



Join SORRT!

Businesses and organizations are encouraged to join Montgomery County's SORRT (Smart Organizations Reduce and Recycle Tons) Program.

An information network that promotes and supports business recycling, SORRT provides technical on-site support, informational materials, and invitations to seminars and workshops held throughout the year.

In addition, SORRT not only provides guidance on how to recycle the required materials, but also any other materials that your business generates that can be recycled. SORRT can supply names and addresses of recycling collection companies and facilities; lists of recycling equipment suppliers; and referrals to other Montgomery County businesses that can share their experience with you, and much more.

To join SORRT or learn more about business recycling, call Montgomery County's SORRT Program at 240-777-6400.

Montgomery County, Maryland
Division of Solid Waste Services

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FAX: 240-777-6465

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This information is available in an alternate format by calling Gabriela Monzon-Reynolds at 240-777-6400.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SORRT

Montgomery County's Business Recycling Program

Spring 2009

Businesses in Montgomery County have been required to recycle since 1993, when the County enacted Montgomery County Executive Regulation (ER) 109-92AM. This regulation was aimed at reducing the amount of waste disposed within the County by 50 percent, required businesses to recycle certain materials, and created reporting requirements. More than ten years later, the Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS) has modified ER109-92AM to improve and clarify recycling requirements. On February 8, 2005, the County enacted (ER) 15-04AM which is effective immediately and supersedes ER109-92AM.

This revised regulation affects all business and property owners, managers, employees, and recycling and refuse collection companies. Additional materials must now be recycled by businesses, and additional reporting and program requirements have been implemented. The County

also enacted a second law, ER18-04. This new law complements ER15-04AM by banning the disposal of required recyclable materials as solid waste at County disposal facilities. Guidelines have been created for collection companies that contract with businesses in Montgomery County for the collection of recyclable materials and this law clearly defines roles and responsibilities of these parties.

Montgomery County still has a goal of recycling 50 percent of all waste generated in the County. With the commitment from all businesses and the cooperation of collection companies, the County will meet and exceed this goal in a continuing effort to reduce the impact on County disposal facilities.

This brochure answers some of the most commonly asked questions about the business recycling requirements. If you have additional questions, please call the Division's Business Recycling Program, SORRT, at 240-777-6400.



Q. Which businesses are affected by these regulations?

A. All businesses in Montgomery County, whether enterprise, individual, corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, or other entity or person, including institutions, health care facilities, construction sites, and Federal, State, and local government facilities, are required to comply with these recycling regulations.

Q. What do these regulations require?

A. ER15-04AM requires all businesses to recycle certain materials, file a business recycling plan, submit annual recycling reports (according to the schedule below), and maintain documentation of materials recycled or collection services received. It also mandates specific requirements for placement of recycling containers and for collectors that service commercial properties.

| ANNUAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS | |
|--|---|
| BUSINESS SIZE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES | ANNUAL REPORT DUE DATE |
| LARGE (250 OR MORE ON-SITE EMPLOYEES) | FEBRUARY 1st |
| MEDIUM (100 TO 249 ON-SITE EMPLOYEES) | MARCH 1st |
| SMALL (FEWER THAN 100 ON-SITE EMPLOYEES) | Initial Submission due 60 days from receipt of a written request from DSWS; thereafter, annually by MARCH 1st |
| PROPERTY OWNERS OF MULTI-TENANT FACILITIES | MARCH 1st |

Q. What materials must my business recycle?

A. Businesses are required to recycle the following materials:

- **Mixed or sorted paper** (white paper, colored paper, corrugated cardboard, boxboard, newspapers, inserts, magazines, catalogs, telephone directories, paperback books, unwanted mail, and all other clean, dry and shredded paper)
- **Commingled or separated containers** (aluminum cans and foil products, bi-metal (steel/tin) cans, glass bottles and jars, and plastic bottles and containers)
- **Scrap metal** (ferrous and non-ferrous items)
- **Yard trim** (grass, leaves, garden trimmings, and brush)
- **Christmas trees**

Other materials that businesses can recycle voluntarily include:

- Plastic film, such as plastic shopping bags and shrink wrap
- Wood waste
- Food waste
- Construction and demolition debris
- Pallets
- Computer equipment
- Toner cartridges

Q. How do I start a recycling program in my business?

A. While the DSWS provides on-site technical assistance and education, it is the responsibility of the business to identify, select and contract with a collection company that meets its specific needs. The DSWS has created and distributes the Business Recycling Regulation Handbook. It includes a resource list of private and non-profit companies known to provide recycling collection service in the County, or act as drop-off locations where businesses can self-haul their recyclable materials. If you would like to have a County representative conduct a recycling assessment of your business and provide recommendations to improve your recycling, waste reduction, and buying recycled efforts, contact the SORRT Program at 240-777-6400 and we will be happy to schedule a meeting with you.

Q. What reports are required?

A. All businesses are required to file a Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Plan when they first begin operations in the County. The Plan identifies the materials that your business will recycle, a description of your collection system, and the name of the recycling company responsible for recycling the materials your business is collecting. Businesses are also required to file an Annual Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Report, based upon the number of employees. This report summarizes the quantities of materials recycled and disposed during the previous calendar year. In addition, the report requires businesses to provide a description of their waste reduction and/or reuse efforts and detail how they educate their employees or tenants about their recycling program.

Q. What is the role of non-residential commercial property owners or managers?

A. Property owners, consistent with County solid waste law and ER15-04AM, are required to make recycling collection service and storage space for recyclable materials available to tenants. In addition, property owners and/or managers of multi-tenant facilities must file an Annual Business Recycling and Waste Reduction Report covering facilities in their entirety, and including information for all tenants.

Q. What if my business cannot recycle the required materials?

A. Businesses for which recycling a required material poses an extreme hardship may request a temporary exemption by indicating on their Plan and/or Annual Report that an exemption is needed due to severe space limitations, non-existent markets or high cost. The Division will assess the hardship, conduct a site visit, provide guidance to address the barrier, and, if necessary, furnish an Exemption Request form for your business to complete and return.

Q. Are there fines associated with non-compliance?

A. Failure to comply with the requirements of ER15-04AM is a Class B Violation of Montgomery County Code and is subject to fines of \$100 for the initial violation and \$150 for subsequent violations levied each day the violation persists. Recycling Investigators issue Notices of Violations as written warnings, and issue Citations as necessary.

Q. Will my business benefit from recycling or is it just one more burden imposed by government?

A. If you currently dispose of large amounts of waste that can be recycled (such as mixed paper), you may find that recycling will save your company money. The refuse collection company that collects your trash passes along the costs to dispose of the trash. However, if a recycling collection company can avoid a disposal fee and recover some revenue from the sale of the recyclable commodity, the savings should be reflected in your service bill. At the same time, in most cases, you can reduce the size of your trash container, or reduce the frequency of collections, saving even more money.

Even small businesses that lease property can see reduced costs. By recycling, you are keeping the costs down for your property owner or building management company and that should also keep your costs down.

Most importantly though, reducing waste and recycling as much material as possible makes Montgomery County an even better place to live, work, and play – for this generation and for generations to come. That’s why we have set the goal to recycle 50 percent of all waste generated and implemented these important recycling requirements.