



# Fact Sheet

OFFICE OF WASTE REDUCTION SERVICES

State of Michigan • Departments of Commerce and Natural Resources

## SELECTING A SUPPLIER, HAULER AND MATERIALS BROKER

*An important component of your waste reduction program is identifying the suppliers, haulers and materials brokers who will provide the waste reduction services and information you need. These companies often have excellent informational resources, are themselves getting into the waste reduction business and will cooperate with you to reduce your waste stream.*

### YOUR SUPPLIER

When you buy supplies, you also buy all of their wasteful characteristics and packaging. Waste reduction often starts with reducing the volume of "soon-to-be-waste" materials that enter your company. Fortunately, suppliers can often provide the materials you need in forms which are easily recyclable or reusable. Work with your suppliers to reduce unnecessary packaging volume and to increase the recoverability of the input and its packaging. This will improve inventory control, reduce your handling expenses, improve quality control and reduce your waste volume.

#### Questions to Ask:

- What portion of the content of a supplied item is made from recycled materials?
- Is the supplied item available in a more recoverable form?
- Is the supplied item available in a more "environmentally friendly" form (such as without chlorofluorocarbons — CFCs)?
- How can the supplied item be provided in less packaging?
- Can the item's packaging be in a more recoverable form?

#### Is Your Supplier Willing to:

- Provide items in reusable containers which may be returned to the supplier?
- Transport and return your reusable containers?
- Provide items in containers which are easily recyclable (e.g. cardboard)?
- Provide items in standard-sized containers to maximize storage efficiencies?
- Back haul containers in which the item is supplied?
- Back haul other containers and recyclable materials?
- Take or buy back sub-standard, rejected items?
- Provide items in larger quantities (to reduce containerization) or smaller quantities (to reduce overstocking, spoilage, etc.)?
- Provide items "just in time" to reduce handling and storage?
- Find supplies having recycled material content?

#### Things to Look For:

Evaluate your supplier's willingness to assist your waste reduction efforts by examining the supplier's:

- Flexibility to meet your waste reduction needs.
- Sense of the importance of reducing waste.
- Level of commitment to waste reduction in their company.
- Familiarity with waste reduction options.



## YOUR HAULER

Reducing waste also involves reducing the volume of “soon-to-be-dumped” materials which leave your company. Fortunately, a growing number of waste haulers provide recycling collection services, particularly for paper, glass, metal and plastics. This allows them to better meet the waste reduction needs of their customers and to reduce their own waste disposal costs. Haulers often will haul recyclables for a reduced charge (less than they would charge to haul waste). They may even pay you for recyclable materials which have value. Some haulers will also provide recycling containers, technical assistance and educational items to help you reduce your waste.

Most haulers who provide recycling services have separate runs for waste and recycled materials. Some haulers, however, have recovery facilities which allow them to recover recyclables from loads mixed with waste.

### Questions to Ask:

- What happens to your waste?
- Where is your waste hauled to?
- What are the opportunities for recycling waste materials which are currently taken to landfills or incinerators?
- What types of recyclable materials does the hauler collect?
- What level of contamination is allowed for recyclable materials?
- What are the minimum volume requirements for collecting recyclables?
- Does the hauler have off-site recovery capabilities? If so, for what materials?
- How effective are the hauler's off-site recovery capabilities?
- How will recycling affect your waste service?
- How will you be compensated for providing recyclable materials to the hauler?

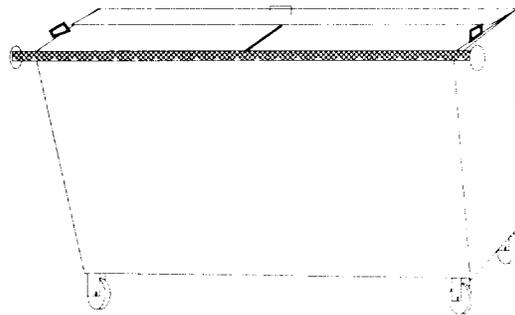
### Is Your Hauler Willing to:

- Collect source separated or co-mingled materials for recycling?
- Provide recycling containers, educational pamphlets, signage and other items to accelerate and improve your company's recycling programs?
- Provide informational and technical assistance to assist the development and implementation of your company's recycling programs?
- Offer financial incentives by reducing hauling rates for recyclable materials or by buying recycled materials from you?

### Things to Look For:

Evaluate the willingness of the hauler to assist your waste reduction efforts by examining the hauler's:

- Ability to consistently provide high quality and timely recycling collection services.
- Flexibility to meet your waste reduction needs.
- Ability to execute and maintain waste reduction efforts.
- Level of commitment to helping you reduce your waste.
- Track record of providing recycling services for you and other customers.
- Business ties with local recycling materials brokers.



## **YOUR MATERIALS BROKER**

The long-term success of your recycling efforts depends in large part upon the recycling markets, your marketing agents and your materials brokers. The markets for newspaper, cardboard, office paper, glass, metal, plastic and other recyclable materials are often unstable and unpredictable. Accordingly, it is essential to have good relations with brokers who will move your materials "no matter what" should the markets become depressed.

Brokers typically provide a link between recyclers and manufacturers. They collect materials from many small sources and sell large volumes to the "mills." Most brokers specialize in a particular material such as paper, metals or plastic, although some will handle multiple categories of materials. They may service you directly and provide technical assistance or equipment rentals. More frequently, however, they serve you indirectly by receiving recyclable materials through a hauler.

### **Questions to Ask:**

- What exactly happens to the materials handled by the broker?
- What are the markets and resources available for off-site recycling of paper, cardboard, glass, metals, plastics, rubber, waste oil, spent solvents and other recoverable waste materials?
- Does the broker have sorting capabilities? If so, for what materials?
- How do prices differ according to types and quantities of materials?
- Will the broker pay you for materials?
- What level of processing is required?
- What is the minimum load required for pick-up?
- What level of contamination will result in a rejected load of recyclables?
- Will the broker offer a long-term contract?

### **Is Your Broker Willing to:**

- Collect source separated or co-mingled materials for recycling?
- Provide recycling containers, educational pamphlets, signage and other items to enhance your recycling programs?
- Provide informational and technical assistance to assist your recycling efforts?
- Provide hauling services for recyclable materials?
- Pay you for recyclable materials?
- Provide long-term assurances to purchase your materials?

### **Things to Look For:**

Evaluate the willingness of the broker to assist your waste reduction efforts by examining the broker's:

- Ability to consistently collect your recyclable materials.
- Flexibility to meet your waste reduction needs.
- Track record in moving low-value recyclable materials.
- Level of commitment to helping you reduce your waste.
- Familiarity with end-use markets.
- Extensiveness of market connections.
- Business ties and working relationships with local haulers.

## DURING NEGOTIATIONS WITH HAULERS

As you design and implement waste reduction programs, you will want to renegotiate your waste hauling contract with your hauler to maximize disposal savings from waste reduction programs. During these negotiations, it may be helpful to be aware of the following things:

- Recycling is a new business to most haulers. They may not have established a track record with markets for recyclable materials.
- Most haulers are not yet able to offer "full service" recycling services. They may start with collection of one or two key materials. You may end up contracting with multiple haulers, collectors or brokers.
- Landfill disposal fees may be rising at a rate of 50% or more per year in your area. Be sure your waste disposal bills reflect any waste volume reductions you achieve.
- Closing landfills may force your hauler to travel two, three or ten times as far to dispose of waste.
- The hauling industry is very competitive in some areas and "the only game in town" in others. Whether you elect to contract with a major, national company or a small local hauler, shop around for the most comprehensive, cost-effective service.

It may also be helpful to remember these tips:

- Base payments on standard cubic yard or tonnage, whichever benefits you most. For example, removing corrugated cardboard represents a larger percentage of waste by volume than it does by weight. Thus, the elimination of cardboard benefits you most if your disposal bill is based on volume.

- Save money by reducing the number of pickups.
- Select waste containers that are no larger than you need.
- Look for timely, consistent pickup service.
- Expect to pay less for waste disposal and/or receive payments for collection of recyclable materials.
- Know where your waste is being disposed and what the disposal tipping fees are at that facility.
- Compare the services and prices of other haulers.
- Explore an "on-call" collection system.
- Inquire about compactors, containers and other equipment that can be rented from a hauler or broker to facilitate recycling.
- Contract for technical assistance, consulting and educational assistance, if necessary.

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For more information on the subject of waste reduction for businesses, contact the **Office of Waste Reduction Services**, P.O. Box 30004, Lansing, MI 48909; (517) 335-1178.

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