



## Successful Recycling in Retail Operations

Packaging materials make up a large portion of any retail store's waste. Because much of this waste is generated outside the retail establishment, reduction efforts must be made in cooperation with vendors. If vendors ship products in unnecessary or non-recyclable packaging, consider asking them to reduce packaging or switch to materials that can be recycled or reused.

### Helpful tips for bolstering recycling:

1. Perform a waste assessment. Walk through your operation and note what type of waste is discarded in each area to determine what types of recycling containers are needed.
2. Based on the results of the waste assessment, set up appropriate recycling programs in all areas. You will probably find that most of your waste will be corrugated cardboard. To reduce volume and make storage easier, you may wish to bale or compact the cardboard.
3. Make sure that managers of public areas in shopping complexes are provided with well-marked containers for recycling. Place containers where materials are generated to make recycling convenient. Don't forget to post signs to tell customers that you recycle.
4. Inform employees about proper recycling procedures by issuing a memo and reviewing procedures at staff meetings or at the beginning of shifts.
5. Set up a logbook or a receipt system to record the volume of recyclables leaving the premises, and take appropriate action if volume decreases.
6. Include recycling information in orientation for new employees.
7. Explain the recycling program to custodial staff. Train them to collect waste separately and have a place they can take separated materials. Plan pick-ups on appropriate shifts so containers don't overflow.
8. Ask custodial staff to help monitor the program. Have them inform you of areas with major contamination problems or where employees are not participating, and follow up with improved recycling education in these areas.
9. If appropriate, make sure grounds crews know to keep yard waste separate from other waste.