

# THE CHICAGO RECYCLING ORDINANCE

Chapter 11-5 of the Chicago Municipal Code

A Guide to Commercial, Retail, and Multi-Unit Residential Recycling in the City of Chicago

## CHICAGO RECYCLES

The City provides bi-weekly recycling collection to low-density households (single family homes & buildings with 4 dwelling units or less). The City does NOT provide recycling services to multi-dwelling buildings (4 units or more), commercial and office buildings, or restaurants and bars. Per the Chicago Recycling Ordinance, such property/building owners and managers must provide recycling services.



## UPDATED RECYCLING ORDINANCE

In 2016, City Council amended the Chicago Recycling Ordinance to reflect the most current standards within the recycling industry. The ordinance now provides greater clarity to property owners about their recycling responsibilities while also giving city officials stronger enforcement capabilities.

The new Chicago Recycling Ordinance was effective on January 1, 2017.

## WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Under the amended ordinance, property owners of multi-unit or high-density residential buildings, office and commercial establishments will now be mandated to provide source-separated, single-stream recycling. Property owners will also be responsible for implementing an ongoing educational program that includes posting signage, providing adequate carts and sending written notice to tenants about the changes.

**TIP:** Low-density residential building means a single family home or any residential building, that contains four or fewer dwelling units.

**TIP:** Source-separated recycling requires all persons citywide to place recyclable material in designated recycling containers and to keep recyclable material separate from waste until such time that the recyclable material is collected for delivery to a properly permitted facility.

**TIP:** Residents may call 311 to report non-compliance (ie/lack of recycling receptacles or educational materials).



## COMPLIANCE

The Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS) will handle enforcement of the ordinance that includes a 30-day warning period and graduated penalties for non-compliance after an inspection. These penalties include: \$500 to \$1,000 (first offense); \$1,000 to \$2,500 (second offense within 12-month period); and \$2,500 to \$5,000 (third and each subsequent violation occurring within 12 months of the most recent violation).

**TIP:** Property owners or building managers can contact (312) 744-2413 for assistance with understanding the Recycling Ordinance.

For more information on recycling in Chicago, visit [www.chicagorecycles.org](http://www.chicagorecycles.org) or [www.recyclebycity.com/Chicago](http://www.recyclebycity.com/Chicago).



## SUMMARY:

All commercial establishments and multi-unit dwellings are required to:

- Contract with a private hauler, for the provision of source-separated recycling services;
- Maintain an ongoing education program to communicate to residents, tenants, and employees about which materials the program accepts and how to prepare the materials for recycling; and
- Post signs in common areas identifying the materials to be recycled and the location of the material collection points.

Before you contract for your recycling program, here are a few questions you should ask:

1. What does your current service include?
2. Do they provide single stream recycling collection?
3. What is the schedule for collection?
4. Will they provide educational material for distribution?
5. What size container can they provide?
6. Do you require the recyclables to be loose, not bagged in the recycling container?



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visit [www.chicagorecycles.org](http://www.chicagorecycles.org) or [www.recyclebycity.com/Chicago](http://www.recyclebycity.com/Chicago).