

HOW TO SET-UP A RECYCLING PROGRAM FOR RESTAURANT ESTABLISHMENTS

Other Tips

Restaurants can reduce their waste considerably by recycling and reusing materials that are currently being disposed, such as utensils, placemats and napkins. Many restaurants and bars also generate significant quantities of glass, aluminum, steel, plastics and corrugated cardboard.

Some methods for managing of restaurant waste might include:

- Recycle cardboard, glass, metals and plastic. To avoid the issue of space there is equipment such as can compactors that reduce the volume of recyclable materials.
- Replace beverage bottles and cans. Many beverages can be served on-tap, which reduces both the cost of buying beverages and disposing or recycling cans and bottles.
- Replace disposable items (cups, utensils, trays, dishes and single-serving condiment packages) with reusable items.
- For eat-in restaurants and hotels, use reusable napkins, dinnerware, placemats and tablecloths. Switch from disposables to save on the purchase of paper goods and avoid waste disposal costs.
- For carry-out and fast food, select the minimum appropriate packaging for food.
- Buy in bulk to reduce container waste and locally to minimize transportation costs.
- Ask suppliers to provide products that are packaged in materials such as recyclable or reusable paper, glass, steel, aluminum or plastic.

Restaurants are a point of large scale consumption; therefore a well-organized recycling program should be a key component of operations.

Materials that should be separated and recycled include:

- Aluminum Cans
- Plastic Bottles
- Cardboard Boxes (Flattened)
- Glass Containers
- Newspaper and Magazines
- Paper

How to make your program a success:

- Assess the waste being collected throughout your establishment.
- Develop recycling programs based on your findings for each area. Be sure to concentrate on materials producing the highest amounts of waste.
- Ensure all containers are located in easy-access areas for both staff and patrons and properly marked for quick identification. Containers with specialized openings (i.e. hole for cans, slot for paper) are critical to maintain clean sorts.
- Inform patrons that you recycle. If your establishment is self-serve, post signs letting customers know that you are recycling and what they should do with their waste. Provide bins for these items, or have customers leave them on a designated counter for collection by your staff.
- Educate employees on proper recycling procedures. This can be easily accomplished through a staff meeting or memo of Do's and Don'ts. Explain the goals of the program and procedures. Be sure to provide recycling information to new employees. Remind employees to keep food waste out of recycling containers and trash. Food waste should be handled separately from trash and recyclables.
- Record the volume of recyclables departing your establishment through a log system. With this you will be able to receive accurate compensation for the materials your establishment has recovered.
- Once policies have been established, communicate the program to all staff. Demonstrate how to use each container and where to take all collected materials. Have this staff assist in monitoring the program.

We at Busch Systems would be happy to assist you with your recycling program. Please contact us for more program ideas and recycling container solutions.