



Greening NYS Hotels

When selecting a location for meetings, conferences, hearings, etc., state agency staff are looking for hotels and conference centers that are making an effort to become more sustainable. The following guidelines are being used in the decision making process:

- Facilities are registered with the Pollution Prevention Institute's Green Hotels
<http://www.rit.edu/affiliate/nysp2i/green-hotels-new-york-state>
- Locations are convenient to most attendees – close to major transportation routes, accessible by public transportation, train routes, etc.
- The hotel/convention center has a sustainability plan that includes the following:
 - A waste reduction/reuse plan
 - Uses reusable cutlery, dishware, linens and decorations.
 - Condiments, beverages and other food items provided in bulk instead of individually packaged and that any packaging is recyclable and recycled.
 - Allow staff to consume left-over foods and/or donate them to a local food bank or soup kitchen, and compost or donate table scraps to farms where possible. Liability to business that donates food items to licensed food handlers has been addressed through the Good Samaritan Food Donation Act.
 - Encourages event coordinators to have attendees sign-up for meals on the registration form to indicate their intentions to attend specific meal functions throughout the event. Better attendance numbers will reduce food waste and costs.
 - Usable textiles are donated to charitable organizations.
 - A comprehensive recycling program
 - A recycling program is available for hotel office areas to collect recyclable materials.
 - Ensure that all recyclables generated in the guestrooms are source separated. This can be accomplished by promoting an In-Room Hotel Recycling Program.
 - Unusable textiles are recycled.
 - Energy reduction measures in place.
 - Installed energy efficient lighting (LED or CFL) in/outdoors.
 - Use Energy Star appliances and equipment.
 - Turn off heat/air conditioning when not in use.
 - Closes blinds and turns off lights when not in use.
 - Water conservation measures in place.
 - Implement a towel and linen reuse program.
 - Install water conservation toilets and showerheads.
 - Educates employees on sustainable practices.
 - Provides information to guests on sustainable practices.
 - Provides waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting information to exhibitors/vendor show participants.
 - Supports local producers when in season.

For more information on the Green Hotel Program, contact NYS Pollution Prevention Institute -
<http://www.rit.edu/affiliate/nysp2i/green-hotels-ny-region>

For more information and resources on going green, visit the America Hotel & Lodging Association at
<http://www.ahla.com/green.aspx>

The following information is specific on materials management – waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting, since recycling is required by local laws. Each municipality has a recycling law or ordinance requiring source separation of recyclables and their own penalties or fines for those people who do not recycle.

Recycling is required for everyone who generates garbage in New York State. Recycling is one part of a total solid waste management program; waste reduction and reuse take precedence in a comprehensive solid waste management program.

New York State addressed our garbage problem in the March 1987 and again in the January 2011 New York State Solid Waste Management Plans. The 2011 New York State Solid Waste Management Plan: Beyond Waste, established a goal of 0.6 pounds of waste per person per day by 2030.

IDEAS FOR WASTE REDUCTION and REUSE



- Make double-sided copies whenever possible. This can dramatically reduce your paper usage.
- Instead of making individual copies for everyone, use a routing slip when circulating information to staff, or post notices on a bulletin board. Better yet, an electronic bulletin board.
- Use reusable envelopes for interoffice mail.
- If applicable, use electronic mail instead of making hard copies of all communications.
- If possible, limit the number of subscriptions to periodicals and share them. This will reduce both trash and subscription costs.
- Arrange to have a vendor collect and recharge empty laser printer toner cartridges.
- Encourage the reuse of office supplies, i.e. paper clips, rubber bands and brass fasteners, etc.
- Use scrap paper for messages and make your own scrap pads.
- Require suppliers who deliver products on pallets or in metal drums to take them back for reuse.
- Have your cafeteria/restaurant switch to refillable containers for milk and juice.
- Use reusable dishes, cups and utensils for continental breakfasts and other meals.
- Purchase reusable and washable cleaning cloths, aprons, tablecloths, etc., rather than single-use disposable products.
- Buy institutional sizes of “green” cleaning supplies.
- Buy recycled content paper products, like, copier paper, paper towels, napkins, toilet paper, etc.
- Offer food and beverages products in bulk.
- Reuse paper as scrap paper. Have employees save scrap paper in boxes and reuse it for memos, messages, calculations, etc.
- Repair equipment instead of replacing it. Purchase durable supplies and equipment.
- Reuse containers or offer used boxes and containers to customer.
- Place wood crates or pallets that aren't sent back near the loading dock and encourage local farmers or others to take what they need.
- Ask your employees for their ideas!



SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE AN EXISTING RECYCLING PROGRAM.

Evaluate Your Current Recycling Program. Review your current recycling program. Make certain that you are recycling all of the items required by your local law. If you are not, meet with your hauler and janitorial staff to get your business in compliance. Conduct a waste audit to evaluate what materials you generate and where they are generated. Remember, if you set up a recycling program, your garbage dumpster may not need to be emptied as often. Contact your waste/recycling hauler to discuss changes in your collection frequency. You may save some money.



Contact Your Municipal Recycling Coordinator. Your city/town probably collects many recyclable items. Your local coordinator may be able to provide you with information on what is mandated in your community and how to prepare these items. You can find a list of recycling coordinators at www.dec.ny.gov

Recycling Bins. Whatever recycling bins you decide to use, you need to make sure they are labeled clearly with what materials you will accept you. We have found that having them together, reduces the contamination issue. Also, be consistent with your color scheme (i.e. recycling bins would be blue, garbage cans would be black).

Location, Location, Location! Place recycling bins (and their companion garbage cans) in locations that are convenient for guests (lobby, rooms, and common areas) and employees (offices). It is also important to have a recycling bin right next to a garbage can (the garbage can should be well labeled, too).

Educate, Educate, Educate! Once the initial planning is completed, the next step is to devise an educational program that will fit your needs and the needs of your employees and guests. The success of your program will depend on how well informed (and motivated) your employees are. A vigorous educational program will assure a successful recycling program.

Publicize Program Success. It is important that everyone have an opportunity to see the results of their efforts. Utilize your employee newsletter or social media to let everyone know how they are doing, i.e., how many tons of paper was recycled, natural resources saved, etc. And let your customers know, too!

Evaluate Your Purchasing Habits. For recycling to be successful, we must all work to create markets for those products that are made from recycled materials. All sorts of paper products and office supplies are now made from recycled materials. The cost of these products is competitive with products made from new raw materials and quality is not only comparable, but is better in some cases.

Composting. Diverting food scraps and yard waste from the waste stream can help reduce your disposal costs. Contact your local community recycling coordinator to see if there is a composting facility near your facility. Starting off with pre-consumer food scraps is the best way to initiate your program, to work out any problems; then you can expand.

We have additional information that may be useful in improving your recycling program, visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8801.html> or email recycling@gw.dec.state.ny.us

OTHER RESOURCES

- Waste Prevention Tools at Work, Cornell Waste Management Institute. <http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/resources.htm>
- Business Guide for Reducing Solid Waste, USEPA. RCA Hotline (800) 424-9364 www.epa.gov
- Procurement Guidelines for Recycled Products <http://www.epa.gov/wastes/conserve/tools/cpg/>
- Keep America Beautiful – Recycling At Work <http://recyclingatwork.org>
- The KAB Guide to Waste in the Workplace, Keep America Beautiful, Inc. www.kab.org
- Northeast Recycling Council <http://www.nerc.org/>
- Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association <http://www.newmoa.org/>
- Waste Audit Reference Manual, NYSDEC (518) 402-8706 recycling@gw.dec.state.ny.us