

# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



## FOR SOUTH CAROLINA'S HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

South Carolina's hospitality industry is a large consumer. Each facility purchases goods and services, creates and manages waste, uses energy and water, and just like an individual leaves an environmental footprint. Operating in an environmentally responsible fashion, the state's hospitality industry can lead by example with everyday, cost-effective practices that help protect and preserve South Carolina's environment as well as the quality of life for all South Carolinians. This "Best Management Practices" (BMP) fact sheet is part of a series.

# Setting Up a Recycling Program

So you want to recycle at your hotel, motel, restaurant or bar?

Here are some basic recommendations on how to set up a successful recycling program at your facility. Each hospitality facility will face different challenges. Each facility is encouraged to modify these steps as needed and keep it as simple as possible.

\* **Build a team.** Key management and staff should be part of the team. Hospitality facilities are encouraged to have a representative from each operational area (e.g., housekeeping, laundry, kitchen/restaurant/bar, office, grounds, and maintenance). Have the team conduct a waste audit, develop a waste management plan and design a recycling program. Consider naming a recycling coordinator to lead the team.

\* **Conduct a waste audit.** This is a key step in finding out what waste is being generated, how much, where, how it is being managed and how much it costs to manage. Visit [www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/green\\_hospitality/pubs/waste\\_audit.pdf](http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/green_hospitality/pubs/waste_audit.pdf) for a sample waste audit.

\* **Develop a waste management plan.** Use the information gathered from the waste audit to develop a plan. It should include goals and objectives, responsibilities, staff education and training, outreach to guests and a tracking

mechanism. A recycling program is an integral part of the overall plan.

\* **Implement the plan.** Educate staff on the plan's goals and their responsibilities. Make customers aware of your facility's program as appropriate. One key reminder: monitor, track and evaluate your program and identify opportunities for improvement.

\* **Determine what can be recycled.** The waste audit identifies not only what is in the trash, but also what recycling opportunities exist throughout the facility. The most common items recycled include cardboard, newspapers, office paper, magazines, aluminum cans, glass bottles, plastic bottles, steel cans, used motor oil, lead-acid batteries, cooking grease, ink and toner cartridges, antifreeze, computers, televisions, cell phones, yard trimmings and food scraps.

\* **Determine where the recyclables will go.** Identifying items that can be recycled is only the beginning of the process. Recyclables need markets. Your facility may deal directly with a market (e.g., a company that wants cardboard) or with a company that accepts recyclables and delivers them to a market. What recycling companies and services – either public or private – are available in your community? Is

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The Green Hospitality Program is offered by the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's (DHEC) Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling (Office). To learn about the program or for help setting up, implementing or improving green practices, call the Office at 1-800-768-7348 or visit [www.scdhec.gov/greenhospitality](http://www.scdhec.gov/greenhospitality).

the company currently providing solid waste collection services to your facility able to offer recycling services? One way to determine what options are available locally is to contact your city or county recycling coordinator. (Visit [www.scdhec.gov/recycle/lwm/recycle/counties.htm](http://www.scdhec.gov/recycle/lwm/recycle/counties.htm) for a listing or call the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling at 1-800-769-7348.) Depending on the items collected, more than one market may be needed. In addition, some markets may require items to be sorted while others may allow them to be mixed. Your local government may be able to help with the recycling of one or several commodities.

\* **Ask and negotiate.** When selecting a company or service to pick up or accept your recyclables, consider asking the following questions.

1. What material do you collect?
2. Do the items need to be sorted?
3. What size and type of containers are needed?
4. Do you supply containers?
5. Is there a charge for containers?
6. Is there a minimum volume or weight requirement for pick up?
7. How frequent is the collection?
8. What are the charges for collection?
9. Will you be paid for the recyclables?

Generally, written contracts are encouraged over verbal agreements.

\* **Determine how the recyclables will be collected and stored.** Items that can be recycled (and have markets) have been identified. The next step is to decide what types and the number of recycling bins or containers that are needed. The company that picks up your recyclables may provide or recommend specific containers and bins. Place the containers and bins where the recyclables are generated. Convenience is a key factor. Place recycling bins next to trash cans. The easier it is for a person to recycle, the more likely it is that he/she will recycle.

\* **Educate and communicate with staff.** Staff training is one of the most important keys to making it work. Begin when the recycling program starts. Short, frequent refresher training is encouraged. Monitoring is necessary and feedback from staff is important to find out what is working and what is not.

\* **Educate and communicate with guests.** Get the word out through signage, posters, placards, hotel TV channel and so on in all areas of your facility. Education, clear communication and convenience are keys to higher participation and successful programs.

\* **Evaluate and report.** Be sure to keep track of waste management expenses and savings (through avoided disposal costs) as well as the amount of material disposed of and recycled. Also keep track of any revenue earned from the sale of recyclables. This information will help you evaluate your program and make adjustments. In addition, hospitality facilities are encouraged to report their recycling activities to DHEC at [www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/smart\\_business/reporting.htm](http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/smart_business/reporting.htm).



The S.C. Green Hospitality Alliance is a free, voluntary program designed to: 1) help South Carolina's hospitality industry reduce the environmental impact of its operations as well as incorporate environmental stewardship and sustainability in its business practices; and 2) promote and recognize member hotels, restaurants as well as other hospitality facilities for their environmentally conscious practices. The Alliance

was developed in partnership by the S.C. Restaurant & Lodging Association and DHEC's Green Hospitality Program.

For more information, call DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling at 1-800-768-7348 or visit [www.scdhec.gov/greenhospitality](http://www.scdhec.gov/greenhospitality).

