



# RECYCLING ALL STARS

## Apartment and Condominium Recycling Program Toolkit

Waste Management and the County have partnered to create the WM Recycling All Stars Program. Whether you are just getting started, or want to refresh your property's recycling program, this program provides all the information, tools, and support you need to create and sustain a successful recycling program for your residents.

Increasing recycling has many benefits:

- **Save money.** It's an easy equation: the more garbage, the higher the waste bill; the more recycling, the lower the waste bill.
- **Help your community and the environment.** Recycling creates jobs. In Washington, recycling creates six times more jobs than landfilling garbage.
- **Make your property more attractive to tenants.** Research shows that residents want to recycle.

### Toolkit Contents

Inside this Recycling Toolkit you will find tips and tools for setting up, refreshing or sustaining a successful recycling program at your property in just three easy steps. You will also find the rules and requirements for how to participate in the WM Recycling All Stars Recognition Program, and sample documents you can use to inform and engage residents.

#### **Step 1: Set your Property up for Recycling Success!**

*Information on how to perform a site assessment and links to an online custom site assessment worksheet for your property.*

#### **Step 2: Educate and Motivate your Residents!**

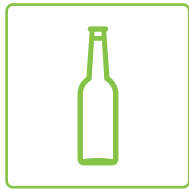
*Ideas for easy and creative ways to engage residents in your property's recycling program.*

#### **Step 3: Take your Recycling Program to the Next Level!**

*A **Recycling Program Checklist** and other tools to keep your recycling program running smoothly throughout the year.*

All materials and resources referenced in this toolkit can be downloaded for printing or ordered online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).

The WM Recycling All Stars Program is managed and funded by Waste Management under a cooperative agreement with the County.



# Step 1: Set Your Property Up for Recycling Success

As a multifamily property manager or owner, you hold the key to establishing a successful recycling program! It all starts with ensuring that your property has the necessary services and tools for making recycling easy and convenient for your residents.

## Calculate the Recycling Service Needed at your Property

Evaluating your current garbage and recycling service level is the most important step in establishing an effective recycling program at your property.

**Tip!** The more your residents are recycling, the less they are placing in the garbage – so make sure to re-evaluate your property’s garbage and recycling needs on an annual or bi-annual basis.

### Garbage

Evaluating your current garbage service level is as simple as taking a peek inside your garbage containers the day before collection day. If your garbage containers are generally 75–100% full on collection day, your service level is probably sufficient. If containers are consistently *less than 75%* full, consider reducing your garbage container’s size or the frequency of pick-up. Likewise, if garbage containers are frequently overflowing, consider increasing your service level.

### Recycling

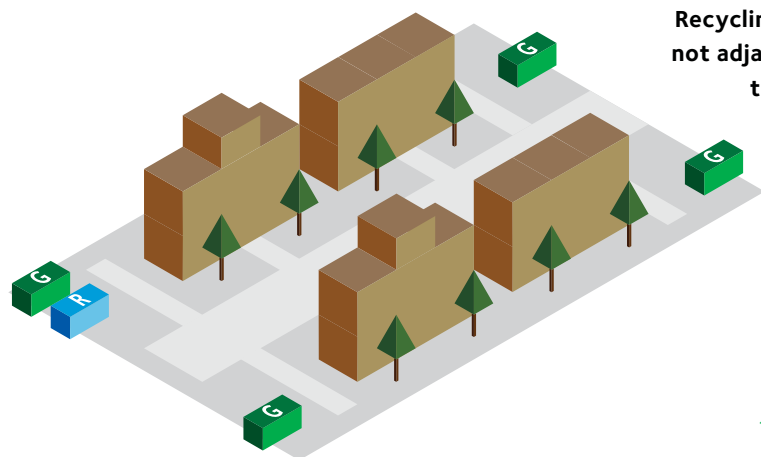
Most properties have plenty of garbage capacity and not enough recycling. This often leads to recyclable materials being placed in the garbage. In general, properties should have an equal number of carts and/or containers for garbage and recycling. For example, a property with a 4 yard garbage container should have a 4 yard recycling container. See the table of recommended recycling service levels to the right.

Property Size	Recommended Recycling Service
2–4 units	96 gallon cart
5–8 units	1 yard
9–12 units	1.5 yards
13–16 units	2 yards
17–25 units	3 yards
26–33 units	4 yards
34–41 units	5 yards
42–50 units	6 yards
51–58 units	7 yards
59–66 units	8 yards
67–75 units	9 yards
76–83 units	10 yards
84–91 units	11 yards
92–100 units	12 yards
100+ units	Call 1–800–592–9995 or request onsite assistance at <a href="http://wmnorthwest.com">wmnorthwest.com</a> .

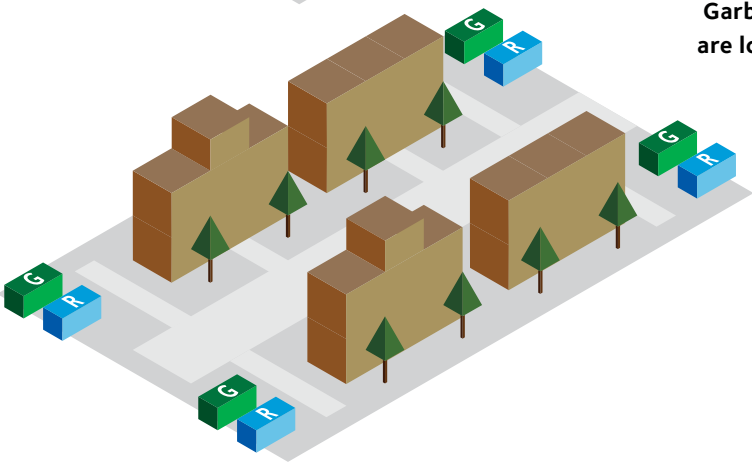
## Place Garbage and Recycling Containers Together for Easy Resident Access

Make sure that garbage and recycling containers are placed in an area that residents can access conveniently and easily, and that recycling and garbage containers are located close together, either side-by-side or in the same enclosure.

Avoid having garbage and recycling containers in separate areas. When garbage and recycling containers are too far apart, residents may throw all of their materials in the closest container. See below for examples of ineffective and effective container placement.



**× INEFFECTIVE**  
 Recycling container is isolated and not adjacent to garbage containers throughout property

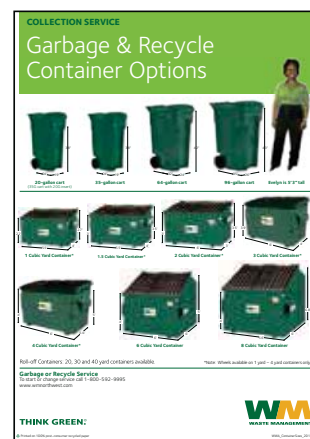


**✓ EFFECTIVE**  
 Garbage and recycling containers are located side-by-side and easy to access



Garbage & recycling containers not necessarily to scale.

**Tip!** Are you worried there isn't enough room for recycling and garbage containers to be located together? Use the *Garbage and Recycling Container Options* sheet (available for download at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com)) to help determine what container sizes will fit in your enclosure. If you need additional space, consider reducing container size and increasing pick-up frequency or converting unused space.



## Replace Container Labels and Add Additional Signage

Clear and visible signs on containers help residents easily identify where materials belong.

Check each of your containers to see if they are properly identified with Waste Management **Garbage and Recycling Decals**. Decals should be posted on all visible sides of the container.



Garbage Decal Sample



Recycling Decal Sample



Garbage Poster

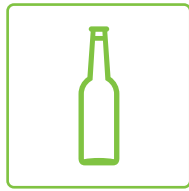


Recycling Poster

## Take Action!

- ✓ **Request new container decals if they are missing or damaged.** Notify Waste Management using the Resource Order Form online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com). Decals are free of charge.
- ✓ **Contact Waste Management Customer Service if you need to make changes** to your collection service or if you need to change container locations. Call 1-800-592-9995 (Mon–Fri, 7 a.m.–5 p.m., Sat 9 a.m.–1 p.m.) or visit [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com) and submit your request using the "Request Onsite Assistance" form.

All materials and resources referenced in this toolkit can be downloaded for printing or ordered online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).



## Step 2: Educate and Motivate Your Residents

It is important to provide residents with information about how to recycle at your property. See below for easy and creative ways to engage residents in your property's recycling program.

For new residents, introduce the recycling program and provide a copy of the Recycling Guidelines when they move in so that residents know how to participate right away.

For current residents, make sure each household has a copy of the latest **Recycling Guidelines**, encourage participation, and communicate often about changes or additions to the property's recycling program.

### Communicate

If you are rolling out a new recycling program, be sure to communicate changes at least 2 weeks in advance. For example, you can:

- Place **Recycling Posters** on bulletin boards or near mailboxes
- Distribute letters and/or **Door-Hangers** to each apartment
- Announce the program through emails or newsletters

Use the **Newsletter Announcements** to introduce residents to a new recycling program, explain improvements to your existing recycling program, or share additional information about waste prevention and reuse opportunities. Consider hosting a kick-off community event to introduce or refresh your recycling program to residents (see the **Resident Recycling Event** section for more information).

### Educate

Provide new residents with recycling guidelines and briefly go over acceptable items.

Let your residents know about ways to recycle moving boxes, packing materials and other items left over after moving in by providing a **Move In/Move Out Resources flyer** and a county **Household Hazardous Waste flyer**.

Distribute **Recycling Guidelines** to residents in their preferred language. Guidelines are available in **English, Spanish, Korean, Amharic, Russian, Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese** and **Hindi**.

Schedule a move-in site walk, visit the garbage and recycling area and let your new resident know who to contact with garbage and recycling questions ([recyclenw@wm.com](mailto:recyclenw@wm.com)). Check in after a few weeks to answer questions about the program and provide positive encouragement.



Recycling Guidelines



County Household Hazardous Waste



Move In/Move Out Resources

**All materials and resources referenced in this toolkit can be downloaded for printing or ordered online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).**

## Recycling Posters

Download or order printed **Recycling Posters** in English or other languages that are common at your property. Guidelines are available in **Spanish, Korean, Amharic, Russian, Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese** and **Hindi** at: [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).

Hang **Recycling Posters** at eye level in community or shared spaces, wherever indoor recycling bins or outdoor recycling containers are located. Possible locations include laundry rooms, mail rooms, community meeting rooms, and garbage rooms, as well as outdoor enclosures near recycling containers. If possible, laminate posters for durability before hanging.

## Reusable Recycling Tote Bag

A **Recycling Tote Bag** makes it easy for residents to store recyclable items in their residence and carry them to the property's recycling container.

You can request a supply of recycling tote bags from Waste Management by visiting [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com). Tote bags are available **at no cost** on a first come, first served basis. Supplies are limited, so request bags today!

You can distribute recycling tote bags, recycling guidelines, and other recycling resources in a variety of ways:

### Door-to-door outreach

Engage residents in conversations about recycling and tell them who they can contact with questions.

### Bag left on doors

Leave a tote bag on the door handle of every unit with the educational materials inside. Include Recycling Tote Bag Instructions (find these at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com)).

### Resident pickup

Provide tote bags and educational materials at the property office.

### Move-in delivery

Distribute bags to new residents as part of the move-in orientation.

Recycling tote bags can also be distributed at a resident recycling event.



Multilingual Recycling Posters



Recycling Tote Bag

**All materials and resources referenced in this toolkit can be downloaded for printing or ordered online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).**

## Resident Recycling Event

A special recycling event for residents that combines food, games or music with an introduction to the new or improved recycling program is one of the most effective ways to engage residents in the property's recycling program.

We have found that Resident Recycling Fairs, National Night Out events or resident Recycling Block Parties provide a fun way to bring everyone together, build community among residents and widely distribute recycling tote bags and educational materials.

You can also use a community event to collect residents' unwanted household and bulky items. Many local companies are willing to collect unwanted household goods, electronics, clothing and other items for free at events like these.

Contact a local charity to arrange a special pick-up day at your location, and let residents know in advance about the opportunity to properly dispose of their bulky items. Organizations available for on-call pickup and collection events include:

### HOUSEHOLD ITEMS:

**Northwest Center | Big Blue Truck**  
[www.bigbluetruck.org](http://www.bigbluetruck.org)

**Sight Connection**  
[www.sightconnection.org](http://www.sightconnection.org)

**Salvation Army**  
[www.satruck.org](http://www.satruck.org)

### ELECTRONICS:

**InterConnection**  
[www.interconnection.org](http://www.interconnection.org)

**PC Recycle**  
[www.pcrecycle.net/pickup.php](http://www.pcrecycle.net/pickup.php)

## YOU ARE INVITED!

FREE Community Recycling Fair  
Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup>  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.



**what:** Recycling Fair & Collection Event  
**where:** The Avenues Apartment, Complex Parking Lot  
**who:** All residents of The Avenues are welcome!  
**bring:** Unwanted TVs, printers, computers, and laptops for recycling!  
**donate:** Gently used items to the NW Center!  
(Only the following items will be accepted: (1) flat items accepted by partner reseller or charity, such as clothing, shoes, books, toys, small household appliances such as blenders, toasters, coffee makers, glasses, crockpots, and furniture (no over 50lb.); (2)

**Join in the fun!**  
Stop in anytime between 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Sample Resident Recycling Event Flyer

Waste Management staff can assist with coordinating the logistics for a resident recycling event.

If you host an event, make sure to keep track of which units attended and follow up later with residents who missed the event, so no one is left without resources.



## Recycle Often. Recycle Right. <sup>SM</sup>

Once residents have all of the educational materials and tools they need, it is important to keep residents motivated to recycle as much as they can and keep garbage out of the recycling containers.

**Looking for ideas?** Consider using the sample newsletter announcements to send out occasional reuse, recycling or waste prevention tips. You can also place recycling reminders near mailboxes and other places where residents gather. Property email announcements and announcements on the property's website can also be a great way to quickly remind residents about recycling and keep them engaged.

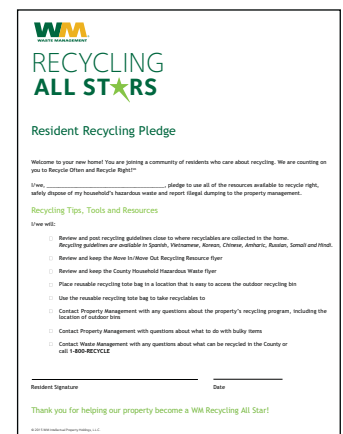
Ask residents to make a pledge to recycle – research shows people are more likely to stick with something they have pledged to do.



Recycling Program Newsletter Example

## Take Action!

- ✓ **Roll out or refresh your recycling program** with door-to-door outreach or a community event to communicate recycling opportunities for residents.
- ✓ **Provide all residents with current recycling guidelines**, Move In/Move Out Resources flyer and county Household Hazardous Waste flyer on an annual basis, and ensure that every unit receives a recycling tote bag. Order recycling guidelines, tote bags and other resources at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).
- ✓ **Send newsletter announcements and hang posters and educational materials** in common areas such as laundry rooms, mail areas and the main lobby or leasing office.
- ✓ **Contact a local reuse or recycling organization** to schedule a special collection event and inform residents which bulky and household items are accepted for donation.



Sample Resident Recycling Pledge

All materials and resources referenced in this toolkit can be downloaded for printing or ordered online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).





## Step 3: Take your Recycling Program to the Next Level

Congratulations! You have created a successful recycling program at your property. We know it is no small task to keep busy residents informed and motivated to recycle often and recycle right.

Here are some tips to keep your recycling program running smoothly throughout the year.

### Communicate Annual Recycling Goals

What does success look like? For some properties, the year's goal might be to increase the number of recycling containers on site. For other properties, minimizing illegal dumping may be a top priority. No matter where your property is starting from, there are always ways to improve resident recycling opportunities.

Every year after you have set the recycling goals for the property, let residents know how they can help and why they should care. At the end of the year, communicate and celebrate success.

### Celebrate Recycling Successes

Most apartment and condominium residents want to know if they are living at a property that cares about recycling and waste reduction. Regularly acknowledging residents for doing a good job recycling will go a long way towards keeping residents engaged in the property's recycling program. On the flip side, if there are frequent challenges with things placed in or next to the garbage or recycling containers, let residents know how they can improve or help keep an eye out for issues.



### Annual Recycling Program Refresh

Review your recycling program every year. Increased recycling participation, changes in unit vacancy rates, and new residents can impact the continued success of your program.

Complete a **Recycling Program Checklist** annually if your property only has a few garbage and recycling enclosures or very low resident turnover. Larger properties, or properties with more than two enclosures, are encouraged to reassess their recycling program bi-annually to keep up with larger-scale changes happening onsite. If you would like to give residents feedback about specific items you are finding in the recycling containers or an overview of how the property is doing as a whole, use the **WM Recycling Program Feedback Doorhanger**. Order any of these materials for free at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).



Recycling Program Feedback Doorhanger

**Tip!** If property management is located off-site, recruit a resident volunteer to assist with the completion of the Recycling Program Checklist and provide recognition for their assistance.



### Tips for Common Challenges

- **Language barriers?** Distribute recycling guidelines to residents in their preferred language. Guidelines are available in **Spanish, Korean, Amharic, Russian, Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese** and **Hindi**! Order online at [www.wmnorthwest.com](http://www.wmnorthwest.com).
- **Garbage placed in the recycling?** Make sure garbage and recycling containers are located next to each other and are clearly labeled – see **Step 1** for more help.
- **Low recycling participation?** When was the last time residents received information about your property's recycling program? Regular communication will give residents the tools they need to successfully participate in the property's recycling program. Distribute current recycling guidelines to residents annually and consider including a note about recycling in your next community newsletter – look at **Step 2** for resources!
- **Overflowing containers?** If containers are overflowing on a regular basis, you may need to increase your collection frequency or service level. Refer to the table in **Step 1** for help identifying the right service level for your property.

### Provide Collection Options and Information for Household Items, Bulky Items and Electronics

If you are struggling with illegal dumping of electronics, furniture and other items not allowed in garbage or recycling containers, consider providing residents with convenient collection alternatives such as a resident recycling event. This can reduce illegal dumping, keep reusable or hazardous materials out of the garbage and help reduce collection costs. You can also provide residents with information about "community take back" programs for special items.

### Ideas

#### Set Up a Share Space

Is there a space onsite where residents can place reusable items they no longer want? This can be a designated corner in a garbage room, laundry room, clubhouse, or under a covered enclosure. Post signs and rules for how and what residents are allowed to leave in the Share Space.



#### Organize a Property-wide Garage Sale

Can you reserve a portion of the parking lot or another common space for a building-wide garage sale? Select a time and date, recruit participants, and post signs. Contact a local charity to collect reusable materials not sold during the garage sale.



### Host a Textile Collection Bin

Clothing collection bins provide a free and convenient way for residents to donate reusable clothing. Consider hosting a clothing donation bin serviced and collected by local non-profits:

- Northwest Center  
[www.bigbluetruck.org/donation101/Host-Bin.asp](http://www.bigbluetruck.org/donation101/Host-Bin.asp)
- Sight Connection  
[www.donatesightconnection.org](http://www.donatesightconnection.org)



### Connect Residents with E-Cycle Washington Program Partners

Through E-Cycle Washington, your residents can recycle televisions, computers, monitors, laptops, e-readers, and portable DVD players for free. Visit [www.ecyclewashington.org](http://www.ecyclewashington.org) or call **1-800-RECYCLE** to find electronic product recycling drop-off locations in your area. Some organizations, such as Interconnection ([interconnection.org](http://interconnection.org)), might be willing to pick up electronics from your property.



### Encourage Use of "Take Back" Collection Locations for Other Special Items

Increasingly, retailers and manufacturers are providing local opportunities for residents to "take back" items to stores or other drop-off locations. Refer residents to these great programs:

- Electronics:  
**E-Cycle Washington, Best Buy, and Staples**  
[www.ecyclewashington.org](http://www.ecyclewashington.org)
- CFLs and fluorescent tubes:  
[www.lightrecyclewa.org](http://www.lightrecyclewa.org)
- Rechargeable batteries and phones:  
[www.call2recycle.org](http://www.call2recycle.org)
- Plastic bags:  
[www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org)



### Encourage Donation of Reusable Clothes and Housewares

Donating reusable books, clothing, housewares and other items to local charities such as Goodwill, Northwest Center, Sight Connection and Salvation Army is an easy way to prevent unnecessary waste, keep reusable items out of the garbage, and create jobs and job training opportunities in your community.



### Take Action!

- ✓ **Revisit and refresh your recycling program often** by using the **Recycling Program Checklist** and providing recycling guidelines to new residents.
- ✓ **Provide collection options for reusable, bulky or electronic items** by hosting a textile collection bin, garage sale or e-waste collection site.
- ✓ **Refer residents to "community take back" programs and other services for special items**, and to charities for reusable items.



**We want to hear from you!** Your feedback and questions help us improve our programs. Feel free to contact the Waste Management Public Education team at [recyclenw@wm.com](mailto:recyclenw@wm.com) at any time. We are here to help!