

Generic Municipal Recycling Transparency/Accountability Ordinance

Supporting Transparency and Accountability Regarding Recyclable Materials

WHEREAS, (your city or state) citizens and businesses are vital in protecting our natural resources and in the success of promoting reduction, reuse, minimizing litter, and proper disposal of garbage, tires, household hazardous waste, electronic waste, etc. and the recycling of various materials such as batteries, cardboard, electronic waste, food waste, glass, metals, paper, plastic, etc. and

WHEREAS, municipal recycling programs designate various types of materials be separated from the waste stream with the intent that these materials will be recycled; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of (your city or state) recognize that materials are **not** recycled until they are made into a new product and returned to the market place; and

WHEREAS, a public trust exists when (your city or state) citizens participate in recycling programs and these citizens rightfully expect that materials collected will in fact be recycled; and

WHEREAS, a portion of the materials collected for recycling by municipal or private companies contracted by government entities are **not** being recycled, either because collected materials are contaminated or there is no economically viable market for the materials; and

WHEREAS, citizens of (your city or state) deserve transparency and accountability regarding the ultimate destination of their collected recyclable material, whether collected by a government entity or a private company, and deserve transparency and accountability regarding the percentage of collected recyclable materials being disposed of in landfills, or used as landfill cover, or burned in an incinerator or waste-to-energy (WTE) facility.

WHEREAS, it would be a lie to tell citizens that recycling is free. There are costs involved with recycling just as there are costs in collecting garbage such as trucks, tires, fuel, employee salaries, insurance, equipment capital, maintenance, workers compensation, etc.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE _____ (governing body) OF _____, (your city or state) the following will be required via contractual agreement of the entity, whether private or public, that collects, processes, and/or sells recyclables for _____ (your community):

1. To ensure citizens that the contents of the recycling trucks are not going to a landfill, incinerator, or a waste to energy facility (WTE), but rather to a recycling facility that will bale and sell them to be made into new products and returned to the marketplace, evidence is needed of the routes the trucks take **after** picking up recyclable material from the curb. Routes will be recorded and archived via GPS tracking data, or other FOI accessible documentation.
2. Unannounced visits will be allowed for any interested party who wants to see what is being dumped from the recycling trucks, and if technology allows, this same goal may be accomplished with video camera coverage that citizens can view online, preferably in real time.
3. Billing for garbage and recycling services, whether public or private, shall clearly denote the cost of recycling, separate from the cost of garbage collection. To this end, **recycling and garbage collection shall be listed as separate line items**. Customer bills will list these costs, recycling and garbage, as **separate line items**.
4. Quarterly reports will be posted on the city website, accounting for the volumes collected, the volumes recycled, as well as the buyer for each material.
5. Trucks shall have a separate compartment for each type of recyclable, thus reducing contamination rates to 3% or less, thereby ensuring end-users with high quality feed stock.
6. The only recyclables that are collected are those for which there are two proven, secure domestic markets.