



Recycling at Work Tip Sheet: Engaging Janitorial Staff

Ideas for Effectively Partnering with Your Janitors and Janitorial Service Companies to Improve Recycling

Your on-site janitors and janitorial service companies are responsible for pick-up of your recyclables and trash and, in some cases, are accountable for proper separation of trash from recyclables before collection by your recycling vendor. With their help and commitment to the recycling process, you can have a successful and cost-effective recycling program.

Effectively Working with Janitorial Staff

- Make it easy for janitors to identify recycling bins by having bins all the same style or color-coded.
- Clearly label all recycling bins. Check with your janitorial company to find out if labels should be in another language. Include pictures of acceptable materials.
- Discuss with janitorial staff the best location for the larger bins to increase service efficiency.
- Post a floor plan map indicating central recycling areas and location of recycling bins in a convenient reference area for janitors.
- Encourage janitorial staff to feel a sense of ownership in the success of the recycling program. Ask them to report when recyclables are improperly sorted or found in the garbage so your Recycling Team can communicate problems and solutions with employees.
- Direct janitorial staff to pick up extra recycling items only if they are clearly labeled for "Recycling."
- Work with janitorial staff to ensure they have the equipment they need to service the program efficiently (e.g., having carts with three collection bags – one for paper recyclables, one for beverage containers and one for trash).
- Remind everyone to keep trash out of recycling.
- If you work with a janitorial service company, include in your written contract the type of recycling service needed (e.g., empty desk-side recycling bins nightly, empty centrally located bins, what materials to collect, where they are to be taken, how often to collect materials). See [Sample Janitorial Contract Language](#).

Educating Janitorial Staff

- Provide recycling training and information when janitors are hired.
- Supply your janitorial service company with an information sheet on how the recycling program works in your building. Include a list of what is and is not acceptable for recycling. This will help the company to educate staff members. Again, make sure that information is in the proper language.
- Encourage sharing of ideas, concerns and comments to improve the recycling program. Address any questions or feedback janitors have about the recycling program (e.g., contamination issues, employees not participating in the program).
- Offer periodic training sessions to educate new and existing janitorial staff about the program. These training sessions also offer a great opportunity for feedback and the exchange of information.

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