

Hennepin County business recycling program

Waste assessment checklist

Use this checklist to assess your current waste situation and identify opportunities for recycling and organics recycling in each of the main areas of your building. Choose from the following options what best fits your business' current situation:

- Option 1: My business currently has no recycling service
- Option 2: My business has recycling service, but we could improve the current program and recycle more
- Option 3: My business has recycling service and wants to add organics recycling (food waste and soiled, non-recyclable paper) service

Option 1: My business currently has no recycling service

Step 1: Find out what recyclables are in your trash

Visit all areas of your building where waste is generated. Look at the contents of your trash containers to determine which of the following materials are in there and how much.

Recyclable items	Is this in your trash?	What percentage of your trash is recyclables?
Paper (e.g., office paper, mail, magazines, shredded paper, file folders, packing paper)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Paper boxes (e.g. cereal, cookie and cracker boxes, supplies and electronics boxes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Cardboard	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Plastic bottles, jugs, cups, food containers (clean), packaging	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Metal cans and pans (rinsed) from food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Cartons (milk and broth cartons, juice boxes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Glass bottles and jars from food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.

Step 2: Consider if you should add organics recycling

Is there organic material (food waste and food-soiled paper such as napkins, towels, plates, cups) in your trash? Yes No Approximately what percentage? Choose an item.

Food waste and food-soiled paper products can be diverted for composting or animal feed. See Option 3 of this checklist and/or the Business Recycling Best Practices Guide for step-by-step information on setting up organics recycling at your business.

Step 3: Assess your hauling service

Who is your trash hauler? [Click here to enter text.](#)

What size trash dumpster(s) do you have, and how frequently is your trash collected?

Volume/size	Number and type of containers	Frequency of pick-up
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.

Contact your hauler to inquire about adding recycling service, which can help you reduce your trash service. You should call two additional haulers to compare prices. Some questions to ask:

- What are the costs for different sized dumpsters?
- How much do I get charged each time my recycling dumpster is serviced?
- Can I get paid for my separated cardboard?
- Can you help me right-size my dumpsters?

Hennepin County’s business recycling grant program can provide your business with indoor recycling containers and help pay for hauling service.

Step 4: Make room for a recycling dumpster

Look at your central recycling/trash area (usually outdoors). Recycling service requires a separate dumpster solely for recyclables. If you need to make room for a recycling dumpster, consider downsizing your trash dumpster. A business recycling grant can help pay for the cost of constructing or modifying a recycling enclosure.

Step 5: Get recycling containers

Consider the following criteria when choosing the type and quantity of recycling containers for your business:

- Are recycling containers paired one-to-one with trash containers? If not, add more recycling containers and/or have fewer trash containers
- How full are your recycling containers? If they’re overflowing, you need to add more.
- Are recycling containers conveniently located and placed in high-traffic areas? If not, move your containers to areas where they’ll be best used.

Recycling container planning form

Area of building	Number and type of containers needed	Placement	Labels needed	Notes
<i>e.g., break room</i>	<i>Include quantity, shape/types and size of container</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 recycling slim jim with lid</i> • <i>1 organics slim jim with lid</i> 	<i>Next to sink, under counter</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 workspace recycling container label</i> • <i>1 workspace recycling poster</i> • <i>1 workspace organics container label</i> • <i>1 workspace organics poster</i> 	<i>Downsize trash container</i>

Option 2: My business has recycling service, but we could improve the current program and recycle more

Step 1: Find out what recyclables are in your trash

Visit all areas of your building where waste is generated. Look at the contents of your trash containers to determine which of the following materials are in there and how much. All haulers in Hennepin County collect the following materials for recycling from businesses; if you are only collecting some of these, there is more you could be recycling.

Recyclable items	Is this in your trash?	What percentage of your trash is recyclables?
Paper (e.g., office paper, mail, magazines, shredded paper, file folders, packing paper)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Paper boxes (e.g. cereal, cookie and cracker boxes, supplies and electronics boxes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Cardboard	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Plastic bottles, jugs, cups, food containers (clean), packaging	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Metal cans and pans (rinsed) from food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Cartons (milk and broth cartons, juice boxes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.
Glass bottles and jars from food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Choose an item.

Step 2: Assess your recycling collection

How are your recyclables collected?

- One-sort Two-sort Cardboard separate, everything else together

Step 3: Consider if you should add organics recycling

Is there a lot of organic material (food waste and food-soiled paper such as napkins, plates, cups) in your trash? Yes No Approximately what percentage? Choose an item.

Food waste and food-soiled paper products can be diverted for composting or animal feed. See Option 3 of this checklist and/or the Business Recycling Best Practices Guide for step-by-step information on setting up organics recycling at your business. Edible food can also be donated to food rescue agencies to feed people in need. Go to www.hennepin.us/organics for more information.

Step 4: Assess your hauling service

Who is your recycling hauler? [Click here to enter text.](#) Who is your trash hauler? [Click here to enter text.](#)

What size recycling dumpster(s) do you have, and how frequently is your recycling collected?

Volume/size	Number and type of containers	Frequency of pick-up
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.

If you have a separate dumpster for cardboard:

Volume/size	Number and type of containers	Frequency of pick-up
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.

What size trash dumpster(s) do you have, and how frequently is your trash collected?

Volume/size	Number and type of containers	Frequency of pick-up
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.
___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.	___ Choose an item.

Recycling service is cheaper than trash service, so diverting as many recyclable materials as you can could reduce your trash hauling bill. You can get additional recycling containers to maximize your business' recycling program through a Hennepin County business recycling grant.

Step 5: Get recycling containers

Consider the following criteria when choosing the type and quantity of recycling containers for your business:

- Are recycling containers paired one-to-one with trash containers? If not, add more recycling containers and/or have fewer trash containers
- How full are your recycling containers? If they're overflowing, you need to add more.
- Are recycling containers conveniently located and placed in high-traffic areas? If not, move your containers to areas where they'll be best used.

Step 5: Properly manage hazardous waste

Does your business generate hazardous waste or problem materials such as fluorescent bulbs, chemicals, solvents or electronics that are required to be recycled? Yes No

Go to www.hennepin.us/hwgenerators and rethinkrecycling.com to find disposal and recycling options.

Option 3: My business has recycling service and wants to add organics recycling (food waste and soiled, non-recyclable paper) service

Step 1: Find out how much organic waste are in your trash

Visit all areas of your building where waste is generated. Look at the contents of your trash containers to determine how much organic material (food waste and food-soiled paper such as napkins, plates, cups) is being thrown away.

Area	Typical organic materials found	What percentage of your trash is organics?
Employee desks	Food waste, food-soiled paper containers, cups and plates	Choose an item.
Employee break rooms	Food waste, food-soiled paper containers, cups and plates	Choose an item.
Restrooms	Paper towels	Choose an item.
Kitchen (including prep area, serving line)	Food waste, food-soiled paper containers, cups, plates and towels	Choose an item.
Dining room	Food waste, food-soiled paper products, compostable utensils and cups	Choose an item.

Food waste and food-soiled paper products can be diverted for composting (food waste plus food-soiled paper) or animal feed (food waste only). Edible food can also be donated to food rescue agencies to feed people in need. Hennepin County’s grant program can provide your business with indoor recycling containers and help pay for hauling service. See page the Business Recycling Best Practices Guide for step-by-step information on setting up organics recycling at your business.

Step 2: Get organics-recycling containers

When choosing the type and quantity of organics-recycling containers your business needs, keep these criteria in mind:

- Are organics-recycling containers paired one-to-one with trash and recycling containers in areas of your building where a lot of organic waste is generated? If not, add more organics-recycling containers and/or have fewer trash containers.
- Choose containers that are large enough to accommodate all the organic material generated in a particular area. Use the percentages in the chart above to help guide you.
- Are the organics-recycling containers conveniently located and placed in high-traffic areas? If not, move your containers to areas where they’ll be best used.

Step 3: Make room for an organics-recycling dumpster

Look at your central recycling/trash area (usually outdoors). Organics-recycling service requires a separate dumpster solely for organics. If you need to make room for an organics dumpster, consider downsizing your trash dumpster. A business recycling grant can help pay for the cost of constructing or modifying a recycling enclosure.