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.

Order or download online:
• How to set up a program.
• Worksheet to tally the amount of glass your business generates.
• Labels for glass recycling bins.
• Signage to let customers know you recycle glass.
• Art for print and online ads, posters, and T-shirts.
• 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:
• 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.

Recycled glass containers become new bottles and jars.
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.

Collection frequency—Arrange for recycling pickup based on volume or to match customer flow, such as before and after the weekend. Coordinate as well with trash pickups, or days when beverage shipments are received.

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.

EDUCATE EMPLOYEES AND KEEP IT CLEAN.

• Make recycling part of employee training.
• Designate an employee to champion the glass recycling program.
• Label bins clearly and place glass bottle recycling procedures in areas where employees can check them.
• Gather employee input on location of collection bins for easy recycling and to ensure no contaminants.

TECT 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.

Why is Glass Recycling right for your business?

Lower disposal costs. Diverting glass containers to recycling can help lower waste collection costs. It also keeps this valuable resource out of landfills.

Environmental payoffs. Glass is 100% recyclable. Recycling glass bottles and jars minimizes consumption of raw materials and lessens demand for energy.

Customer recognition. Consumers expect glass to be included in a recycling program. It shows your commitment to environmental stewardship.

Do the math

As glass containers add weight and volume, diverting them to recycling can allow hotel, restaurant, and bar operators to lease a smaller, less expensive dumpster for 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.