



Florida *Green Lodging* Program Best Management Practices



Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling

Florida's tourism industry serves an estimated 98.9 million visitors annually. More than 50 percent of these visitors are hotel guests during some portion of their stay. The waste generated by these guests constitutes a large portion of the state's commercial waste stream. A hotel waste audit showed that the majority of waste in a hotel is not produced in guest rooms, but in the Food and Beverage Department. If a hotel's waste is not reduced or recycled, it contributes to the state's overall environmental problems.

Many guests are familiar with recycling from home or work and are glad to continue the process when staying at a hotel.

The following information provides Best Management Practices (BMPs) relating to each area of waste reduction. Reducing waste creates a more efficient management program.

General Waste Reduction Best Management Practices

Conduct a facility-wide waste audit with your waste service provider

Your garbage hauler can determine what percentage of your waste stream is recyclable and right-size your garbage and recycling dumpsters accordingly. By moving much of your garbage stream to a recycling stream, you can downsize the garbage service. The savings from downsizing your garbage service could more than pay for your recycling service fees.

Track waste generation on a regular basis

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's WasteWise Program offers a free web-based program to track your waste, recycling and recycle content purchasing. Waste tracking will allow the facility to obtain measurements and data to assist in the waste reduction efforts by highlighting outstanding generation issues. Visit [ReTrac](#).

Properly identify, track, store and dispose of hazardous materials according to appropriate environmental regulations

Proper management of hazardous materials reduces the likelihood of exposure of guests, staff and the environment. Common examples of possible hazardous materials are large volumes of paints, oils, chemicals, batteries, pool supplies and spent fluorescent bulbs. These materials must be stored and disposed of according to the correct environmental regulations. Fluorescent and HID bulbs cannot be disposed of in normal trash receptacles. These bulbs must be properly stored and labeled in a padded container and disposed of through a hazardous waste collection service.

Prepare and follow a written waste reduction plan

Describe which staff will be responsible for each aspect of appropriate waste management. Pursue waste reduction at the source by working with suppliers to reduce packaging.

Institute environmentally-preferable purchasing (EPP) policies



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EPP or Green Purchasing is a set of policies that leads to direct waste reductions at the source. Common types of EPP are buying products that have minimal packaging and participating in supplier or manufacturer take-back programs for items such as pallets and large containers.

Provide newspapers to guest only by request

Newspapers are a substantial contributor to the waste generation problem in the lodging industry. One of the ways to combat this problem is by providing guests with newspapers by request only.

Use refillable containers instead of single-use packets and containers

Instead of providing single-use toiletries and condiments, use items that are refillable on a continual basis. An example is using refillable shampoo/conditioner containers in the showers of guest rooms.

Set printers and copiers to duplex printing by default

By printing on both sides, also called duplex printing, paper usage can be reduced by up to 50 percent. Change the default settings on all printers and copiers to print in duplex mode.

Eliminate the use of polystyrene (Styrofoam) and plastic food service containers

Plastic and polystyrene food service containers take up valuable space in landfills and are not biodegradable. By substituting these products with biodegradable and compostable materials, less waste will be generated.

Reduce the purchasing of excess or inventory materials

Buy only what is needed in the short term to reduce excess materials and waste.

Remove or eliminate the storage and use of hazardous chemicals

Although hazardous chemicals may be needed for certain appliances, try to move away from them where possible. Examples include switching from traditional cleaning chemicals to green cleaners. Green cleaners often have less stringent storage requirements than traditional cleaners and can lead to reduced exposure to harmful substances. Green Seal, EPA Safer Choice and EcoLogo provide a list of certified green products. Visit [Green Seal](#), [EPA Safer Choice Labeling](#), or [EcoLogo](#) to learn more.

Reuse Waste Reduction Best Management Practices

Use old or discarded office paper for notepads or packing materials

Used office paper can easily be cut into squares and reused as office notepads. This is especially true if the paper is only printed on one side. If duplex printing is used, shred paper for reuse as packaging material for shipping and in gift shops.

Donate any excess items, such as food, toiletry items, furniture, electronics and linens to local charities or other social service organizations

Donate any items that can still be used to local charities or other social service organizations. This will extend the life cycle of these usable products instead of sending them to the landfill. If items cannot be donated to local



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charities, arrange for a system to sell the items to employees. Construction and demolition supplies and wastes can also be reused in this manner.

Compost excess food and landscape trimmings

In areas where excess prepared food items cannot be donated to local charities, compost these materials. As with excess food, landscape trimmings should not be sent to the landfill. These materials can be shredded or chipped and reapplied as soil amendments. Such services can be arranged through local agricultural and landscaping resources.

Supply reusable goods in place of disposable goods

Common examples of reusable goods include cloth table linens, glass or hard plastic drinking containers, refillable soap, cleaning supplies and toiletry containers, plates and cutlery items. These goods can be supplied not only to guest areas of the facility but to back of house areas as well.

Recycling Waste Reduction Best Management Practices

Develop an onsite recycling program from as many waste materials as possible

Commonly recycled materials include: aluminum, landscape waste, newspapers, cooking grease, food waste, glass, carpet, building materials, motor oils and liquids, plastic bottles and buckets, magazines and batteries. Recycling services for all the above may not be available in your area. Check your local Recycling Coordinator on the availability of commercial recycling. You can find your local recycling coordinators on the DEP website at [Recycling Program](#). Institute recycling programs for as many as possible.

Locate recycling containers and bins next to trash receptacles

The most successful recycling programs make it easy to participate. Locating recycling containers next to trash receptacles will lead to an increased success rate for the recycling program. Also, provide easy instructions and directions where these bins are located to both guests and staff.

Clearly communicate what can be recycled

Materials that are accepted for recycling should be clearly communicated to both guests and facility staff. One common way is to clearly define acceptable materials on the recycling containers themselves. Often a large print sticker can be used.

Purchase recycled content supplies

Participate in environmentally-preferable purchasing by procuring materials that are made with recycled content instead of first-generation content. If possible, purchase supplies that contain at least 30 percent post-consumer recycled content. Common examples of items containing at least 30 percent post-consumer content are toilet tissue, paper towels, facial tissue, envelopes, office paper and kitchen napkins.