

Recycling and Waste Management



Recycling is Law

All commercial properties in New York City are required to establish a recycling program under the guidelines of New York City Local Law 87 of 1992. This law requires separation of certain grades of paper (high-grade white paper, newspapers, magazines, catalogs, and phone books) and encourages recovery of all other mixed paper grades. All businesses are also required to separate cardboard boxes, and food and beverage establishments must separate glass, metal, and plastic for recycling.

Mandatory Building-Wide Recycling Program

In accordance with NYC Local Law 87, Empire State Realty has recycling guidelines in place that tenants are expected to follow. All mixed paper should be kept separate from non-recyclable trash. Collection of all non-recyclable trash, including all food related materials, should be centralized. Tenants are also strongly encouraged to establish one collection point for cans and bottles in pantries, though this component of the recycling program is not required by law. All plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass bottles can be comingled into one bin.

Recycling Guidelines are to be posted in common areas, and shall be available to all employees for reference.

Cleaning Staff Responsibilities

The cleaning staff should maintain tenant separation efforts in accordance with the building's recycling program. Tied off bags of mixed paper, bags of non-recyclable trash, and any bags of bottles and cans should be placed in the freight area for removal. All trash and recyclables are brought down for removal by the waste removal vendor.

Understanding Off-Site Procedures

The recycling and waste removal vendor picks-up all materials from the property and transports it to the vendor's dry transfer station where all materials are emptied on to the facility floor. All bags of paper are opened, and the contents are sent up a conveyor belt where contaminants are removed, by hand, and recyclable paper is separated by grade for further processing. This process is also done for some bags of trash to recover recyclable material. (NOTE: Not all bags of trash are opened for further sorting. Materials that are too heavily commingled at the source cannot be sorted off-site, as excess labor delays the conveyor belt and thus the entire facility's operations.) Bags of bottles and cans are separately sorted and processed by type.

Questions?

Contact the Management Office at (212) 695-3617 or Great Forest, Inc., our recycling consultant, at (212) 779-4757 with any additional questions or concerns.

Recycling and Waste Management Frequently Asked Questions



Q: What Can Be Recycled?

A: Any type of paper and all bottles and cans.

- Paper

All paper materials can be recycled and should be placed in your deskside bin (regardless of color) or in central paper receptacles. All paper includes white office paper, newspaper, magazines, catalogues, colored paper, envelopes, Post-It notes, clean paper bags and file folders.

Not sure if it is paper? If you can tear it, it is probably paper – so go ahead and recycle it!

If it's a paper plate, paper bag, napkin, paper pastry bag or paper food wrapping you can recycle that too – a few crumbs are ok, just make sure it isn't too heavily soiled with food.

- Bottles and cans

All plastic bottles, aluminum cans and glass bottles can be recycled and should be placed in designated bins in pantry areas. If you have aluminum foil, plastic cups or plastic food containers it is ok to put them in the bottle and can bin – just make sure they're clean and/or empty.

Q: What Can't Be Recycled?

A: Food related, non-paper materials should be considered trash.

- Trash

Food related packaging, non-recyclable food containers, plastic wrap, plastic bags and Styrofoam are considered trash. In addition, heavy food waste and liquids are also considered trash. The items listed above should be disposed of in the pantry or central trash receptacles to reduce odors, deter pests and avoid spills at work stations.

Q: How do I know that the waste hauler is actually recycling?

A: All cardboard, bags of paper, bags of trash and bags of bottles and cans are placed into the same truck by the building's waste hauler. The bags are flattened in the truck, but do not break apart. This truck goes to a recycling facility where all bags of paper are further sorted by paper grade. Some bags of trash that contain a high percentage of paper may also be further sorted. However, not all bags of trash are opened for further sorting. Materials that are too heavily commingled at the source cannot be sorted off-site, as excess labor delays the conveyor belt and thus the entire facility's operations. The cleaner the bags of recyclables are when they get to the facility, the more recyclables can be recovered.

Q: What about materials that don't fall into the categories above?

A: Materials such as E-waste (e.g., computers), Fluorescent Lamps, Batteries and Toner Cartridges should NOT be placed in any trash or recycling bin. Contact management for expired computers, light bulbs, batteries or toner cartridges that are in need of disposal.

Still have questions about the recycling program? Contact the Management Office at (212) 35695-3617 or Great Forest, Inc., our recycling consultant, at (212) 779-4757.

Installing Your Recycling Program – A Guideline for Office Managers



1. Contact the Recycling Consultant from Great Forest to setup an introductory meeting and walkthrough.
2. Become familiar with the details of the recycling program. You should know:
 - The various waste and recyclable streams
 - What types of materials are accepted in each
 - Location of bins and types of bins
 - Collection procedures by cleaning staff
 - Final destination of materials
3. Ensure consistent set-up
 - All desks/workstations/offices should have the same bin set-up throughout all floors.
 - Central areas throughout all floors should have same bin set-up.
4. Ensure consistent and visible labels and signage
 - All central area bins should be clearly labeled (Paper Only, Glass/Metal/Plastic Only, Garbage Only).
 - Signage detailing the recycling program and materials acceptable in each stream should be posted in all common areas.
5. Education and Communication
 - Use the same channels you use for distributing information regarding new programs/policies – memos, emails, and meetings.
 - Ensure that the information is consistent in all communications.
 - Provide an avenue for feedback and questions – respond in a timely manner. If additional information is needed contact building management or Great Forest.
 - Incorporate information about the recycling program in new employee/temp worker orientations, and in other internal communication materials such as intranet or newsletters.
 - Share successes (tips for easier compliance employees have come up with) and commend those who are doing well.
6. Monitor
 - Great Forest can assist with spot checks and periodic monitoring, but you are there every day. Make note of anything not in compliance with the program. Recurring patterns (bins consistently moved, employees not complying) could indicate improvements can be made (changing location of bins to accommodate higher traffic areas) or the program needs enforcement (additional education materials). Great Forest can help in addressing any continuing issues.
 - When walking around the floors check on the following:
 - Does the bin set-up remain consistent?
 - Are central bins lined appropriately?
 - Do bins exhibit appropriate materials?
7. Be firm. As with any new change, there may be resistance. We encourage office managers to stand firm and enforce the program with employees.