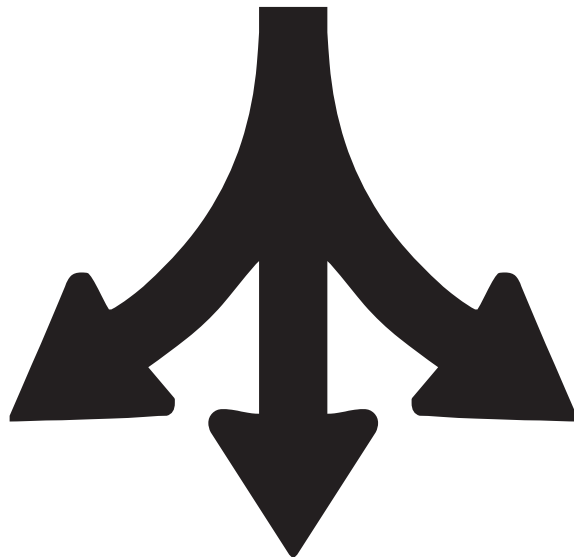


A GOOD IDEA IS NOW THE LAW.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING IS NOW MANDATORY
FOR MANY BUSINESSES IN ALAMEDA COUNTY.
THIS GUIDE TELLS YOU **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**
TO FOLLOW THE RECYCLING RULES.



ALAMEDA COUNTY WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE 2012-01

COMPLIANCE GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES

ABOUT ALAMEDA COUNTY WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY'S MANDATORY RECYCLING ORDINANCE

A GOOD IDEA IS NOW THE LAW.

Recycling and composting for businesses is now mandatory.

The Alameda County Waste Management Authority (ACWMA) passed the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance 2012-01, effective July 1, 2012, to reduce the amount of readily (or “easily”) recyclable and compostable materials sent to landfills. This local Ordinance builds on state recycling and organics collection laws, AB 341 and AB 1826, by specifying the types of materials that need to be recycled and composted and how the laws will be enforced in Alameda County.

Phase 1 of the ACWMA Mandatory Recycling Ordinance 2012-01, which began July 1, 2012, prohibits property owners and managers of businesses with **four or more cubic yards** of weekly garbage service and multi-family property owners with **five or more units** from disposing of certain readily recyclable materials in the garbage. Phase 2 of the Ordinance began July 1, 2014 in participating jurisdictions and requires **all** businesses to participate, not just those with four or more cubic yards of garbage service per week. It also requires that businesses separate discarded food scraps and compostable paper (also known as organics) from the garbage in addition to the mandated recyclable materials. Property owners must provide enough recycling and organics service to handle the amount of recyclable and compostable material produced, and inform employees and tenants about how to properly participate in the program.

What materials are covered?



The Ordinance mandates the following materials to be recycled: cardboard, newspaper, white paper, mixed recyclable paper, recyclable glass food and beverage containers, metal (aluminum and steel) food and beverage containers, and PET (#1) and HDPE (#2) plastic bottles. Phase 2 of the Ordinance that began July 1, 2014 requires placement of discarded food scraps and compostable paper in a separate organics collection container, which is then collected by a service provider separately from garbage. The law also prohibits placing garbage in recycling and organics containers.



Additionally, ACWMA Plant Debris Landfill Ban (Ordinance 2008-01) requires businesses and institutions, as well as multi-family properties, in Alameda County generating **four or more cubic yards** of garbage per week to separate all plant debris from garbage and recyclable materials. Those with on-site service must place plant debris in a designated organics collection bin. Businesses can arrange for the removal of plant debris by their landscaper. The landscaper must haul to an approved facility and must deposit plant debris in the facility's designated “clean green” area.

What businesses and institutions are affected by the Ordinance?

The Mandatory Recycling Ordinance applies to most business and commercial property owners, property managers, and institutions such as hospitals and nonprofit organizations as well as multi-family property owners with five or more units throughout Alameda County. For more details on requirements for each jurisdiction and how to determine if the law applies to your property, refer to Table A on page 10 for details.

What is the long-term goal?

The Ordinance will help ACWMA reach its goal that by 2020 less than 10 percent of what ends up in landfills will be readily recyclable or compostable.

For more information about the ACWMA Ordinance, see compliance information and tips for success found in this guide. Additional information and resources to help with compliance can be found at the Ordinance website, www.RecyclingRulesAC.org.

THREE STEPS TO COMPLIANCE



There are three steps commercial property owners and managers must take to comply with the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance and avoid a possible citation and fine:

STEP 1

Arrange for Adequate Collection Service of Recyclable and Compostable Materials

If your property is affected by the Ordinance, you need to sign up for recycling with a service provider in your area. Businesses in jurisdictions participating in Phase 2 of the Ordinance must also set up organics collection service. For service provider contact information, visit your city's page at www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/cities-overview. Types of services, rates, and rules for recycling and garbage service vary by city and by service provider, but in many cases recycling and organics services cost less than garbage service.

The recycling and organics service you request must accommodate the quantity and types of materials generated by your building's employees, tenants, contractors and customers. Recycling and organics service is considered adequate when there is enough capacity for all of the recyclable and compostable material generated by the business, all of the time. This can be adjusted with the number or size of containers and the frequency of service.

When space allows, place hauler-serviced containers for recycling, organics and garbage adjacent to one another for ease of sorting.

#1 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Use the 25% rule of thumb as a starting point to determine the right level of recycling collection for your site. As a general rule of thumb, recycling capacity should be no less than 25% of your weekly service level for garbage collection. This may vary depending on your organization. For example, offices typically generate a lot of paper for recycling and are likely to need more than 25% recycling service capacity. Food scraps generation is

often more directly correlated with business type, and significant quantities are expected to be produced in food service businesses. For instance, if you are a restaurant or grocery store it may be that 50% of your material consists of food scraps and compostable paper, so your organics service should reflect that volume.

Contact your garbage service provider or local jurisdiction for assistance.

QUICK TIP

Place recycling and organics collection containers adjacent to garbage carts or bins. Disposal areas should include containers for all three collection streams to make recycling, organics and garbage disposal equally convenient.

CASE STUDY:

Recycling Saves Office Property Manager Thousands

Pleasanton Corporate Commons (PCC) is a multi-tenant, property-managed commercial office campus that revamped its recycling program after discovering just how little campus waste was being recycled. The four-building site recycles over 410 tons of waste per year, cutting the overall amount of garbage generated by 75%.

The most important step was to get tenants involved. Management met with each tenant to explain and troubleshoot collection details, and the night custodians placed educational postcards on everyone's desk right before rolling out the new program. Using clearly labeled bins for garbage and recycling makes sorting easy and helps reduce contamination. The reinvigorated recycling program reduces PCC's garbage costs by 86%, saving over \$60,000 per year.



REDUCTION IN OVERALL GARBAGE: 75% SAVINGS PER YEAR: OVER \$60,000

*Three Steps to Compliance—continued***STEP 2****Ensure Proper Separation**

The Ordinance requires businesses to place “covered materials” in the correct containers and keep recycling and organics containers free of garbage.

**The following materials
must be recycled:**

- cardboard
- newspaper
- white paper and mixed recyclable paper
- recyclable glass food and beverage containers
- metal (aluminum and steel) food and beverage containers
- PET (#1) and HDPE (#2) plastic bottles



If you are in a jurisdiction with organics collection requirements, the Ordinance states that “discarded food” and “compostable paper” must also be kept separate from garbage.

**Some examples of items that must be
placed in a separate organics collection
container include:**

- food prep trimmings
- spoiled or contaminated food
- plate waste and leftovers
- paper contaminated with food or oils such as pizza boxes and bakery boxes
- paper that is wet
- waxed corrugated produce boxes
- disposable paper products such as paper plates, cups, towels, and napkins



To summarize, recycling and organics containers must be free of contamination, and recyclables and organics may not be placed in the garbage.

#2 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Convenience is key. Keep indoor recycling, organics and garbage containers together so that it is equally convenient to dispose of all three material streams. Consider adding small organics and recycling containers at employees' desks, as well as larger containers in central areas such as break rooms and kitchens.

USE COLOR-CODED BINS. When possible, use the same style or color-coded bins. Standard colors are black or grey for garbage, blue for recycling, and green for organics. To figure out how many indoor containers you might need and information on where to buy them, visit www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/businesses-and-institutions-support-materials. You can also repurpose existing garbage containers by labeling them with new signs available on the website.

SELECT THE APPROPRIATE CONTAINER LINERS. If interior liners in the recycling and/or organics containers must be used, use clear liners. If your hauler allows or requires compostable bags for organics, ensure the bags you purchase are BPI certified. Visit www.bpiworld.org for a list of certified products.

MONITOR AND PREVENT CONTAMINATION. Periodically check bins to ensure materials are being properly sorted. If problems exist, remind employees what materials belong in each bin and remind them that proper recycling and organics separation is the law. Ask janitors to report when recyclables or organics are improperly sorted or found in the garbage.

Transfer materials to hauler-serviced bins. Consider the following options for removal of recyclables, organics and garbage:

- Ask employees/tenants to empty the recycling and organics containers at their workstations into larger, centrally located bins and have the janitors empty the larger bins.
- Rather than placing disposal containers at workstations, create centrally located collection stations with all three bins (recycling, organics and garbage) for employees to bring waste from their workstations. This option uses the fewest bins and reduces janitorial time.
- Have janitors empty recycling, organics and garbage containers at employee/tenant workstations, as well as larger centrally located containers. Ensure they have the equipment needed to service the program efficiently and keep recyclables separated from garbage (for example, carts with multiple collection bags or dividers).

ADJUST SERVICE LEVELS. Save money on your monthly garbage bill by reducing garbage service after implementing recycling and/or organics programs. Your hauler, city, or ACWMA business assistance representative can help make these service level adjustments. A request for assistance can be submitted at www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/request-assistance.



QUICK TIP

Free indoor green bins may be available.

Find out how qualifying Alameda County businesses can receive free green bins valued up to \$500 at www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/containers.

*Three Steps to Compliance—continued***STEP 3****Provide Employees, Tenants and Contractors with Information**

Provide information at least annually for employees, tenants and contractors describing how to properly use the recycling, organics and garbage containers. For commercial property owners who lease space to one or more businesses, this information must be provided to each tenant to share with their employees. This same information must also be provided to new tenants no later than 14 days after tenants move-in and no less than 14 days before tenants move-out, unless a tenant does not provide 14 or more days notice to the property owner before leaving. See page 8 for a sample employee/tenant memo.

Keeping recyclable and organic materials out of the garbage requires an ongoing effort to monitor the program and educate tenants, employees and contractors about how to participate.

CASE STUDY:**US Foods Shares Recipe for Green Success**

US Foods' San Francisco Division, based in Livermore, recycles cardboard, paper, shrink-wrap and other materials. Chuck Brown, Director of Safety, Security & Facilities has championed the recycling efforts. "I knew all along that going green wasn't only the right thing to do, but also a financially lucrative business decision," states Brown. "The challenge was to set it up right and get employee buy-in."

Important steps in setting the groundwork included identifying recycling vendors for key materials, purchasing internal recycling bins, and developing Standard Operating Procedures to roll out the new recycling practices division-wide. The changes produced a substantial return on investment almost immediately. Recycling efforts save the facility over \$90,000 annually in avoided disposal costs and recycling revenue.



SAVINGS PER YEAR: OVER \$90,000

#3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Post prominent signs on or near all recycling, organics and garbage containers, clearly indicating which container is which.

- Use posters or decals that contain images of the materials that go into each container. This helps people quickly understand how to sort. Many collection service providers can supply you with posters and/or decals that are specific to the materials they accept. Some posters are available for printing on your city's Recycling Rules page at www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/cities-overview. A sign-maker tool and other sample posters are available on the Support Materials page.
- Post instructions above recycling bins on how to properly flatten and store cardboard boxes.

- Clearly mark indoor recycling and organics bins in lunchrooms since these bins are often the most contaminated with garbage.

Educate tenants, employees and janitors

- Send e-mails to all staff members to explain the program, distribute updates and invite feedback. See the Sample Tenant/Employee Information Memo on page 8 for an example.
- Post a floor plan map in a convenient reference area for janitors indicating central recycling areas and location of hauler-serviced recycling and organics containers.
- Offer periodic training sessions to educate janitors about the program and invite their feedback.

QUICK TIP

Reward and celebrate success. Keep track of increases in your recycling and organics service and reductions in your garbage service. Share this information with employees and tenants to show progress. Throw a party for employees using some of the money saved.

ENFORCEMENT

The Mandatory Recycling Ordinance is enforced through a routine inspection program. On a rotating basis, inspectors are dispatched to business properties to inspect the garbage, recycling and, if required, the organics collection containers. The inspection is brief, taking about five to ten minutes and may occur without notification to the business or property owner depending on the time and circumstances of each location.

If a business or institution is found to be out of compliance with the law:

- A notification letter will be sent to the property; and
- Free assistance will be offered to ensure that the property owner knows what recyclable and organic materials are covered by the law and any other actions they must take in order to comply.

If the business or institution continues not to comply, even after assistance has been offered, the business or property owner may be fined.

If you have received a Notice of Violation letter, you can get guidance on how to correct the violation at www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/correct-a-violation or by calling the Ordinance Help Line at 510-891-6575.

SAMPLE EMPLOYEE/TENANT INFORMATION MEMO

The highlighted words indicate portions of the template that you should change before distribution. Add specifics about recycling and/or organics programs at your building or business such as types and locations of desk-side and central containers, frequency of collection by janitors, service providers and other program information. With additional minor modifications, you may be able to use this to provide information to tenants upon move-in or move-out. You can download a copy of this memo at www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/businesses-and-institutions-support-materials.

Template Memo – Announcing a New Recycling and/or Organics Program

Date: [insert date]

To: [Building Tenants or Company Employees]

From: [insert name, title, i.e., Property Manager or Business Manager]

Re: Recycling [and Composting] Program

State and local laws require businesses in Alameda County to separate recyclables and organics from garbage beginning July 1, 2012. To comply with the laws, we are [starting a new or improving the] recycling and organics program at [insert building address or company name]. The Alameda County Waste Management Authority Mandatory Recycling Ordinance **requires** our business to recycle paper, cardboard and recyclable food and beverage containers (aluminum, steel, glass, PET (#1) and HDPE (#2) plastic bottles) [insert if applicable “and, food scraps and compostable paper”]. It requires our business to compost food scraps and compostable paper including napkins, paper towels, pizza boxes, and paper plates.

Most of the discarded materials at our location are recyclable or compostable. Only about 10% of the materials we discard actually belong in the garbage. Recycling helps our environment by conserving natural resources and reducing energy use, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Our goal is to make recycling and composting easy for you. Here's what to do:

Desk-side Collection:

Choose the following option that best describes your property's desk-side collection and color coding system (or modify text). You can also show a picture of the desk-side bins, if available.

- There will be no collection of garbage, compostables or recyclables at individual work stations. Please deposit **garbage, compostables, and recyclables** in the appropriate containers located in the [kitchen area, conference room, and other central areas].
-or-
- **Recyclables** will be collected from each work station. Please deposit **garbage and compostables** in the appropriate containers located in the [kitchen area, conference room, and other central areas].
-or-
- **Recyclables and garbage** will be collected from each work station. Please deposit **compostables** in the central containers located in the [kitchen area, conference room, and other central areas].
-or-
- **Recyclables, compostables, and garbage** will be collected from each work station.

sample memo template continued

Central Collection:

Most properties offer centralized collection containers for recyclables, compostables, and garbage. Indicate if your property offers these containers, what color they are, and where they are located. Use the text below as a template. Verify with your service provider which materials are recyclable or compostable.

Containers for the collection of **garbage, recyclables and compostables** are located in the [kitchen area, conference room, and other central areas]. Please keep these materials separate. The containers will be emptied [daily, or frequency by type of container].

WHAT GOES IN EACH CONTAINER?

If these photos don't look like the ones at your facility, delete them or replace them with photos of your containers.

RECYCLABLES

All clean office paper, glass bottles and jars, aluminum foil and cans, steel/tin cans, and plastic containers (no soft plastics like bags and wrappers) belong in the [blue] recycling containers. Please empty food or liquid from recyclables before depositing in [blue] recycling containers.

Where does it go? All recyclable material is sent to processing facilities for sorting. The materials are then sold to recyclers and made into new products.



COMPOSTABLES

Much of the material that used to go in the garbage can now be put in the [green] compostables containers. This includes **leftover food, paper take-out containers, paper coffee cups, used napkins, used tissues, used paper towels, and milk cartons.**

Where does it go? All compostable material is sent to a composting facility where it is turned into compost, a soil amendment for local farms, landscapes and gardens.



GARBAGE

Very few items actually belong in the garbage. Items that should be put in the garbage include: **Foam cups and packaging, candy wrappers, chip bags, plastic wrap, plastic bags, and aseptic packaging (juice boxes/Tetrapaks).**

Where does it go? All material put in the garbage is sent to landfill and does not breakdown regardless of the material because landfills are anaerobic (without oxygen).



We're proud to contribute to the greening of our facility and our community. We need everyone's participation for this program to be successful!

Our target start date will be [insert date]. Watch for additional communication as the date approaches. Please contact [insert contact name, phone number and/or email address] with any questions.

TABLE A: MANDATORY RECYCLING REQUIREMENTS BY CITY

Cities and municipalities were given the option to fully participate in the Ordinance, opt-out entirely from participation, or delay all or portions of the Ordinance. Due to this flexibility, the timing and scope differs among the 17 jurisdictions in Alameda County. The following table provides an overview of the recycling requirements for businesses and multi-family properties (five or more units) in each jurisdiction at the time of print. Visit www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/cities-overview for more information.

CITY	RULES OVERVIEW For more information, view the “Rules in Detail” key on the back of this brochure.
Alameda	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Albany	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Berkeley	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Castro Valley Sanitary District	Recycling required for all businesses and multi-family properties. Organics collection requirements effective January 1, 2016.
Dublin	N/A – City of Dublin has chosen not to participate in the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance.
Emeryville	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Fremont	Recycling required for all businesses and multi-family properties. Organics collection requirements effective July 1, 2017.
Hayward	Recycling and Organics required for businesses with 4+ cubic yards of weekly garbage service and multi-family properties. Recycling and Organics collection requirements effective July 1, 2016 at businesses with less than 4 cubic yards of weekly garbage service.
Livermore	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Newark	Recycling required for all businesses and multi-family properties. Organics collection requirements effective July 1, 2017.
Oakland	Recycling required for all businesses and multi-family properties. Organics collection requirements effective July 1, 2016.
Oro Loma Sanitary District (L1 District only)	N/A – Oro Loma Sanitary District has chosen not to participate in the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance for its unincorporated area (L1). Oro Loma Sanitary District businesses and multi-family properties located in the City of San Leandro and City of Hayward must follow the rules for those cities.
Piedmont	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Pleasanton	Recycling required for businesses with 4+ cubic yards of weekly garbage service and multi-family properties.
San Leandro	Recycling required for all businesses and multi-family properties. Organics collection requirements effective July 1, 2016.
Unincorporated Alameda County	Recycling and Organics required for all businesses and multi-family properties.
Union City	Recycling required for businesses with 4+ cubic yards of weekly garbage service and multi-family properties.

RECYCLING RULES OVERVIEW

Recycling Requirements

- Provide containers and service of sufficient number, size and frequency for recyclables.
- Recycle cardboard, newspaper, white paper, mixed recyclable paper, recyclable glass food and beverage containers, metal (aluminum and steel) food and beverage containers, PET (#1) and HDPE (#2) plastic bottles.
- Ensure recycling containers are contamination free. No garbage or organics may be placed in recycling containers.



Organics Requirements

- Provide containers and service of sufficient number, size and frequency for organics.
- Place food scraps, compostable paper and plant debris in a separate organics cart/bin for organics collection.
- Ensure organics containers are contamination free. No garbage or recyclables may be placed in organics containers.



This law applies to businesses and institutions in the following jurisdictions:

Alameda
Albany
Berkeley
Castro Valley Sanitary District
Emeryville
Fremont
Hayward
Livermore
Newark
Oakland
Piedmont
Pleasanton
San Leandro
Unincorporated Alameda County (except areas within the boundaries of the Oro Loma Sanitary District)
Union City

See page 10 for more information about the requirements in each jurisdiction.



Notification Requirements

All businesses and multi-family properties with recycling and/or organics collection requirements must also:

Provide information at least annually to employees, tenants, and contractors describing how to properly use the recycling, garbage, and organics containers, as well as no later than 14 days after move-in and no less than 14 days prior to move-out of tenant businesses.

STAY INFORMED

Sign up for email alerts and more information about the new ordinance.
[RecyclingRulesAC.org/stay-informed](https://www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/stay-informed)

SIGN UP

Alameda County Waste Management Authority Mandatory Recycling Ordinance

Visit www.RecyclingRulesAC.org for more information about the Ordinance and to find downloadable resources, including posters, employee/tenant letters and more! To learn more about the State's recycling regulations, visit www.CalRecycle.ca.gov.