

The Practical Guide To Creating A Successful Recycling Programme



6 steps to start a successful recycling programme

Starting a recycling programme can seem daunting at first, but a recycling programme can unlock innumerable benefits.



So, what are the steps?

1 Complete a waste audit

A waste audit is an essential component in helping a workplace achieve a successful recycling programme and, ultimately, achieve its environmental goal. Responsible for allowing companies and organisations to understand their waste management requirements, a waste audit identifies waste needs and provides recommendations for improvement or adaptation.



2 Hire a waste collection and disposal company

It is the responsibility of the company to contract a waste collection and disposal company while ensuring that the chosen company has all the necessary licences.

But that isn't the only element to consider when contracting a waste collection and disposal company. Here is a list of possible questions and considerations you may decide to ask your new or existing waste contractor to optimise a recycling programme.

■ Type

- What can and can't be recycled with them?
- Will an additional fee be levied if cross-contamination occurs?

■ Collection

- How frequent are collections?
- How are missed collections reported?
- Are there any height or weight restrictions to consider?
- Is there a charge for overfilled recycling bins?

■ Extras

- When are charges reviewed?
- Can you terminate the waste contractor contract if you are not happy with the service or if a price increase occurs?
- Does the waste contractor provide incentives to encourage recycling?
- How and when can services be amended?





3 Selecting your waste streams

A waste stream is a specific flow of waste, from source to disposal and recycling. Individual recycling capabilities, treatment levels and hazard levels of items determine a waste stream. After completing a waste audit, a workplace will have a good idea of which waste streams they should collect.

As advised by multiple waste collection companies, a separate, single stream is the recommendation for any materials individual businesses collect predominantly. For smaller recyclable collection amounts, a waste audit may highlight the need for multi-stream containers.



Always check stream collections with your waste collector, as some waste collectors offer different recycling services and collections.

4 Choose your recycling bins

Choosing the correct recycling bins can help determine how successful a workplace waste management programme is. With various sizes, colours, styles, and streams available, there are several things to consider when choosing which recycling containers will optimise recycling programmes:



PLACEMENT: indoor or outdoor

Recycling bins come in various shapes, sizes, materials and styles, but what are the key differences between indoor and outdoor recycling bins?

Outdoor Recycling Bins

Ideal for on-street locations, school and universities campuses, playgrounds, high streets, car parks and leisure establishments, among other places, outdoor recycling bins often offer a larger capacity than indoor varieties to fulfil the waste needs of high footfall areas. They also tend to come with lockable entry and vandal-resistant material to provide added security and lessen the possibility of damage caused by vandals or weather. Hooded apertures may also feature to contain possible odours and repel vermin.



Indoor Recycling Bins

Suitable for internal environments, indoor recycling bins come in various styles and sizes to match individual waste requirements and aesthetics. With capacities ranging from as little as 2.5-litres to 180 litres, interior recycling bins are available with numerous apertures to fit all waste stream requirements.



CAPACITY

From desktop office recycling bins to lockable wheelie bin storage to everything in between, there is a wide range of indoor and outdoor containers with varying capacities to choose from when selecting recycling containers.

The placement of the container, the intended users, and the recyclable waste intended for disposal all help determine the suitable capacity for individual workplaces.

For example, if an office-based company, frequented only by staff members, produces a large number of coffee cups but not a large amount of any other specific recyclable material, they may choose to get a dedicated indoor coffee cup recycling bin alongside a 30-litre mixed recyclables recycling bin.

Or, if a company produces an adequate amount of a few materials, they may opt for a Quad recycling station, which provides four 40-litre units, to cut the cost of buying multiple bins while providing the necessary equipment to achieve their environmental goals.

A school, warehouse, retail company or any other business with high indoor and outdoor traffic may opt for placing several larger capacity outdoor recycling bins with the addition of smaller containers indoors. This would allow for the optimisation of indoor spaces and, with strategic placement where high footfall exists, the improvement of recycling programmes.

With capacities ranging from 5 litres to 360-litres, once the placement, users and waste stream is determined, finding an ideally sized container has never been easier.

For help with choosing a recycling bin, see our guide: [How do I choose a recycling bin?](#)



APERTURES

Apertures encourage users to place suitable waste into the correct bin by providing openings appropriate for specific waste streams. Optimising recycling containers with aperture openings prevents cross-contamination and minimises the possibility of facilities rejecting contaminated recycling waste.

Apertures come in various colours, which enable the containers to be easily spotted while also coordinating with the signage to accentuate the function of the particular bin.



GRAPHICS AND SIGNAGE

Graphics and signage greatly contribute to the success of recycling programmes. Providing clear, easily recognised signs allow for easy identification of recycling points while encouraging individuals to dispose of waste in the correct containers. By adding images or graphics to recycling sign kits, the containers highlight the function of each stream, create a simplified recycling system and minimise the possibility of cross-contamination.



They can also be personalised to incorporate logos and messages. From a company crest to a full graphic wraparound, recycling bins can feature personalisation to fit workplace branding, corporate colour schemes, and visitor or staff information.

See the section on niche waste streams to see how our customers have utilised personalisation to create the ideal recycling solution for their organisation.

5 Communicate with staff

Communicating with staff is an integral part of initiating a successful recycling programme.

Informing and discussing recycling and environmental targets with staff members allows companies to receive feedback and suggestions, which can help optimise plans. It also ensures that all staff are aware of, and adhering to, the company-wide goal and presents the opportunity to train staff to use the specific streams adopted by the workplace, which lessens the probability of cross-contamination or the disposal of recyclable materials in general waste bins. Assigning responsibility or 'green' roles within a team may also help improve the success of a programme.

6 Monitor

Measuring and monitoring waste management programmes will enable businesses to adapt and improve.

Performing scheduled reviews and spot checks can ensure that staff members are segregating waste correctly while keeping track of the company's waste generation.



4 tips to promote workplace recycling

Set an overarching environmental goal

Implementing and communicating a green target to staff members can increase recycling rates. If all staff members strive for the same target and can see colleagues actively pursuing the same objective, it encourages participation.

Communicate and accept feedback

Allowing staff members to comment and respond to recycling programmes before and during implementation is a handy tool to discover any issues or helpful suggestions. Staff will have a good idea of what recycling streams are most beneficial for their workplace and which may not. This communication can be verbal, through newsletters, and through the company intranet, among other ways.

Set targets to measure programme success

Setting achievable targets is not only a method to measure programme success but is also a handy way to encourage participation. By creating an attainable focus, staff members are more likely to adopt recycling habits to achieve goals. The targets, which are amendable, build a fun way to accomplish recycling programme success while also reaffirming the overarching environmental goal.

Install recycling points and streams

After identifying waste stream requirements, the next step to promoting a recycling programme is to install easily accessible and identifiable waste streams and recycling points. These will enable staff members to recycle materials easily, lowering waste costs by preventing waste from unnecessarily going to landfill.

Waste streams can be both single and multi-stream and are often customisable to requirements. See the section on Common workplace waste streams and Niche workplace waste streams to find out more.





OVERVIEW

The global recycling infrastructure is expanding to fit the global environmental goal. As countries strive to achieve a circular economy, recycling will play a massive role in the fight for a greener, more sustainable future, continuing to provide alternative and environmentally viable alternatives to natural resource consumption.

As workplaces and businesses, we all have a role in creating a green, more sustainable planet for future generations.

So, what changes will your workplace make to aid the environmental targets?

Let's get started together.

RESOURCES

Circular Economy - <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/economy/20151201STO05603/circular-economy-definition-importance-and-benefits>

European Circular Economy Action Plan - https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan_en

European Green Deal - https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

Canada Circular Economy – <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/sustainability/circular-economy.html>

Australia Circular Economy – <https://www.globalaustralia.gov.au/industries/circular-economy>

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