

Commingled Recycling

Free Business Owners Guide To Arranging Commingled Recycling Services


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Dear Business Owner

Choosing a commingled recycling company isn't easy because you're bombarded with misleading advertising, confusing claims, and simply bad information.

From super-low prices and high-pressure sales to unlicensed operators and hidden fees, how do you ever find a qualified, competent, and trustworthy commingled recycling company?

You start by reading this Consumer's Guide. In this fact-filled booklet, you'll discover how to avoid commingled recycling rip-offs, six mistakes to avoid when choosing a supplier, and also guidance on whether a commingled service bin is actually right for your business!



We wrote this guide to help you better understand commingled recycling bin collection services. Now, with this information, you can make an informed, intelligent decision.

If you have any questions about mixed recycling bins or any other waste or recycling service please reach out to us.

You're invited to call us at 1300 927 837 or at info@waster.com.au. We've dedicated our business to educating consumers, we'll be happy to help you in every way.

Cordially,
Mr Waster



About Waster.com.au

Waster is an Australian waste and recycling company specialised in helping small and medium companies.

We provide all waste and recycling services such as medical waste, general waste bins and all recycling options.

We are different to other suppliers as we operate on flexible 30 day agreements – so you are never locked in to a contract that does not suit you. We also specialise in reducing your costs by boosting recycling. You can email us at info@waster.com.au.

How to avoid 4 commingled recycling rip-offs!

RIP-OFF #1: DISPOSING OF MIXED RECYCLING IN GENERAL WASTE BINS Cardboard recycling is the most economical waste and recycling service, followed up by commingled recycling. Disposing of bottles, cans and containers in general waste will significantly increase your waste costs.

RIP-OFF #2: PAYING BIN RENTAL. Some companies will charge you rental for your bin. There is really no need if the service is on an agreed schedule.

RIP-OFF #3: OVER SERVICING. How often do you really need your bin serviced (mixed recycling should not smell if clean containers). You should ensure the bin is only picked up at the frequency you require – whether it is daily or monthly.

RIP-OFF #4: HIDDEN COSTS OR PRICE INCREASES If you sign a multi year contract for commingled bin services you may find yourself caught out by increasing prices or gradual increases that soon add up. Be careful with the small print in any long term contract that you consider signing.

6 costly misconceptions about commingled recycling

MISCONCEPTION #1: Commingled recycling is just an extra charge

No. Commingled recycling should be thought of in how much it can reduce your general waste bill (and help the environment). If you add a commingled bin service it should reduce a general waste service and save you money.

MISCONCEPTION #2: It is smarter to use a commingled recycling bin

No. A straight cardboard and paper bin will be the cheapest option in nearly all scenarios. If you only have a small volume of cardboard – it can be disposed of in your commingled bin.

MISCONCEPTION #3: I can dispose of coffee cups and plastic bags in a commingled bin. No. The modern coffee cup is very difficult to recycle – and should not be disposed of in a commingled bin. Plastic bags also create difficulties.

MISCONCEPTION #4: I can throw some general waste in a commingled recycling bin. No. If a driver finds that there is general waste in your recycling bin – it may be classified as contaminated and need to be collected by a general waste truck – at a much higher price.



What can be accepted in a mixed recycling bin

Commingled recycling is a very versatile recycling option and can contain:

- Newspaper, magazines and brochures
- Cardboard
- Milk and juice cartons
- Plastic bottles and containers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Steel cans
- Aluminium cans



MISCONCEPTION #5: A commingled bin is the best service for glass bottles.

Maybe not. If your business has a lot of glass bottles – such as an upmarket restaurant or bar – with wine and beer bottles. A crushed glass collection service would likely be a more convenient and cheaper option.

MISCONCEPTION #6: I do not need a lock for my commingled bin

In some cases – it is best to have a lock on the bin. Whereas you will not be charged extra for a heavy bin, a lock may still be a smart case. If the bin is in a busy area – with lots of pedestrians – a lock will prevent people dumping rubbish in your bin (and risking contamination).

Kids (and grownups) can have lots of fun using bottle and can crushing devices such as those produced by US company Plastic Bottle Crusher.

This lets you easily crush containers to save money in your bin,

You can see a video here of the device in action.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHUg45tvj5Q>



5 questions to ask when choosing a commingled recycling provider

Value versus price

We are not going to dress it up and make it look like a luxury product – commingled recycling bins are one of those necessary evils in life like paying your taxes. The smart decision is to know some simple facts and choose a reputable provider so you avoid any long term issues.

Minimising any impact to your business operations is vital. Thus regular servicing will ensure:

- Saving money on general waste
- Strong environmental performance
- Simplify systems and processes in your office

Cheapest in the long run

A good quality service will be the cheapest option in the long run for your business and will save you money.

A good supplier should ensure – no hidden extras, no extra call out fees and prices that stay reasonable stable year after year.

We have covered what to avoid and common misconceptions

but what are the questions you should ask a comingled recycling company before hiring them?

QUESTION #1: Can you provide pricing now?

•A reputable company should be able to provide pretty accurate pricing on the phone or in person – i.e. based on number of bins, access and frequency. They should not really need to do a site inspection or come to visit you to provide a “free quote”. There will be some caveats such as access and height restrictions.

QUESTION #2: Do I need to sign a long term contract?

•Many companies will want you to sign a long term – and sometimes multi year contract for them to start providing bin services. Think – is there any real benefit to you; the customer in this context. As a bin company does not have to provide any expensive equipment etc to you – there should really be no need for a long term contract.

QUESTION #3: Do I get charged by weight in the bin?

•As commingled recycling is not disposed of at landfill (and so be impacted by landfill levies) – you should not be charged extra for weight in the bin. They may however charge if comingled recycling is on the floor etc or if the bin is exceptionally heavy i.e. due to crushed glass. In this situation a crushed glass collection

QUESTION #4: Are you properly licensed?

•This is vital – if the supplier is not licensed, then you really are risking your business. The company should be able to describe their operations and facilities – and provide evidence of certification etc.

QUESTION #5: Can I get a discount if I book other services?

•Yes. Of course you should ask for a better price and also a discount if you book other services such as general waste bins.

What does the commingled recycling process actually involve?

Commingled recycling is possible due to large and efficient facilities called MRFs (Material Recovery Facilities) which separate and filter the bin contents into various recycling streams. A good description of the process was given at thebalance.com

"Haulers arrive at the MRF and dump the commingled material onto the tipping floor. A front end loader or other bulk material handling equipment then drops into a large steel bin at the start of the processing line. This bin is known as the drum feeder. Inside of the drum feeder, a fast moving drum meters out the commingled material onto the conveyor at a steady rate, while also regulating the density of the material on the conveyor so that it is not packed too tightly together."

"From there, material goes to a pre-sort station, where workers standing along the conveyor spot and remove any trash, plastic bags or other mistakenly placed material and separate them for appropriate disposition. Large pieces of plastic or steel, including pipes and other large items, can damage the system or expose workers to risk of injury."

"Larger pieces of cardboard are then removed from the mixed material stream, pushed to the top by large sorting disks turning on axles, while heavier material stays beneath. Smaller sets of the disk may then remove smaller pieces of paper. As materials are separated, they are diverted to separate conveyors for accumulation and baling."

"Powerful magnets separate steel and tin containers, while an eddy current separator is used to draw aluminum cans and other non-ferrous metals from the remaining co-mingled material. Glass containers can be separated from plastic containers by a density blower, then hammered into the crushed glass, known as cullet."

"Remaining plastic containers may be sorted manually by workers on the conveyor line, or increasingly, optical sorters are used to identify different materials and colors. Air classification may be used to separate key plastics such as HDPE and PET."

It is a very interesting process for anyone who likes ingenious technology – and well worth a visit if you can arrange one.



When you run a business – being locked into an unsuitable multi year contract is the last thing you need. Waster operates on flexible 30 day agreements – which basically means that if you are not happy with our service, or it just does not suit you anymore – you can cancel by giving us 30 days written notice.

Waster provides low cost waste and recycling services to small and medium Australian businesses.

You can book all your required services such as grease trap cleaning, general waste bins, recycling bins and all niche services such as sanitary bins and confidential document destruction.

Check out all your options at waster.com.au



Waster operates on 30 day agreements – so you are never tied to a long term contract