



City of Fort Worth **Business Smart** Program

Waste Reduction and Recycling

According to the North Central Texas Council of Governments, “there is an estimated 38 years of lifetime remaining for existing landfills. This remaining lifetime is greatly affected by the continued population and economic growth in the region and the use of landfills as the primary disposal option. Considering this data, it is expected that a number of communities will be facing challenges in their capacity needs in the near future.”

This section offers recycling and waste reduction options for businesses seeking to be part of the regional effort to reduce waste.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (34 pts)

Prerequisite(s): Track and Report Annual Recycling and Waste

Background: Approximately two-thirds of waste generated in Fort Worth comes from commercial and industrial properties. A primary goal of the Business Smart program is to reduce waste through increased waste reduction and recycling.

Required Action: Business Smart participants are asked to track annual recycling and waste generation by using the Business Smart waste and recycling calculator. If contracted waste companies can provide data on recycling, then please provide their numbers in lieu of using the calculator.

Points: Prerequisite for membership in Business Smart.

WRR1

Conduct a Waste Stream Audit

Background: According to the MillerCoors Corporation, “Waste” is just another term for “resource.” Understanding what is thrown away and identifying recyclable elements of the waste stream can lead to more efficient recycling. Auditing waste streams is helpful in quantifying the amount of trash and recycling generated and “right-sizing” service level. Financial savings are possible when garbage service level corresponds to actual garbage produced.

Recommended Action: Download the Dumpster Audit form or the Waste Assessment worksheet from the Business Smart Resource tab. Collect data on your company’s waste stream over the course of two weeks. Evaluate the data and analyze the potential for waste reduction. A list of recycling providers can be found on the Business Smart Resource tab. Calculate your company’s current diversion rate and set an improvement goal.

The EPA’s recycling measurement method calculates a recycling rate that requires dividing the total amount of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) recycled in a given year by the total amount of MSW generated, where the amount of MSW generated equals the amount of recycled MSW plus the amount of disposed of MSW. This is different from a diversion rate.

Diversion rates measure the amount of material diverted from MSW disposal facilities and typically only track disposed of quantities. For instance, if state A disposed of 100 tons of MSW in year one and 90 tons of MSW in year two, then state A could claim a 10 percent diversion rate. Since diversion rates only track disposal practices, they do not necessarily reflect recycling rates.

- Points:**
- 1 = Conduct a waste audit.
 - 1 = Achieve a diversion rate of at least 25%.
 - 2 = Achieve a diversion rate of at least 50%.

Max points: 3

WRR2

Recycling Education

Background: Clearly labeling recycling bins indicating accepted and non-accepted material will give employees visual clues to encourage participation and will help reduce recycling bin contamination.

Recommended Action: Design your own or customize a Business Smart poster to fit your organization’s recycling program and distribute the information to staff electronically, post the information on bulletin boards or place directly on the recycling bin. Employee newsletters, new hire orientations and staff meetings are also good opportunities to educate staff about the organizations waste reduction goals and practices.

In an office situation, provide recycling bins for each employee, making sure to pair the bins next to employees trash cans. In common areas, place recycling bins next to trash cans, but clearly mark the bins as “Recycle Only” and provide a poster or list of materials that you want in the bin. *The City of Fort Worth does not provide bins to businesses or organizations.* Check with local office supply stores or on the internet to find a vendor for recycling bins.

- Points:**
- 1 = Launch an education campaign about your recycling program.
 - 1 = Provide recycling containers for individual employees and also common areas.

Max Points: 2

WRR3

Join EPA's WasteWise Program

Background: The [EPA's WasteWise program](#) requires solid waste and recycling tracking.

Recommended Action: Sign up for the EPA's WasteWise program and gain recognition for your efforts. Participating in the Business Smart program already qualifies you for WasteWise program and its benefits.

Points: 2

WRR4

Reduce Paper Use I

Background: According to a North Central Council of Governments [Regional Benchmark study of North Central Texas](#) 2007, paper is a major component of the commercial waste stream in North Central Texas. While recycling paper is better than throwing it away, reducing the amount of paper used conserves more resources.

Recommended Action: Find out how much paper your office uses and establish goals for paper use. Recycle waste paper, and purchase paper with at least 30% recycled content.

Points: 1 = calculate how much paper your organization uses annually and set goals for paper reduction.

- 1 = Purchase paper with at least 30% recycled content.
- 1 = Achieve a 25% reduction in paper use.
- 2 = Achieve a 50% reduction in paper use.
- 3 = Achieve a 75% reduction in paper use or better.

Max Points: 5

WRR5

Reduce Paper Use II

Background: Establishing paper reduction through policy changes is an effective method to reduce office paper consumption.

Recommended Action: Set office printers for default double-sided printing, and/or establish policy that documents be transmitted electronically when feasible. Post meeting agendas prior to meetings so attendees can print if needed or simply read electronically. **Note:** Remind/educate employees on how to remove two-sided printing option for documents that must be single sided.

Points: 1 = Set double-sided printing as the default print option.

- 1 = Create standard procedure for employees to transfer documents electronically.
- 1 = Establish standard procedure to email / post meeting agendas instead of printing them for distribution.

Max Points: 3

WRR6

Eliminate Disposables

Background: Single-use food containers are often used at organizational gatherings and celebrations. While convenient, after use the containers head straight to the landfill and represent a reoccurring expense. Replace disposables with washable, reusable serving ware such as mugs, silverware, plates and dishes.

Recommended Action: Discontinue the practice of purchasing single-use food and beverage containers. Provide members of your organization with a mug and/or place reusable serving ware in accessible common areas.

Points: 1 = Distribute coffee mugs and/or water bottles to employees.
1 = Purchase reusable serving ware for employee daily use and company events.
2 = Discontinue the purchase of single-use disposable beverage containers.

Max Points: 4

WRR7

Organics Recycling

Background: According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Americans throw out approximately 25% of prepared food or 96 billion pounds of food waste each year (Source: [EPA](#)). Organics recycling or composting keeps food waste out of the landfill and turns the waste into a valuable soil amendment and reduces greenhouse gases. At least one vendor offers collection of commercial organics for composting in Fort Worth. The City of Fort Worth offers the opportunity to visit with Master Composters on the second Saturday of each month in the spring and fall and offers a biannual [Master Compost Class](#) teaching backyard composting techniques.

Recommended Action: Develop an organics composting program that recycles on-site food waste. Have a predetermined percentage of your staff attend a Fort Worth composting class or similar. Smaller organizations can compost all vegetable matter (coffee grounds, tea bags, and produce) on site through backyard composting techniques. Large organizations should inquire with their local waste service providers about organic recycling opportunities.

Note: As of 2012, large scale composting opportunities are limited in the Fort Worth area. However, a handful of businesses have reported success in organics composting.

Points: 2 = Compost your organization's organic waste (either through on-site vegetable matter composting, or through contracting with a service provider).
1 = Have a predetermined percentage of staff or one person from each section/division attend a City of Fort Worth compost class (weekend class or Master Composter course).

Max Points: 3

WRR8

Buy Recycled (Close the loop/Green Purchasing)

Background: Recycling waste products is only half of the equation. Recycling AND buying products made from recycled content is called “closing the loop” and is part of Environmentally Preferable Purchasing For more information on how companies can close the loop, read [WasteWise Update: Environmentally Preferable Purchasing](#).

Recommended Action: Develop a green purchasing policy encouraging the procurement of recycled content office products, and building material for building upgrades.

Points: 1 = Develop a procurement policy for the purchase of office products that contain at least 30% recycled, post-consumer content (letterhead, printer paper, filing, boxes, business cards, etc.)
2 = procurement policy for the purchase of office products that contain 50% or more recycled, post-consumer content (letterhead, printer paper, filing, boxes, business cards, etc.)
2 = procurement policy for the purchase of recycled content building upgrade material (carpet, furniture, tiling, etc.)

Max Points: 4

WRR9

E-Waste and Special Waste Recycling

Background: Some materials are currently not accepted in the standard office recycling bin. E-waste and special waste such as batteries often fall into this category. While such waste comprises only about 2% of the United States waste stream, special waste is made from items that do not belong in the waste stream (source: [EPA eCycling](#)).

Recommended Action: Recycle or donate used computers to a reputable electronics recycler. Have collection points for special waste such as batteries, cell phones, printer cartridges, and renewable batteries.

Points: 1 = Recycle or donate used electronics.
1 = Recycle or donate used ink cartridges.
1 = Setup collection point to recycle or donate cell phones.
1 = Recycle CFL bulbs, fluorescent light tubes and LED lamps.
1 = Recycle rechargeable batteries.

Max Points: 5

WRR10

Donation of Items for Reuse

Background: The three “Rs” stand for Reduce, *Reuse*, and Recycle. Donating reusable items is a better use than having them recycled as scrap. Many opportunities exist for donating usable office furniture and other numerous items generated through daily business activities.

Recommended Action: Check on donation or reuse options before recycling or throwing workplace items away. Helpful websites for your search may be [Craigslist](#), [Freecycle](#), [Resource Exchange Network for Eliminating Waste \(RENEW\)](#), or local donation shops, including Habitat for Humanity ReStore, the Salvation Army, or Goodwill.

Points: 1= Create a procedure for donating materials or giving them away, keeping track of your donations for tax purposes.

Max Points: 1

WRR11

Innovation in Green

Background: Design, implement and document a “green” achievement not listed here.

Recommended Action: Think outside the box and do something green that has a substantial and measurable impact on any part of the environment as it relates to transportation options. Submit your action to Business Smart for credit approval.

Points: 2 = per achievement in any of the WC, AT, EC, WM, or O segments of Business Smart.

Max Points: 4 for total Business Smart program