

Greening the Lodging Industry

Welcome to the World of Waste Reduction!

The hospitality industry is very competitive, and as an owner or operator of a resort, lodge, inn, motel, or hotel, you probably look for ways to save money while maintaining quality services. Many owners who practice “green housekeeping” have found they can remain competitive and save a little “green” too, by reducing waste, energy consumption and water use throughout their businesses.

Recycling: It's not only good business—it's also the law*

Local ordinances and the state Waste Reduction and Recycling Law require all businesses and property owners to:

- Provide separate containers for the materials banned from landfills and incinerators (see below)
- Regularly educate the occupants and users about the recycling program at their facility
- Arrange for the collection and delivery of the recyclables to a recycling facility.

The law also places a high priority on reducing waste and reusing items even before recycling.



Materials banned from disposal in Wisconsin:

Paper

- ⊘ office paper
- ⊘ newspaper
- ⊘ magazines
- ⊘ corrugated cardboard

Containers

- ⊘ aluminum cans
- ⊘ steel (tin) cans
- ⊘ glass bottles and jars
- ⊘ plastic containers (#1 and #2)**

Other Materials

- ⊘ major appliances
- ⊘ waste tires
- ⊘ lead-acid vehicle batteries
- ⊘ yard wastes
- ⊘ used motor oil



* You can order a summary of the recycling law by calling (608) 266-6790 and asking for publication WA-422 Solid Waste Recycling and Waste Reduction in Wisconsin.

** Current law offers a variance to plastics labeled #3 - #7. Check with your Responsible Unit to find out if this variance applies to your business.

Now that you know what to recycle, how do you go about doing it?

STEP 1: Work with your hauler to get started

You probably already have a solid waste contract with a hauler. Does it include recycling services? Get a list of what is accepted for recycling. Work closely with your hauler to identify collection methods, frequency of collection, container needs, and costs for collecting recyclables and trash. Discuss potential recycling contamination problems and solutions. Consider all items that you might need to dispose of, including appliances, furniture, kitchen grease, florescent bulbs, etc. By recycling, you can reduce your overall solid waste disposal costs.

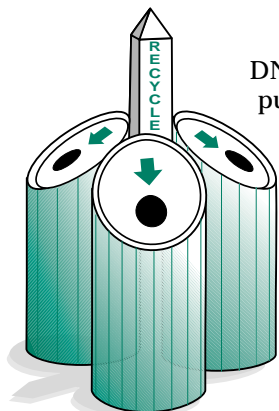
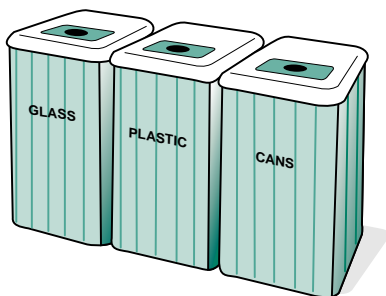
STEP 2: Establish your recycling collection program

You may decide to put a container for recyclables in each guest room, and have another can for garbage. Label them clearly.



In many cases, guests can mix recyclables like cans and bottles with each other in the recycling container with few problems since rooms are serviced daily. Remind guests that it takes no more time to put an item in a recycling bin than it takes to put it in a garbage can!

Put recycling containers in these areas: the lobby or other common areas; vending areas; any food preparation areas; housekeeping closets; the pool or recreation area; conference rooms and offices; and in maintenance buildings and grounds. There are many attractive and functional containers on the market.



DNR has several free publications that describe how to set up a recycling collection program in detail. See "Resources for Lodging Operators" in this flyer for information about how to order them.

STEP 3: Train your employees to practice good habits at work

Help your staff incorporate waste reduction and recycling habits into their daily responsibilities. Teach your employees the importance of keeping recyclables separate from garbage to minimize contamination of the recyclables. Incorporate this training into their general employee orientation. On-going education is the key to overcome contamination and insure employee cooperation.

Form a committee made of staff from housekeeping, administration, maintenance, and other areas to develop and maintain your program. Solicit ideas from your employees for additional ways to recycle and reduce waste.



STEP 4: Educate your guests

Give guests a flyer that describes your recycling and waste reduction programs when they check in.

Put informational table tents that describe your recycling and waste reduction program in each guest room. Pre-printed table tents, like the one pictured, can be ordered for a small fee from the "Green" Hotels Association (see "Resources for Lodging Operators" for address). Or, you can make your own and have them printed locally. Laminated tents will last longer.

Recycling is one step you can take to make your business more "green," but if you really want to save resources and more of that other "green stuff," practice waste reduction. Here are some tips that have worked in large and small resorts, lodges, motels, and hotels.

Waste Reduction Tips for Guest Rooms

Reduce Solid Waste

- Substitute refillable liquid soap dispensers for individually-wrapped bar soaps in bathrooms. Though the initial expense for these dispensers may seem high, you will realize a quick return on your investment. Refills and items purchased in bulk are usually less expensive and generate less waste than individual containers.
- If you continue to use bar soap, donate partially-used bars to day care centers, senior centers, shelters, churches, etc., instead of throwing them away.
- Substitute washable drinking glasses for disposable glasses if you have dishwashing capabilities. It is cheaper to wash and reuse them than to purchase disposable ones and pay to have them hauled away as garbage.
- Take hangers left in guest rooms to dry cleaners or laundromats for reuse. Bring other reusable items left in rooms to resale stores when appropriate.
- When remodeling, give reusable furniture, bedding, carpet, fixtures, etc., to resale stores or donate items to community groups like day care centers, shelters, or churches. Get a receipt for tax deductions.
- Instead of putting a complimentary newspaper in each room, encourage guests to pick up a free copy in the lobby if they want one.

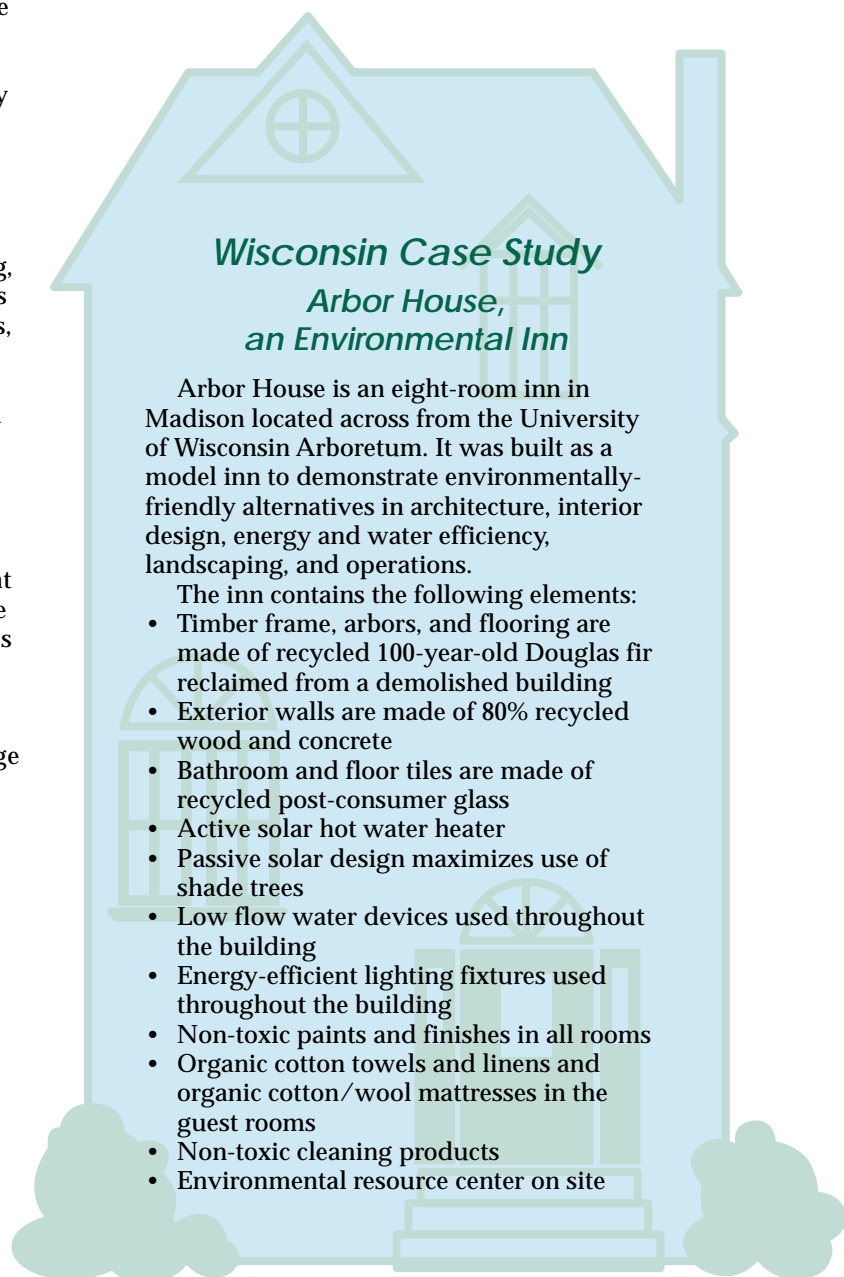
Reduce Energy Waste

- Replace standard light bulbs with energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs. These bulbs cost more initially—about \$15 each—but pay for themselves over time since they last much longer and use about one-quarter of the electricity of an incandescent. Using long-lasting bulbs also reduces labor costs since you don't have to change them as often.
- Compact florescent bulbs are found in most hardware stores. See "Resources for Lodging Operators" for other sources.

Reduce Water Waste

- Repair all water leaks immediately!
- Install a water-saving toilet dam in the toilet tank. Toilet dams, available at hardware stores, can save about one-third of the water commonly used per flush with no change in effectiveness.

- When remodelling bathrooms or replacing broken toilets, install standard low-flush toilets that use only 1.5 gallons per flush.
- Install low flow water aerators in shower heads and sink faucets. These inexpensive items, commonly found in hardware stores, incorporate air into the water flow. Each shower uses 25-50% less water, yet supplies the same amount of pressure in the spray. Aerators also save energy since less hot water is used.
- Encourage guests to leave sheets on the bed during their stay instead of having them changed every day. This reduces the amount of laundry you have to do, saving water, soap, energy, time and money!
- Encourage guests to take new towels only when they really need them. Remind them to leave dirty towels



on the floor so housekeeping staff will replace only those towels. Here is a sample of a pre-printed message that can be hung on the bathroom door. To order copies, see "Resources for Lodging Operators" in this flyer.



Reduce Waste in Other Areas

- Use linen hand towels on a continuous roll instead of paper towels in the employee, dining and lobby restrooms.
- Cut up old linens and use them as cleaning rags. Or, donate slightly-worn linens and towels to community groups or shelters for reuse.
- Replace old appliances with newer, energy-efficient appliances. Recycle the old one, of course!
- Buy products you use regularly in bulk whenever possible.
- Use rechargeable batteries in pagers, cell phones, etc. Recharging units and batteries are available in hardware and discount stores. Check with your suppliers for information on how to recycle the used batteries that eventually wear out.
- Put reusable dishes, mugs, and glassware at your continental breakfast table.
- Encourage employees to use reusable mugs and glasses for coffee breaks instead of disposable cups.



Less waste in the office

- Minimize paper use by copying on both sides of your paper, or use the blank back sides as scratch paper.
- Use refillable toner cartridges instead of disposable ones in your copier and computer printers. Your local office supply store can help you locate companies that service refillable cartridges.
- Buy recycled products whenever possible. Ask your suppliers or shop at discount stores for items like recycled toilet paper, fax, copier, notepaper and computer paper; garbage can liners, pillows, carpets and carpet pads made of recycled plastic soda bottles; landscape edging made of plastic food containers; picnic tables, benches, and parking stops made of plastic milk jugs; and construction materials like recycled ceiling tiles, insulation, and floor mats.
- Remove your name from unwanted mailing lists by calling the 800 phone numbers on catalogs. Or, send your name and your business' name to: Mail Preferences Services, Direct Mail Marketing Association, PO Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY, 11735.
- Choose suppliers who can provide reusable or recyclable packaging and packaging that has recycled content in it.

Live Lightly with the Environment

- Use water-based paints instead of oil-based paints. Water-based paints can be cleaned up with water. Donate unused paint to a community-service agency or a local paint exchange.
- Left-over oil-based paint is considered a hazardous waste and must be brought to a hazardous waste collection event for proper disposal. Call your DNR Hazardous Waste Specialist for more information.
- Use cleaners without oil-based solvents.
- If you're using lawn chemicals, take every precaution to keep them off of paved driveways, sidewalks, and streets so they don't run into storm drains when it rains. Follow directions exactly and only buy as much as you need.



State hazardous waste regulations prohibit businesses from disposing of waste lamps and light bulbs in landfills due to the mercury content that exceeds hazardous waste limits. These include fluorescent, mercury vapor, metal halide, high-and low-pressure sodium-vapor, and some incandescent lamps. Check with your DNR Hazardous Waste Specialist for information on how to recycle these bulbs safely.

Resources for Lodging Operators

Water savers, energy-efficient light bulbs, organic cotton linens and sheets, non-hazardous cleaners, non-hazardous laundry detergents, composting supplies.

Real Goods
555 Leslie Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
1-800-762-7325
www.realgoods.com

Pre-printed educational materials to promote recycling and waste reduction in guest rooms including table tents, door hangers, and flyers; sells water saving devices like low flow aerators, toilet dams, etc.








“Green” Hotels Association
PO Box 420212
Houston TX 77242
713-789-8889
713-789-9786 FAX
www.greenhotels.com



Waste reduction/recycling/ pollution prevention assistance

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Contact the business sector specialists or waste management staff at these DNR Regional offices:

-  Eau Claire 715-839-3700
-  Green Bay 920-492-5916
-  Madison 608-275-3266
-  Milwaukee 414-263-8500
-  Rhinelander 715-365-8900
-  Spooner 715-635-2101
-  Wausau 715-359-4522

OR, refer to the “Waste Reduction and Recycling, People to contact in Wisconsin” factsheet on the following DNR website: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/wm/contacts/recycle.htm

WasteCap Wisconsin — A public-private partnership that offers site visits, seminars, and technical assistance to businesses. 414-961-1100, wastecap@wastecapwi.org, www.wastecapwi.org

Buy Recycled Business Alliance — A broad-based group of businesses and organizations committed to promoting the purchasing of recycled-content products. 414-453-1077, brba.nrc-recycle.org or www.buyrecycled.org/

AROW — A nonprofit association of government representatives, recycling services, businesses, and individuals. 608-745-0900, arow@mail.palacenet.net.

NOTE: DNR does not endorse or promote any specific product or business. This is a partial list of services available for making your business environmentally-friendly.

Publications

“Recycling and Source Separation for the Lodging Industry,” #P93IC004, American Hotel and Motel Association, 84 p. Excellent description of ways to reduce waste and establish recycling collections, case studies, discussions of economic benefits, sample waste audits.

P.O. Box 753
Waldorf, MD 20604
301-705-7455
\$10 member, \$20 non-member

“Greening Your Property,” by My Ton, published by Green Seal, 1996, 85 p. Very thorough discussion of environmental considerations when operating a motel, including solid waste, energy-efficient lighting, water management, indoor air quality; includes numerous work sheets to help determine costs and savings.

Educational Institute
American Hotel and Motel Association
PO Box 1240
East Lansing MI 48826-1240
517-353-5500
\$37.50

The following materials can be ordered from Recycling Publications, WA/3, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI, 53707, 608-266-2111.

“Recycling and Waste Reduction in the Restaurant Industry,” PUB-CE-282 2001, 4 p. Description of waste reduction and recycling methods for managing wastes in the food service industry.

“Business Waste Reduction and Recycling: A Guide for the Workplace,” PUB-CE-278 2001. Contains industry-specific tips for reducing, reusing, and recycling materials, case studies, and tips on buying recycled products.

“Recycling and Waste Reduction at Convenience Stores” PUB-CE-280 2001. A four page fact sheet giving store managers ideas of how to reduce disposal costs, and save natural resources.

“Special Events: Recycling and Waste Management” PUB-CE-281 2001. A four page factsheet design for special events and festival planners.

Fun Facts

Recycling

Recycling saves Chicago's 2,033-room Hyatt Regency Hotel over \$100,000 a year through reduced garbage fees. Their monthly garbage bill went from \$12,000 to \$2,000 in one year (1991).

Each employee separates aluminum, glass, plastics, papers, and cardboard from garbage when cleaning rooms or working with recyclables in the kitchen, lobby, and other areas. The hotel makes \$20,000 a year selling their recyclables.

Water Conservation

The Phoenician Resort in Arizona installed toilet dams in 605 guest rooms. They made their own low-cost dams by reusing plastic tubs and other used food containers. Their favorite toilet dam is a one half-gallon milk jug filled with water and placed in the toilet tank.

Water usage has been reduced by 500,000 gallons of water per year since the dams were installed.

One leaky toilet can waste 50 gallons of water per day, which wastes 18,000 gallons per year.

To determine if your toilet leaks, put a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Wait 20 minutes. If the food coloring escapes into the toilet bowl, you have a leak.

Fun Facts are from ***50 Simple Things Your Business Can Do to Save the Earth***, by the EarthWorks Group, EarthWorks Press, Berkeley, CA, 1991.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape etc.) upon request. Please call 608/266-6790 for more information.



PUB CE-279 2001