

# 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.

# Waste Reduction and Reuse

Waste reduction, reuse and recycling are three ways that hotels, motels, restaurants and other hospitality facilities can reduce disposal costs and improve their facility's bottom line. All three ways result in environmental and economic benefits such as reducing pollution, saving energy and conserving natural resources. All three should be incorporated into daily operations along with staff training. The preferred practice, however, is to reduce waste, followed by reuse and recycling.

Where to start? Take the following three steps.

- \* **Build a team.** Key management and staff should be part of the team from the beginning. Hotels and motels 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.
- \* **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.

Listed below are examples of ways to reduce waste.

- \* **Implement an environmentally preferred purchasing (EPP) policy.** EPP may lead to waste reduction at the source. Common types of EPP include buying in bulk or products that have minimal packaging and using supplier or manufacturer take-back programs for items such as inkjet and toner cartridges. See the BMP fact sheet "Environmentally Preferred Purchasing" at [www.scdhec.gov/recycle/green\\_hospitality/pubs/bmp\\_epp.pdf](http://www.scdhec.gov/recycle/green_hospitality/pubs/bmp_epp.pdf). Also visit [www.epa.gov/epp](http://www.epa.gov/epp) for more information.
- \* **Encourage suppliers to deliver products in reusable containers that they can take back.** This practice reduces the need for disposal or recycling and may save suppliers money, possibly reducing your costs.

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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).

- \* **Repair and reuse pallets, crates, boxes and buckets.**
- \* **Reuse or recycle packaging peanuts and bubble wrap.** Drop-off sites for loose fillers can be found at [www.loosefillpackaging.com](http://www.loosefillpackaging.com).
- \* **Provide newspapers to guests only by request.** Newspapers are a substantial contributor to waste generation in the lodging industry. One way to reduce this waste stream is to provide newspapers by request only. In all cases, recycle the newspapers.
- \* **Supply reusable goods in place of disposable goods.** Provide reusable flatware, plates, glasses and mugs in dining areas instead of disposable paper and plastic items. Use washable napkins and tablecloths when possible.
- \* **Consider serving fountain or draft drinks instead of using bottles or cans.** This will reduce or eliminate the need to store the aluminum, plastic and glass beverage containers before serving and, then, for recycling. Serve beverages in reusable cups and glasses. Also use permanent coasters instead of paper napkins.
- \* **Never use Styrofoam cups or plates.**
- \* **Use refillable containers.** Instead of providing single-use toiletries and condiments, use refillable containers (e.g., soap and shampoo dispensers, ketchup bottles).
- \* **Keep an up-to-date inventory.** Don't buy excess food or supplies. Remember expiration dates when purchasing perishable items.
- \* **Hold/host green meetings.** Use reusable cups, dinnerware, glasses and napkins. Provide recycling containers in meeting rooms.
- \* **Use rechargeable batteries instead of single-use batteries.** The switch may not only save money, but also reduce the amount of material disposed of in a landfill. Rechargeable batteries can be recycled easily and at no cost. Visit [www.call2recycle.org](http://www.call2recycle.org) to learn more.
- \* **Set printers and copiers to duplex printing by default.** This can cut your paper costs by half.
- \* **Don't print unless absolutely necessary.** Use e-mails, bulletin boards and staff meetings to make announcements rather than memos.
- \* **Consider using direct deposit for payroll.** This will save paper, time and postage.
- \* **Reduce the amount of unwanted mail you receive.** Visit the Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service at [www.dmchoice.org](http://www.dmchoice.org).
- \* **Use old office paper for notes or packing.**
- \* **Rent equipment (e.g., carpet cleaners, power washers) that you use infrequently.**
- \* **Donate or sell excess reusable items** (e.g., toiletries, furniture, appliances, electronics, towels, linens) to non-profit organizations, schools and community groups (e.g., shelters, resale stores).
- \* **Use the S.C. Materials Exchange.** Use this free, on-line service to offer others unwanted items (e.g., furniture, appliances, utensils) or find items to reuse in your facility at a reduced cost. Visit [www.scdhec.gov/scme](http://www.scdhec.gov/scme).
- \* **Consider composting.** Composting greatly reduces the amount of waste sent to a landfill and is an excellent source of organic material for rebuilding and enriching soil. For details, visit [www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/compost.htm](http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/compost.htm).
- \* **Recycle.** Set up a recycling program. To learn more, see the S.C. Green Hospitality Program's BMP fact sheet on recycling at [www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/green\\_hospitality/pubs/bmp\\_recycling.pdf](http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/green_hospitality/pubs/bmp_recycling.pdf).



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).

