Start Recycling

Use the tools in this kit and online at the Glass Packaging Institute (www.gpi.org) to start a glass container recycling program for your business:

- How to set up a program.
- Tips for employees (open to flip side).

Order or download online:
- Labels for glass recycling bins.
- Signage to let customers know you recycle glass.

- Worksheet to tally the amount of glass your business generates.
- Model programs in U.S. communities.

Determine the amount of glass containers generated.

Identify the color, quantity, and location of glass containers generated on premise. Review purchasing and waste removal records to estimate the amount that is recyclable, or check with your waste hauler.

Contract for glass recycling.

Work with your waste hauler, or another local recycler, to determine if glass container recycling services are available. This may require renegotiating your current waste hauling contract. You may also be able to recycle plastic and cans. Use these questions to identify the best option:

- What types of recycling storage containers will be used and what is their cost? Will containers be appropriate for glass bottles?
- Will recycling collection be on a set schedule or “on-call”?
- Will revenue generated from the sale of recyclables offset program costs?
- Will the pricing structure be fixed or tied to the market?
- Will the contractor assist with employee education? Who will monitor quality?

Smaller restaurants and bars might consider sharing an outside recycling container—and the costs. Empty glass containers can also be transported directly to a glass processor or recycling drop-off center.

Set up collection and handling.

Collection containers—Make recycling bins different in size, shape, or color from those for trash, and label to ensure quality. Confirm that employees can easily lift bins when full. Place inside containers where employees can easily reach them, such as behind the bar or at wait stations. Consider using liquor/beer shipping boxes to store empties beneath the bar. At end of shift, or closing, empty bins in a designated storage area.

Storage space—Evaluate space both inside and outside to determine the size and type of containers needed. Ensure that outside containers can be locked. Roll-out carts are one option for tight storage space, or consider sharing a recycling container with other businesses. A glass crusher can also help reduce the volume of glass recyclables.

Lowest disposal costs.

If glass container recycling services are available, you may be able to reduce your waste removal and pay for fewer pickups. While overall waste management costs are likely to be reduced, recycling is still an expense. Understand the economics before you start.

Tell your customers.

To reap the most economic benefit, make a long-term commitment to providing a consistent supply of clean container glass. Promote the recycling program to employees. Then tell your customers. Display signage that shows your business recycles.