

Zero Waste—You Make It Happen!

Reducing Waste in Property Management

There are many opportunities for reducing waste in building maintenance, custodial care, and landscape management. Reducing waste can mean saving money on both garbage bills and buying supplies. The following are suggestions from professionals in property management and waste reduction.

Building Maintenance

- Service all building equipment as indicated in the warranties.
- Purchase durable, repairable, and energy-efficient equipment. It may cost more up front, but will save money in the long run.
- Keep buildings in good repair; avoid deferred maintenance. Repairs are usually less expensive if handled right away.
- Use durable, recycled, and recyclable materials when doing maintenance and repairs. For a list of businesses that sell recycled content construction products, call 1-800-553-2962.
- Obtain and recycle material through the California Materials Exchange (CalMAX) or a local material exchange. For more information about this free listing service, call 1-877-520-9703. Material exchanges help businesses and institutions locate markets for materials they have traditionally discarded and to find materials suitable for reuse.
- Contact local processors who accept construction/renovation debris for recycling. For a list of processors see the CIWMB Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling Program Web site at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/ConDemo/.
- Donate old furniture, office equipment, outdated forms, or paper that is only used on one side. These materials can be used by many nonprofits, schools, or other organizations. Contact United Way, local homeless shelters, or social service organization for potential recipients.

- Purchase reusable air filters or air filter frames. Completely reusable air filters require cleaning with hot water (no soap); reusable frames have a disposable filter insert. Some organizations have saved money by hiring a firm that replaces filter inserts on a regular basis.
- Purchase longer lasting bulbs. Incandescent light sockets in exit signs can be converted to fluorescent. Check out availability of rebates from your electric company.
- Use sensors or timers to automatically turn equipment on and off. This can reduce wear on equipment and energy costs.
- Purchase energy-efficient plugs and sockets.
- Maintain building with lead-free paint, and paint on as-needed basis.
- Recycle old paint and other related materials appropriately. See CIWMB Publication #331-97-016, “Latex Paint-Hazards and Solutions for Disposal.”

Custodial

- Make recycling available to building tenants. See CIWMB Publication #500-940-013, “Waste Reduction for Business and Industry,” for more information about how to set up a recycling program.
- Use cloth towel dispensers in bathrooms or purchase recycled and unbleached paper towel rolls.

- If individual rolls of toilet paper are removed before they are completely empty, save them and donate to shelters.
- Ask vendors to sell products that are more durable, reusable, repairable, and recyclable. Also, ask suppliers not to over-package others.
- Request that deliveries be shipped in returnable and reusable containers. Ask vendors to take back packaging. In some cases they may be able to reuse it.
- Prior to recycling or disposing, find out if packaging materials could be reused by your company or another business. Cardboard and polystyrene may be used for art projects.
- Purchase products with no packaging, less packaging, or reusable packaging.
- Reduce wood waste by requiring suppliers to collect crates, pallets, barrels, and spools for reuse. These items may also be used internally or can be given to employees to take home.
- Purchase cleaning supplies in bulk and concentrate form. These give you more product for less packaging and are usually less expensive.
- Use cleaners without toxic, corrosive, and flammable chemicals. Read labels. Look for products that do not require special handling and/or do not have warnings.
- Dispense cleaning solution in refillable containers like pump-spray bottles. Use products in non-aerosol containers where possible.
- Eliminate trash bag liners in waste cans where no wet trash is disposed of.
- Avoid over fertilizing and over-watering, which leads to rapid plant growth and pollution from runoff.
- Practice “grasscycling” by leaving grass clippings on the lawn as you mow, and allow them to decompose naturally. See CIWMB Publication #443-99-011, “Grasscycle! Make the Most of Your Lawn. Make the Most of Your Time.” Also available in an 11-minute video in English and Spanish versions.
- Practice integrated pest management, which encourages biological pest controls and minimum applications of pesticides.
- Recycle excess materials, and buy recycled-content products.
- See the CIWMB Publication #443-00-011, “Resource Efficient Landscaping.”

For More Help:

- Visit Waste Prevention World for more information and assistance: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/WPW/.
- Waste Prevention Information Exchange, www.ciwmb.ca.gov/WPIE/, (916) 341-6363.
- The Business Waste Reduction Web site at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/BizWaste/ has waste prevention resources designed for businesses and offers technical assistance. E-mail bzassist@ciwmb.ca.gov.

CIWMB publications are available online at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Publications/ or by calling (916) 341-6306 or 1-800-CA-WASTE. If you have questions, information, ideas, educational materials, etc., please e-mail us at bzassist@ciwmb.ca.gov or call (916) 341-6363.

Landscape Management

- Compost yard trimmings on-site, and use them as a topsoil amendment.
- Chip tree trimmings and use as mulch.
- Plant drought-tolerant plants; they use less water and produce fewer trimmings.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut energy costs, **Flex Your Power** and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.