



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY: CITY OF HICKORY – COMMERCIAL RECYCLING

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Population:	38,973
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For ten years, the city of Hickory has provided free recycling services to downtown eating and drinking establishments.

Each Wednesday, the city's solid waste division collects glass bottles from more than 30 local businesses. The route, which includes 14 bars and restaurants, takes about six hours to complete and yields approximately one ton of brown, green and clear glass bottles each week. The city offers collection of mixed paper, old corrugated cardboard, old newspapers, aluminum cans and other recyclables from businesses on the remaining days in the week. These additional collections yield another ton of material weekly.

In order for businesses to receive recycling services, an owner or manager of that establishment must request the services from the city. Once recycling services are requested, a city crew leader is sent to interview the owner/managers to determine the establishment's needs. Once the needs have been determined, the city provides containers to the business. Bars and taverns receive at least three, 90-gallon rolling containers at no charge, into which they collect and store bottles awaiting pick-up by the city. If requested, they also receive recycling bins for the collection of cans, paper and other materials.

Establishments that opt for city-provided recycling service receive the service free of charge; however, the city of Hickory does charge a container rental fee for the eight-cubic yard front-loader dumpsters used for the collection of old corrugated cardboard. Businesses have found that the rental fee is recovered by waste disposal cost avoidance through recycling. Businesses using the recycling services provided by the city have found that the program has an added educational value by setting a good example of environmental stewardship for patrons.

Brown glass comprises the majority of the material collected, followed by green glass and then by clear. Materials are source separated, meaning that employees of each establishment must separate the brown glass from the clear glass and the green glass. The city runs the collection route using a truck fitted with a compartmentalized dump body with a side lift for the rollout carts. Since the glass is already sorted by color, the driver places each glass-filled cart onto the lift, which raises the cart and dumps the contents into the truck compartment containing that particular color of glass. Once the route is completed, the truck takes the material to the GDS material recovery facility in Conover where it is dumped into bunkers and stored, awaiting transfer to the glass processing facility in Georgia.

The city's commercial recycling program is well received by the businesses that participate in the program. Most feel that it is the, "right thing to do." Since most glass collected is brown glass, it's easy to separate and take them from the serving area are moved to the recycling staging area and dumped into the rollout carts, ready for pickup.



Source separated collection of brown bottles using 90-gallon rolling carts and semi-automated, compartmentalized recycling collection vehicles.