recyclables generated	(Gallons/week from B) x (percentage of recyclables in trash stream from Waste Audit) =		Gallons/Week
D	Recycling capacity needed	(Weekly recyclables generated from C) x 1.15 =		Gallons/Week

Container Size and Frequency Recommendations Table		
Weekly Recyclable Volume (Including Buffer)	Recommended Container Size	Recommended Pickup Frequency
Up to 45 gal/week	96-gallon cart	Every other week
45-96 gal/week	96-gallon cart	Weekly
96-200 gal/week	2-yard dumpster	Weekly
200-400 gal/week	4-yard dumpster	Weekly
400-800 gal/week	6-yard dumpster	Weekly
600-1,600+ gal/week	8-yard dumpster	Weekly

Recycling Container Pickup Frequency Calculator		
Value (Based on Recycling Container Size Calculator Table and Container Size and Frequency Recommendations Table)	Units	Result
Size of Recycling Collection Containers Needed	Gallons or cubic yards	
Frequency of Recycling Pickup Needed	Twice/week, once/week, once every two weeks, etc.	

Program Budget Form

Program Table – Implementation/Start-up Costs		
Property Management Company and Contact	Quantity	Cost
Indoor bins (e.g., deskside bins, central bins)		\$
Signage and labels (e.g., bin decals, posters, wall-mounted guides)		\$
Equipment if needed (e.g., balers)		\$
<i>Containers and Equipment Subtotal</i>		\$
Contractor/Hauler Costs	Quantity	Cost
Startup charges		\$
Required minimum service levels (e.g., minimum number of carts – not a cost)		# of carts:
<i>Contractor/Hauler Costs Subtotal</i>		\$
Internal Labor and Operations	Quantity	Cost
Staff time to set up the program		\$
Initial training time for employees or custodial staff		\$
<i>Internal Labor and Operations Subtotal</i>		\$
Total	Quantity	Cost
<i>Grand Total</i>		\$

Program Budget Form

Program Budget Table – Ongoing Costs (Monthly Basis)		
Contractor/Hauler Costs	Quantity	Cost
Monthly or per-pickup collection fees (based on size and types of carts or dumpsters, e.g., 32/64/96-gallon carts, front-load dumpsters, etc.)		\$
Contamination or extra pickup fees (if applicable)		\$
Fuel or environmental surcharges		\$
<i>Contractor/Hauler Costs Subtotal</i>		\$
Internal Labor and Operations	Quantity	Cost
Ongoing labor for internal movement of recyclables (e.g., janitorial staff emptying office bins into a central cart)		\$
Ongoing training time for employees or custodial staff		\$
Monitoring/spot checks to reduce contamination		\$
Recordkeeping/invoice monitoring		\$
<i>Internal Labor and Operations Subtotal</i>		\$
Total	Quantity	Cost
<i>Grand Total</i>		\$

Regulations on Commercial Recycling Dumpsters in the City of Joplin

Provided below is a summary of regulations around establishing and maintaining commercial recycling dumpsters in the City of Joplin, from the **City of Joplin, Missouri Zoning Regulations**.

- Recycling collection station areas **cannot** exceed 1,000 sq ft
- Dumpsters **must** be shown on a site plan and approved
- Dumpsters **must** be screened from public view (in a structure or behind a 6-foot tall, 100% opaque solid screen)
- A sign must be posted indicating the hours when material collection is permitted. The collection hours are determined by Zoning Administration
- The business/property owner is responsible for keeping the recycling area clean and safe, including picking up blown materials and ensuring proper stacking within the bins



Commercial Recycling Haulers Serving the City of Joplin

The following haulers may collect recycling in Joplin depending on your business's location and recyclable materials generated. It is recommended to call each hauler to confirm whether services are available to your business.

Local Recycling Haulers			
Hauler	Phone Number	Services Offered	Materials Collected
<i>Republic Services</i>	800-431-1507	Commercial recycling collection – call to confirm eligibility based on address	Call to confirm
<i>Midwest Fiber (Part of Circular Services)</i>	501-490-0500	Customized recycling based on waste assessments that identify what materials a business generates and how to optimize recycling – call to confirm eligibility and options	Paper, cardboard, plastic
<i>CARDS Recycling and Disposal</i>	877-592-2737	Call to confirm eligibility and options	Call to confirm
<i>Service Recycling</i>	417-625-0700	Call to confirm eligibility and options	Separated streams – call to confirm

Template Action Plan

The Template Action Plan (below) can be used to make a plan for establishing your recycling program by assigning a responsible party, additional supporters, and a timeframe to each task. The tasks in the Template Action Plan correspond to the steps in the How to Start a Program section of this Toolkit.

Task	Responsible Party	Additional Supporters	Timeframe		Considerations
			Start	End	
Sample: Evaluate current waste management system	<i>Ops Manager</i>	<i>General Manager</i>	<i>10/15</i>	<i>10/31</i>	
1) Evaluate current waste management system with a waste audit					
2) Calculate recycling container size and pickup frequency					
3) Create a budget for the program					
4) Contact a recycling vendor to collect material					
5) Modify dumpster corral to accommodate recycling					
6) Purchase appropriate recycling containers and signage					
7) Train staff and raise awareness					
8) Measure, track, and improve					

S.M.A.R.T. Goals Framework

The S.M.A.R.T. Goals Framework (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) below can be used to establish what you want to achieve with these program efforts. An example is provided in the first row.

Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-bound
<i>Describes what is to be done or how, and what is the outcome</i>	<i>Achievement of objective is measurable</i>	<i>Realistic for the group to accomplish</i>	<i>In line with the group's mission</i>	<i>Has a discrete timeframe</i>
<i>EXAMPLE: Expand recycling collection to all departments, introduce standardized signage, and conduct quarterly waste audits to reduce the total landfill-disposed waste from company operations.</i>	<i>EXAMPLE: Reduce landfill waste by 20 percent compared to the 2025 baseline, verified through hauler reports and audit data.</i>	<i>EXAMPLE: The goal can be achieved using existing staff and vendor resources, employee engagement, and improved collection systems.</i>	<i>EXAMPLE: This goal supports the company's sustainability commitments, reduces disposal costs, and demonstrates environmental leadership.</i>	<i>EXAMPLE: Complete implementation and achieve the 20 percent reduction by December 2027.</i>