

ABC Container Recycling - A Guide for Permit Holders

Background

During the 2005 legislative session, the North Carolina General Assembly passed House Bill 1518 (Session Law 2005-348) requiring holders of certain Alcoholic Beverage Control permits to separate, store and recycle all recyclable beverage containers. The bill affects only holders of on-premises malt beverage, on-premises unfortified wine, on-premises fortified wine and mixed beverages permits. Furthermore, recycling is only required for those containers that are sold at retail for on-premises consumption. House Bill 1518 becomes effective Jan. 1, 2008. The legislation directs the ABC Commission to work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to develop a “model recycling program” to guide permit holders in implementing recycling. This fact sheet describes the basic components of a model program to help permit holders begin recycling efforts.

Provisions of the Law and Materials Affected

As stated in H1518, effective Jan. 1, 2008: “Holders of on premises malt beverage permits, on premises unfortified wine permits, on premises fortified wine permits, and mixed beverages permits shall separate, store, and provide for the collection for recycling of all recyclable beverage containers of all beverages sold at retail on the premises.” The bill then further bans the containers from disposal effective on the same date. H1518 is viewable by [clicking here](#).

In effect, the main types of containers affected by the legislation are glass bottles, aluminum cans and plastic bottles. Through previous legislation, aluminum cans were banned from disposal in North Carolina, and House Bill 1465, also enacted in 2005, bans the disposal of plastic bottles by October 2009. For most ABC permit holders, glass bottles will be the majority of the materials generated for recycling, especially by weight, followed by aluminum and then plastic.

Recycling markets exist for all of these materials. Making new containers and other products from used materials saves energy and resources, creates jobs and provides valuable feed stocks to North Carolina manufacturers.

Most, if not all, ABC permit holders who initiate container collection efforts will access markets through one or more of three types of collection service providers: a solid waste hauler, a recycling services company or a local government recycling program. There will likely be some cost associated with the first two options, but as discussed below the costs may be at least partially offset by reduced solid waste services and disposal fees.

Starting a Recycling Program

Step 1: Find a Recycling Service

ABC permit holders should not begin the collection of recyclable containers until they know exactly how the materials will be taken and handled off-site. The kinds of services offered by haulers,

recycling companies and/or local governments will dictate many other aspects of the program, including:

- Whether or not materials need to be separated or can be commingled in any way.
- If bins, carts or other recycling storage will be provided or if they must be procured separately.
- What kinds of bins, carts or other recycling storage are appropriate and most efficient to use.

A logical place to start is to ask your existing solid waste hauler to provide recycling services. Most private haulers offer recycling programs. It is important that ABC permit holders explore this option 1) to get a cost baseline to compare with other alternatives, and 2) to understand if the existing solid waste contract obligates the use of the hauler's recycling services. In addition, other service alternatives may not be feasible in some parts of the state. If an ABC permit holder uses its existing solid waste company for recycling services, it should evaluate those services and any related costs against current solid waste needs for possible cost avoidance opportunities (see more on this topic below).

A second possibility is for ABC permit holders to access local government (municipal or county) recycling services. Some local governments in North Carolina offer drop-off locations for use by the public that can also be used by permit holders. A few local governments also offer on-site collection services. To see examples of how local governments are offering container collection to ABC permit-holders, see: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/deao/recycling/abc/case-studies>. ABC permit-holders can also contact their local solid waste, recycling or public works officials to see what kinds of services are available. For information on local contacts, use your local telephone directory, see: <http://p2pays.org/localgov/ncwaste.html>, or call the N.C. Division of Environmental Assistance and Outreach (DEAO) at (877) 623-6748.

A third service option for ABC permit holders is to contract for materials pickup with companies in the business of commercial recycling. Although these companies are not active in every part of North Carolina, one or more of them serve most urban communities of the state and some serve rural areas as well. DEAO can provide information on recycling service provider options at ((877) 623-6748. Permit-holders can also search the state's recycling markets directory at <http://www.p2pays.org/DMRM/start.aspx>.

Step 2: Make Arrangements for Handling Materials

Once permit holders determine who will provide recycling services and how materials will be handled after collection, the logistics of collecting beverage containers should be addressed. Specific decisions will have to be made in a number of areas: external storage, internal storage and possibly self-haul to drop-off centers.

External Storage - bins, carts, dumpsters or other types of storage will be needed to stage materials outside for pickup by the service provider or transport to a drop location. The decision on what to use will depend heavily on what the hauler or recycling service company prefers or provides - some may furnish equipment upon request, but all will need a type of container that matches the kind of truck used to collect recyclables.

Space may be an issue for permit-holders, especially in downtown areas, so it is important to investigate the possibilities for commingling at least some of the materials. Glass must often be separated by color to recycle, but that separation may be possible at a processing center where materials are taken. It may be a good idea to share storage with other nearby permit holders or other businesses. Outside storage must be sized to accommodate service schedules.

Internal Storage - Ideally, internal storage of recyclable containers should mesh well with external storage. Bins, cans or carts used inside should be designed to dump easily into outside storage units. It may be possible to use the same types of storage units - for example, wheeled carts may be able to used inside until full and then rolled out for direct service outside by the recycling service provider.

Permit holders may be even more space-constrained internally than externally, so again being able to commingle would help with this situation. Although less than ideal, it is possible to collect materials commingled internally and then ask employees to sort materials into separated storage bins outside. In all cases, keep in mind that recycling does not increase the overall volume of waste, but simply requires separation. Once containers are separated, it may be that the remaining waste is minimal and can allow downsizing of trash cans, etc., to accommodate new storage demands for containers.

Self-hauling off-site - for some ABC permit holders, the best option for externally handling materials will be to bring them to a nearby local government drop-off site or to a private recycling facility. In those cases, it is important to know how materials are accepted at those sites - specifically whether any commingling is allowed or if all materials must be separated into different bins. Permit holders who choose or take advantage of this option must size collection units appropriate to their ability to transport, including vehicle size, and how often materials will be transported. For small generators, the use of large buckets or small trash cans may be sufficient; for larger generators, bigger carts may be most appropriate.

Sources and Kinds of Recycling Storage Units

A permit holder’s recycling service provider may, again, furnish external storage for collected recyclables. Depending on the size of the business and the possibilities for commingling, a permit holder could use anything from a small dumpster to large rolling carts to simple small trash cans.

For rolling carts or recycling bins, permit holders may have to work directly with a cart vendor - a few of the major ones are listed below. Local janitorial supply companies may also be able to provide collection containers, especially in smaller quantities. Note that a simple Web search may be the best way to find a wide array of different cart and bin products.

| Name | Phone | Web Site |
|--------------------|--------------|---|
| Amick Equipment | 800-922-3795 | http://www.amickequipment.biz/diakon1.asp |
| Busch Systems | 800-565-9931 | http://www.buschsystems.com/ |
| IPL | | http://www.ipl-plastics.com/ec-environ.html |
| Mid-Point Intl | 888-646-4246 | http://www.midpoint-int.com/listing.mv?c=5 |
| Otto | 800-227-5885 | http://www.otto-usa.com/en/products_rc.asp |
| Recycling Products | 800-875-1735 | http://www.recyclingproducts.com/ |



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|----------------|--------------|--|
| Rehrig Pacific | 800-421-6244 | http://www.rehrigpacific.com/ |
| Rubbermaid | 800-347-9800 | www.rubbermaidcommercial.com |
| Toter, Inc. | 800-772-0071 | http://www.toter.com/ |
| Ultra-Cart | 800-899-7856 | http://www.ultracart.net/ |
| Zarn | 501-951-2045 | http://www.zarn.com/ |

Another possibility for internal handling is using five gallon buckets in certain key locations inside. Permit holders who serve food may have ready access to these buckets from incoming foodstuffs or they can also be purchased. Permit holders may also receive plastic crates, boxes or other types of packaging that can be used for internal storage of recyclables.

What about odors?

Permit holders may be concerned about empty beverage containers causing odor problems. A few key strategies are to remove the recyclables to external storage areas as quickly as possible and to make sure the pick-up schedule (or delivery if using a local drop-off) is frequent enough to prevent this problem. Permit holders, especially in tourist areas, may need to work with their service provider to adjust for busy seasons or large events. Having lids on carts or containers will also help. Permit-holders could take the extra step of quickly rinsing out bottles before putting them in recycling bins. Remember, recycling does not change the volume of beverage containers; it simply requires some level of separation. Generally, standing practices for managing wastes will also apply to separated recyclables.

Step 3: Educate Employees

Successful business recycling programs ultimately rely on the awareness and active participation of employees. Permit holders who want their recycling efforts to succeed should consider a number of the following “tried and true” techniques for engaging their employees:

Top-down commitment - clear and visible support for the recycling effort by business owners and management sets the tone and standard for success.

Designate a leader(s) - having one or a few specific champions (for example, one per shift) of the recycling effort is one way to get organized and under way. A motivated and enthusiastic leader can make the difference between a poor effort and one that works efficiently.

Designate a recycling team - a set of employees with recycling as part of their designated responsibilities can ensure that recycling duties are covered. The team, along with any designated leaders, can take care of the details of evaluating service options, procuring containers, conducting education and other specifics that make recycling go smoothly.

Conduct some basic training - If possible, convene employees for some brief training before implementation of recycling efforts. Topics that need to be covered include:

- Why the recycling program is being established
- What materials are targeted for recycling
- How and what kind of separation is necessary
- What kind of commingling is allowed
- The need to avoid contaminating recyclables with food or other wastes

- How to handle materials inside and out
- How often and what kinds of services the hauler or recycling company will provide
- If applicable, where to take materials if using self-hauls to a local drop-off facility

Provide written information and good signage - It is a good idea to provide each employee a brief written summary addressing all the relevant topics above. A quick announcement with basic information can be attached to paychecks, and memos or posters with the recycling information should be put into break rooms, above or near time clocks or in other common areas frequented by employees.

It is also important to label all recycling storage units with clear signs that communicate to employees what to put where. If recyclables are mistakenly commingled or if wastes are mixed in with glass, plastic or aluminum containers, it may make for much more work for staff to separate the materials and may make the materials unacceptable to the recycling service provider. Good signage is key to any recycling program.

Reward good behavior - once recycling is implemented and going well, recognize staff or specific employees for their efforts. Simple awards and incentives can encourage commitment and proper recycling behavior.

Recycling and Waste Costs

Implementing a recycling program will likely entail costs to ABC permit holders. Possible source of costs include:

- Purchase or rental of internal or external containers
- Ongoing collection charges by haulers or recycling companies
- Costs of transporting materials to a local drop-off center
- Signage and other informational materials

Permit-holders can use some key strategies to reduce or control costs, and in some cases, possibly use recycling to save money overall.

1. Make a thorough search for recycling services. In many parts of North Carolina, haulers and recycling companies compete for customers. Use that competition to your advantage in procuring recycling services.
2. Ask your hauler or recycling company to provide containers as part of their service to avoid having to purchase them.
3. Use opportunities to commingle materials (as allowed by your service provider or local drop-off) to reduce labor to separate containers and to decrease the numbers of bins, carts, etc., you may need to rent, buy or use.
4. Explore the idea of sharing revenues from the sale of recyclables by your service provider - note that sharing revenues may simply increase service fees.
5. Most importantly, thoroughly examine your level of waste services and explore the possibility of reducing those services once recycling is implemented. If your “waste stream” is mostly recyclables that you will now be diverting from disposal, you may be able to use a smaller waste container or be able to have it emptied less frequently, or both. This is a

critical strategy that many industrial and commercial businesses have used across North Carolina to cut their waste costs to help offset recycling program costs.

ABC permit-holders that employ all of the relevant approaches above will ensure that recycling adds the least possible costs to their operation.

Case Studies and Other Information

For more information or assistance on recycling beverage containers under House Bill 1518, please contact the N.C. Division of Environmental Assistance and Outreach at (919) 707-8100 or (877) 623-6748.

Your community's local recycling, solid waste or public works office may also be able to provide assistance. If you have trouble finding a contact through local telephone directories or other means, please use the search mechanism at: <http://www.p2pays.org/localgov/PAYT/ncwaste.asp> or call the DEAO at the numbers listed above.

Finally, for information on ABC permit holders in North Carolina who have successfully implemented recycling programs for beverage containers, see: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/deao/recycling/abc/case-studies>.