

Office Recycling Policy



CARBON REDUCTION INSTITUTE
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

WASTE MANAGEMENT AT WORK A DO IT YOURSELF OFFICE RECYCLING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Most people naturally recycle their waste at home but find it difficult to apply this habit at work. Even though employees generally understand the values of recycling, waste management in the office needs to be planned very carefully. This guide shows how a recycling policy can be implemented in the office in just a few simple steps.

WHY SHOULD YOU RECYCLE AT WORK?



RECYCLING YOUR OFFICE WASTE HAS MANY BENEFITS:

- It enhances your business's marketplace image - and its reputation
- It increases staff morale & supports team building
- It enhances resource efficiency
- It helps combat climate change



RECYCLING SAVES RESOURCES AND HELPS THE ENVIRONMENT:

Recycling one tonne of paper or cardboard saves:

- Approximately 13 Trees
- 2.5 Barrels of Oil
- 4100 kWh of Electricity
- 4 Cubic Meters of Landfill
- 31,780 Litres of Water

**RECYCLING
OFFICE WASTE
WILL MAKE YOU
FEEL GOOD
ABOUT GOING
TO WORK!**



RECYCLING ALSO BRINGS FINANCIAL SAVINGS:

- Recycling office paper reduces the amount of waste disposal collections needed and therefore reduces cost
- 70% of office waste is office paper; so the savings might be significant
- Recycling reduces the amount of renewable resources going to landfill

SETTING UP A RECYCLING SYSTEM IN THE OFFICE

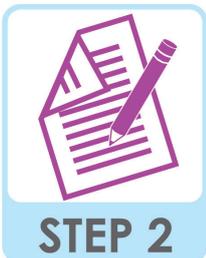
This guide explains how a successful recycling policy for the office can be planned and implemented in five simple steps. It will help you identify possible areas of waste reduction and recycling. Implementing this recycling policy in your office will enhance your company's image and prove that you are a responsible business!

5 EASY STEPS TO WORKPLACE RECYCLING



ASSIGN A PERSON IN CHARGE AND GAIN SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

An effective leader or recycling 'champion' will go a long way in convincing others to get involved and establishing a successful, sustainable program.



ANALYSIS AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Understanding your current waste system and where improvements can be made is an important early step.



SYSTEM DESIGN

Decide what changes you are going to make and design a complete process from diverting the waste at the point of disposal through to it being captured by the appropriate recycler.



IMPLEMENTATION

Once the new system is in place, it's time to communicate it to all people in your office. Also, you can let people outside your organisation know about your commendable efforts to reduce waste to landfill and greenhouse gases.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Ongoing adjustment to the system design such as number or location of receptacles will ensure it remains an effective and manageable system.



ASSIGN A PERSON IN CHARGE AND GAIN SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Recycling your office waste will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help tackle climate change.

The first step in implementing an effective recycling system at work should be assigning a person in charge. That person should be able to invest some time and commitment into the project. Note that changing your employees' waste habits may turn out to be much harder than expected. It may take someone with commitment to the subject and influence in the office to fulfil this task.

Depending on the size of your office, it might be necessary to assign a team rather than a single person. Write a clear job description for each team member; participants could possibly be involved in project management, waste audits, labelling, design, and monitoring of the processes.



ANALYSIS AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT PHASE

The second stage should be devoted to analysing the current waste management situation in the office and identifying areas for improvement. A crucial procedure of this step is a waste audit that determines the current amounts and kinds of waste produced in your office. This task is an unattractive one because it requires someone to literally separate and analyse the waste in the bins, but it will pay itself off in the later planning stage.

Set a target to monitor the waste habits in your office over a period of time, one week for example. That will help you identify possible areas of waste reduction and recycling. Ask yourself specifically what different kinds of waste are being produced and in what quantities over that period of time and keep a chart with your results.

Further questions that need to be asked are:

- What do we currently recycle?
- How many bins do we use?
- What size of bins? Where are they located?
- How full are these bins?
- How are they clearly identifiable e.g. colour coding?
- Who is emptying the bins and picking up the garbage?
- Is it worth shopping around for other collector firms or should we stick to our current ones? (Cost-benefit-analysis)

Answering those questions will give you a good overview of the waste situation in your office. It is important that you know as much as possible about the current system in order to uncover its strengths and weaknesses. Be clear about where you are going and set realistic goals at this phase!



SYSTEM DESIGN.

The third step should be committed to laying out the changes and making sure that they are converted into a working system.

The main question while designing this system should be: How can this new recycling policy be communicated and how can we get everybody to comply, including the cleaners? As mentioned above, changing all your employees' waste habits can be a difficult yet rewarding task!

These tips might be helpful in setting up the new system:

Be very clear about what you want to recycle. Common categories are:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Mixed recyclables (Glass, Cans, Plastics)
- Food scraps
- Non-recyclables

Note: Councils throughout Australia have different recycling policies. For example, one council might recycle glass and plastics together as mixed recyclables whereas another one offers to recycle them separately. Check with your local council about what can be recycled prior to making decisions about the categories.

- Make bins easily accessible and make sure everybody knows where to find them. Rule of thumb: if you're not sure about the number of bins you should provide, always go for the higher number. People don't like to get up from their desk if they don't really have to! Every desk usually needs its own paper collection tray. All bins should be placed in appropriate places. Accommodate for high-waste areas like kitchens and printer vicinities.
- Think about an effective identification system. Consider a highly effective colour coded system, as supplied by our certified carbon neutral product member - Eco Bin www.ecobin.com.au
- Are new bins required? They need to be ordered / purchased.
- Communicate with the cleaners to make sure they comply with the new policy. Type reminders and hang up notes for them if necessary.
- Research the recycling of other office items such as printer cartridges, toner chemicals or batteries.



These links will be helpful:

www.recyclingnearyou.com.au - National Recycling Hotline
www.planetark.com - Planet Ark (Mixed Recyclables)
www.visy.com.au - Visy (Mixed Recyclables)
www.cartridgeworld.com.au - Cartridge World (Cartridges)
www.chemsal.com.au - Chemsal (Chemicals)
www.cmaecocycle.net - CMA Ecocycle
 (Specialising in recycling mercury-containing wastes)

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

RECYCLE ORGANICS NATURALLY

Worm farms are increasingly popular, especially for those offices that have employees with a garden. Worm farms produce excellent fertile garden soil! Many websites offer information about worm farms, an example being: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/EasyWormfarm.htm>

REWARD & CELEBRATE

It has been proven supportive to design a reward system for staff. For example, you could fire up recycling competitions between different departments. This will not only increase value for the environment but also make work more fun!

PLAN TO SUCCEED

Designing this system might be complex due to the number of decisions to be made. However, careful planning beforehand will make implementation easy and ensure that the system runs smoothly later on. Rule of thumb: make it challenging but achievable! That is most likely to bring the best results.



IMPLEMENTATION

It might be a good idea to implement the new system with a kick-off event: Explain the changes in a relaxed atmosphere - like a barbeque or an office breakfast. Provide drinks and snacks that come in different packaging materials and let people take a guess where to put them. Explain why these changes are necessary and how they can be achieved.

Do not just talk about it but actively **SHOW** people where the new bins are and what to put in them.

After the first kick-off event it is important that you put the new system in writing and constantly remind people about it. This can, for example, happen with a follow up email. Posters and stickers in the appropriate places will function as a reminder. Keep people updated about the developments and successes, failures and changes.

Don't forget to communicate the system externally as well – implementing a new recycling policy makes a great story for a newsletter! This will enhance your business image and make people feel better about their company's ethics and environmental credentials.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure that the new system is a success, it is important **to keep monitoring it**.

To do so effectively, you should note down and respond to any challenges. Identify mistakes and work towards abolishing them. The new system will go through a warming period before running smoothly, so don't despair. Once it has found its own pace, minimal efforts will keep it operating.

This is how you can make sure everybody keeps recycling:

- Keep the system dynamic to avoid routine
- Keep rewards and competitions alive
- Set up feedback mechanisms for employees

Congratulations! You are well on your way to reducing your waste and carbon footprint!

MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more tips on reducing your impact on climate change, visit:

Carbon Reduction Institute - www.noco2.com.au

Clean Up Australia - www.cleanup.org.au