



# WASTE BAN COMPLIANCE TIPS FOR RETAILERS

## WHAT ARE WASTE BANS?

Many businesses are not aware that a number of materials are banned from disposal in Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) bans easy-to-recycle materials (like cardboard) from the trash. Your municipality might have additional bylaws/ordinances or regulations requiring businesses to recycle. Your business, your waste hauler, and solid waste facilities are all responsible for complying with waste ban requirements. See the RecyclingWorks website for an [overview on waste bans](#).

Retailers that place banned items in the trash run the risk of solid waste facilities rejecting their waste, being charged additional fees, and receiving enforcement from MassDEP.

Businesses that receive MassDEP enforcement often already have a recycling program. However; a number of common issues can result in recyclable materials being placed in the trash, including:

- Breakdown in staff participation
- Poor signage
- Miscommunication with hauler about what materials go in each collection container
- Collection containers are not the right size
- Pickup schedule not properly set
- No backup plan for equipment failures



## RECYCLING CARDBOARD

More than 80% of all MassDEP waste ban enforcement is for cardboard!

Cardboard is a readily recyclable material with well-established markets for processing. See the RecyclingWorks website for information on [how cardboard is recycled](#).

Talk to your waste hauler about options for collecting cardboard for recycling, such as:

- Compactor
- Dumpster
- Carts
- Baler

Material specifications could include cardboard only, cardboard mixed with paper, or single stream (cardboard, paper, and containers)

Businesses often save money on disposal fees when recycling cardboard. For example, Wyman's Liquor Store in Leominster saved \$7,000 annually by improving its cardboard recycling program. Read the [Wyman's Liquor Store case study](#) for more information on how recycling cardboard can save money on disposal costs.

Other key waste ban materials for retailers may include:

- Paper
- Bottles and Cans
- Clean Wood (at landfills only)
- Food (if your business disposes of 1/2 ton or more per week)

Other waste ban items

- [Visit this link](#) for a full list of waste ban materials.

# HOW TO COMPLY

Identify what waste ban materials your business regularly disposes of and work with your hauler to set up or improve your business' recycling program for those materials.

## KNOW YOUR WASTE

You may not know exactly what materials are in your business' trash bins. Take a look in your waste barrels and dumpsters to learn what waste ban items your business regularly throws away.

## COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR HAULER

Talk to your waste hauler to find out options for adjusting your dumpsters/compactors so your business can recycle all waste ban materials. When you set up or improve your recycling program, you will likely be able to reduce the size or pickup frequency of your trash container.



Just as it is important to keep recyclables out of the trash, it is equally important to keep trash out of recycling containers. Work with your hauler to identify which materials are accepted at your recycling outlet and which are not. Common contaminants include food waste, plastic bags, Styrofoam, and rubber gloves.

Request that your hauler provide you with direct and immediate feedback on waste ban materials observed in your trash containers or when they receive notice about waste ban failed loads from solid waste facilities. This is particularly important if your business has a compactor or roll-off container, as drivers can observe and identify waste ban materials in these loads at the disposal site.

If you rely on equipment such as a baler or compactor for your recycling, talk with your hauler about back up plans to ensure that materials can continue to be recycled if equipment requires repair or replacement.

## SIGNS

Clearly label all trash and recycling containers. Customize these signs to include the specific needs and waste materials at your facility.

## TRAINING

Regularly train staff on how to recycle.

For more information on working effectively with your hauler to set up a recycling program, see [RecyclingWorks Guidance for Businesses Contracting for Trash, Recycling, and Food Waste Services](#).

**RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts** is a free assistance program that helps businesses reduce waste, and maximize recycling, reuse, donation, and composting opportunities. Contact RecyclingWorks for customized assistance for your business, including how to:

- Start or improve recycling
- Comply with Massachusetts waste ban regulations
- Find haulers and processors of recyclable materials
- Provide employee training and signage
- Save money on waste removal