



Our mission is to reduce waste today through innovative resource management and to reach a waste-free tomorrow by demonstrating that waste is preventable, not inevitable.

## Key Issues to Consider in Municipal Recycling Contracts

- **Environmental Benefit** – Make sure your materials really get recycled. You can require a maximum residual rate for a processing facility. You can also stipulate preferred end markets in your contracts. For instance, you can specify that glass bottles be recycled back into glass markets. Language in your contract will ensure that if something happens to these markets, you will be notified and will have the option of choosing what happens to the material and if it is continued to be collected.
- **Revenue Share** – Communities are entitled to share in the value of materials collected. Many cities are just now beginning to get a fair share of the revenue.
- **Enforcement** – You want to have a way to enforce that contract provisions are being met. Having a mechanism in your contract to ensure your contract is enforced (also known as liquidated damages) makes it clear to the vendor and city what is expected and what happens if the terms are not met.
- **Education** – Education is the key element for a successful recycling program. Your recycling vendor should play a meaningful role in this and provide resources and effective education materials tailored specifically for your community.
- **Accurate Reporting** – Reporting is a necessity. To be able to track your progress and determine the potential to increase recycling, you need good data. All communities are different and you need reporting that is specific to your city and material stream. Your recycling vendor should clarify in writing how materials are tracked and reported to the city.
- **Composition Analysis** – Accurate reporting can only start with an accurate understanding of the materials you have. You'll need to know this to understand the residual rate specific to your community (what doesn't get recycled is often called residual). Annually, you should require your vendor to perform an analysis of the composition of materials collected in your community. This differs in every community and changes over time.

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- **Annual Work Plan and Goals** – As you strive to meet your community’s waste reduction goals, you’ll want to have your recycling vendor working with you to help your efforts. Each year, you should require the vendor to develop a work plan of goals and educational efforts to coincide with your community’s goals.
- **Quarterly Customer Service Evaluations**- You’ll want to know more than just how much material is collected in your community. A quarterly report that summarizes trends in complaints and reoccurring problems will inform you of issues that your community is dealing with and can indicate areas to focus on for improvement.
- **Direct Customer Feedback and Customer Service** - Residents need to be consistently and directly communicated with to ensure the environmental benefits of recycling are maximized. This includes tagging mistakes that residents make, making it easy to get information and help by phone or Web, and providing effective mailings and educational materials.
- **Per Ton Collection Pricing** – A per ton collection fee structure provides incentives for a hauler to collect as much material as possible and do what they can to ensure all residents are participating. When you pay per household, you pay the hauler whether or not the resident sets out anything to be recycled. In a per ton fee, the community doesn’t end up paying for a truck to drive by a house and not pick anything up.
- **Emissions Reductions** – Recycling vendors can take simple steps to reduce the negative impact of emissions from their trucks in your community. These include using cleaner alternative fuels such as biodiesel or installing equipment such as diesel oxidation catalysts or particle trap filters that reduce particulate matter emitted in your community.

*Updated October 2007*