



LOCAL GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY: DOWNTOWN RALEIGH – COMMERCIAL RECYCLING

Population:
Contact:

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Downtown Raleigh Recycles! began in September 2006. The curbside recycling program is provided by the City of Raleigh Solid Waste Services Department, and is the department's only commercial route. Recycling collection is available every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to more than 130 businesses in the Central Business District.

A two-man crew collects recycling following the dual-stream method used in Raleigh's residential recycling program. Participants are asked to separate all fiber materials (e.g. newspaper, magazines, catalogs, etc.) from containers such as bottles and cans. While most of the material collected in the program consists of office paper and glass bottles, businesses can recycle all 14 materials currently collected from residents.

Solid Waste Services provides businesses with containers free of charge, thanks to grant support from the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance. Container choices consist of 64-gallon roll carts and 18-gallon bins, although businesses are permitted to use large, clear plastic bags if they cannot store a container. The city minimized start-up costs for the program by retrofitting a truck in the existing fleet (with cart lifters) and training the downtown garbage crew to collect recycling.

Participating businesses have been recognized for their environmental stewardship with an advertisement in a major daily newspaper. They were also given a "We Recycle" window decal that they can display to let patrons know that they recycle. Currently, only a fraction of the garbage customers in the Central Business District take advantage of this voluntary program. In September 2007, on the one-year anniversary of Downtown Raleigh Recycles!, the city will hold focus groups with current recyclers. The information gathered during those groups will be used to revive marketing and education efforts with the goal of increasing the number of participants and tonnage collected.

14 Types of Materials Collected by Raleigh Recycling:

- White paper
- Newspaper and all inserts
- Corrugated cardboard boxes (no waxed food boxes)
- Paperboard boxes and paper tubes
- Magazines
- Catalogs
- Aluminum beverage containers (soda cans or beer bottles)

- Glass food and beverage containers (any color)
- Metal food cans
- Plastic bottles (except those that held hazardous chemicals)
- Aluminum foil and trays (must be clean)
- Gable-top cartons
- Aseptic (drink) boxes
- Plastic beverage rings (soft kind only)