



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# Recycling Ordinance

## *Step-by-Step Guide*

All information on Environmental Services Department's website (links subject to change).

## Background

### Purpose of Ordinance:

- **Meet the state mandated waste diversion rate of 50 percent (Assembly Bill 939).** If the diversion rate is not maintained, the City could face fines of up to \$10,000 per day. For additional information on AB 939, go to [www.ciwmb.ca.gov/BoardInfo/](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/BoardInfo/).
- **Extend the life of the Miramar Landfill,** which is forecasted to close in 2017.
- **Assist the City in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, complying with state Assembly Bill 32, and conserving natural resources.** Making products from recycled materials uses less energy and water, and pollutes less. For additional information on AB 32 go to [www.calepa.ca.gov/legislation/2006/FactSheetAB32.pdf](http://www.calepa.ca.gov/legislation/2006/FactSheetAB32.pdf)
- **Save money.** Implementing a recycling program can lower trash bills with fewer trash pick-ups.

The focus of the City's Recycling Ordinance is to achieve compliance through education and technical assistance, but fines may be assessed in cases where education and assistance have been offered and the violator continues to fail to meet the requirements of the ordinance.

### Key Implementation Dates:

- Effective February 18, 2008
  - Residential buildings served by private waste haulers:
    - Single family
    - Apartments and condominiums - 100 units or more
  - Commercial - 20,000 square feet or more
  - Mixed use facilities fitting either threshold in previous two bullets (above)
  - Special events
- Effective January 1, 2009:
  - Apartments and condominiums - 50 units or more
  - Commercial - 10,000 square feet or more
  - Mixed use facilities fitting either threshold in previous two bullets (above)
- Effective January 1, 2010:
  - All Apartments and condominiums
  - All Commercial facilities
  - All Mixed use facilities

## Step 1: Check out City of San Diego's Website:

Visit [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/index.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/index.shtml) for more information and to view the ordinance and implementation tools.

## Step 2: Establish Recycling Service

- We strongly encourage you to set a goal of a recycling rate of 50% or higher. A MINIMUM OF 40% recycling services is needed.
  - Example: currently have eight 3 cu. yd. dumpsters; should switch to having a minimum of five trash dumpsters and three recycling dumpsters. **If space is an issue:** Convert to toters or use different size dumpsters (1.5 cu yd – 8 cu. yd). Note: conversion factor for 95 gallon toters: 6.5 toters = one 3 cu. yd. dumpster.
- If a hotel, you have two options regarding placement of recycling containers:
  - You must have adequate recycling containers in all common areas (for example, vending machines, breakfast room, lobby, laundry rooms, pool/spa, and staff areas).
  - We strongly encourage you to have recycling containers in each guest and in common areas.

List of recycling companies that offer services to commercial properties/ multifamily:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/pdf/businessrecycling.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/pdf/businessrecycling.pdf)

List of recycling companies that offer services to Special Events:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/07eventrecyclers.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/07eventrecyclers.pdf)

## Step 3: Obtain Proper Recycling Containers and Signage

Read Guidelines for Recycling Containers and Signage for Recyclable Material Collection Services:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/071128containerguide.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/071128containerguide.pdf)

**SDMC 66.0710 (b): Container Features** – shall be equipped with close fitting lids and be leak-proof and rodent-proof.

Obtain recycling containers by contacting your hauler. For a list of different types of indoor and outdoor recycling containers, visit the following website:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/07containervendors.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/07containervendors.pdf)

**SDMC 66.0710(a): Container Signage:**

- Each recycling container, enclosure or chute should be clearly labeled.
- Name and phone number of Franchisee or Recycler to whom container should be on container.

**Suggestions Regarding Signs:**

- Laminate or place in plastic sleeve to avoid weather damage. You can also make metal signs.
- If you choose to create your own signs, we recommend placing pictures of the items next to the descriptions of the recyclable materials which must be deposited into recycling containers. This includes: plastic and glass bottles and jars, all paper, newspaper, all metal containers and cardboard. It is recommended that you use the signs above as they contain the appropriate information.

**If recycling container is in an enclosure, it must have signage on the outside as well.**

For information on signage, ideas for creating your own materials and to download/print educational tips and signs, go to the Education Toolkit on the webpage:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/toolkit/index.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/toolkit/index.shtml)

- **Sample Recycling Container Sign - English and Spanish** (PDF: 296K) – May be placed on recycling containers, enclosures or wall near recycling containers. Do not place on trash containers. It will confuse your tenants/employees if your container is trash or recycling. If your recycling container already has a recycling label and states what can be recycled, you do not need to place this sign on your recycling containers. Haulers are required to label the recycling containers that they provide. Contact your hauler if the containers are not labeled. [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/containersign.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/containersign.pdf)
- **Sample Recycling Program Poster and Flier** (PDF: 3MB) – May be placed on official bulletin boards, office, common areas, enclosures or wall near recycling containers. Place your phone number or hauler's number in the blank area following "for information call". Note: this poster is not intended to be placed on recycling containers or dumpsters. [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/recyclingposter.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/recyclingposter.pdf)

**CHUTES:**

**If your property has chutes:**

- ❖ If you can: designate a chute for recycling and place the recycling container sign next to chute (state: NO TRASH ALLOWED – RECYCLE ONLY).
- ❖ If you can't designate a chute for recycling, recommend you have a sign next to chute stating trash only and info about what can be recycled and the locations where recyclables should be taken. Place recycling container(s) next to, or as close to, trash chute as possible.

**Optional Signage and Flyers:**

Curbside recycling Do/Don't Recycling List:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/pdf/newcurbflyer.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/pdf/newcurbflyer.pdf)

Scavenging sign:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/noscavenging.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/noscavenging.pdf)

Donation flyer:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/donationflier.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/donationflier.pdf)

Unwanted mail flyer:

[www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/mailflier.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/mailflier.pdf)

## **Step 4: Education:**

### **Written Notice of Recycling Program or to Tenants**

You are responsible for educating your residents/tenants and have them actively participate in the program. Failure could result in fines. You may use and/or modify the sample materials, create your own, or request them from your recycling service provider. Creating a map of the location of your recycling containers along with letter will be helpful.

**Official annual information to all residents/tenants: The items below should be noted in written notice.**

- Education to residents/tenants annually. The following are minimum requirements to check for:
  - Letter/Notice to each tenant/occupant must be distributed annually and needs to convey the following:
    - Recycling is present at facility
    - The location of recycling containers
    - Types of recyclable materials that must be recycled
    - Advising occupants/tenants that they have a responsibility to recycle pursuant to the City's Recycling Ordinance.
- In addition:
  - New occupants shall be given above information upon occupancy
  - All residents/tenants shall be given information and instructions upon any change in recycling service to the facility.
  - For hotels, the written notice described above should be displayed at the check-in desk. Another notice must be either given to each guest or placed permanently in each room.

### **Sample letter to residents of apartments/condos: (available in English & Spanish)**

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/071211residentletter.pdf>

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/090205residentletterSPA.pdf>

### **Sample letter to commercial tenants/ employees: (available in English & Spanish)**

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/071211tenantletter.pdf>

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/090205tenantletterSPA.pdf>

**Optional:** creating a binder or folder with all material mentioned above. Examples: move-in application with written notice, lease language addressing recycling requirements (recommended), flyers displayed, map of recycling/trash containers location (recommended), hauler's number, address, times of pick ups, number of containers, etc. This makes the next inspection easy and accessible for staff and keeps you organized of the new law.

**REQUIRED:** All information in above paragraph should be available on request. Property is subject to inspection at any time.

***For questions or concerns, please contact the City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department:*** ***858-694-7000***  
***[www.sdrecyclingworks.com](http://www.sdrecyclingworks.com)***

# Check List:

## How to Prepare for Inspection!

### What happens next?

A Code Compliance Officer will be visiting your property to see if you are 100% in compliance with the City of San Diego's Recycling Ordinance. The Officer could show up at any time. All responsible parties will receive a notice of violation describing what needs to be done along with an inspection date. It is recommended you contact the Officer to schedule a time to meet on inspection day. The Officer's number will be shown on the letter you receive. Not complying with the Recycling Ordinance can result in fines. Below is a checklist to assist you!

### CONTAINERS:

- Adequate recycling service (minimum of 40%)  
# of dumpsters\_\_\_\_\_ and capacity of each\_\_\_\_\_ and/or # of totes\_\_\_\_\_ and capacity of each.
- Recycling containers located next to or in the vicinity of the trash containers.
- Recycling containers in common areas (pool, laundry room, fitness room, lobby, club house, breakfast area, near vending machines, etc).
- Recycling containers in staff work rooms and break rooms.
- Commercial Businesses: place recycling containers in each room or work space (recommended) or adequate containers on each floor. A Recycling Specialist or Code Compliance Officer can recommend the correct number if you like to place containers on each floor. In the future you should convert to having containers in each room or work space.
- Containers for outdoor uses should be equipped with close fitting lids and be leak-proof and rodent-proof (some exceptions apply).

### SIGNAGE: Each recycling container, enclosure or chute should be clearly labeled.

- Signage on all recycling containers. The haulers should have provided signage already on your outside containers. (Signage stating it's a recycling container and what can be recycled by description (optional to have photos of what can be recycled: recommend sample container signs in step guide which is already provided at this document's beginning).
  - [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/containersign.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/containersign.pdf)
  - [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/recyclingposter.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/recyclingposter.pdf)
- If containers are in enclosures: must have signage displayed on the outside of enclosure.
  - ❖ Suggestion: laminate or place in plastic sleeve to avoid weather damage. You can also make metal signs.
- Display a letter/notice and signage flyer (provided link above) in common areas.
- Commercial Businesses: Display a letter/notice and signage flyer (provided link above) in common areas, staff areas, and check in area. Suggested ideas: display on bulletin boards, plastic sleeves, display stands, and electronic display).

### CHUTES:

If your property has chutes:

- If you can: designate a chute for recycling and place the recycling container sign next to chute (state: NO TRASH ALLOWED – RECYCLE ONLY).
- If you can't designate a chute for recycling: have a sign next to chute stating trash only and info about what can be recycled and the locations where recyclables should be taken. Place recycling container(s) next to, or as close to, trash chute as possible.

## **EDUCATION: The following are minimum requirements to check for:**

- Letter/Notice to each tenant/occupant must be distributed annually and needs to convey the following:
  - Recycling is present at facility
  - Location of recycling containers
  - Types of recyclable materials that must be recycled
  - Advising occupants/tenants that they have a responsibility to recycle pursuant to the City's Recycling Ordinance.
- ❖ Letter provided for you: input your info into the highlighted areas.

### **Sample letter to residents of apartments/condos: (available in English & Spanish)**

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/071211residentletter.pdf>

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/090205residentletterSPA.pdf>

- Commercial businesses:** Letter/Notice to every new tenant/occupant must be distributed and needs to convey the following:
  - Recycling is present at facility
  - The location of recycling containers
  - Types of recyclable materials that must be recycled
  - Advising occupants/tenants that they have a responsibility to recycle pursuant to the City's Recycling Ordinance.
- ❖ Letter provided for you: input your info into the highlighted areas.

### **Sample letter to commercial tenants/ employees: (available in English & Spanish)**

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/071211tenantletter.pdf>

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/ro/pdf/090205tenantletterSPA.pdf>

- Commercial Businesses:** distribute to all customers a letter/notice and signage flyer or display in all rooms, whatever is the most cost effective.
- Exception (HOTELS):** if you place recycling containers in each room with proper signage on container, you only need to display a letter/notice and signage flyer in common areas, staff areas, and check in area. Suggested ideas; display are on bulletin boards, plastic sleeves, display stands, and electronic display).

## **INSPECTION DAY: Code Compliance Officer will need:**

- ❖ Did you call Officer to schedule a time to meet on inspection day?
- Copies of all education materials (flyers, letters, signage, newsletters, etc) given to tenants/guests.
- Map of property (if applicable).
- Copy of hauler contract.
- Tour of property. Need to see all signage, containers, and education materials displayed.
- Photos may be taken and information may be requested.

**For questions or concerns, please call or email**

**Michelle Young**

**CRO Enforcement Officer**

**City of San Diego**

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