



Recycling Corrugated Cardboard

Corrugated cardboard, also called old corrugated cardboard (OCC), is one of the most frequently used packaging materials. It is made from unbleached, unwaxed paper with a rippled (corrugated) inner liner. This material accounts for more than 70 percent of the paper-based products recycled in the United States.

If your business receives a significant amount of materials or supplies in corrugated cardboard containers, you should look at the feasibility of recycling or reusing these boxes. **For many businesses, recycling OCC is usually cost-effective.**

If your business does not generate enough OCC for a hauler/buyer to collect at a cost level acceptable to you, you can save on pick-up charges by taking the OCC to the buyer yourself.

Corrugated cardboard cartons to be recycled should be **empty** and not contaminated with:

- Wax coatings
- Food waste or other trash
- Metal or plastic straps

Cartons should be:

- Source separated from other waste materials
- Flattened
- Baled (if there are large enough quantities of cardboard to justify this; baling also conserves space)

Owners and managers of smaller businesses located in an industrial park or strip shopping center and who share waste collection services may request a dumpster dedicated to OCC recycling. Any revenue generated from the sale of this material could be used to offset other waste disposal costs.



If your business does not generate enough corrugated cardboard to merit recycling, consider the following alternatives:

- Sell or give clean OCC to other businesses.
- Use OCC for storage and shipping.
- Make OCC available to employees or others who may be moving.

How To Make It Work

- Assess whether it is convenient for your business to recycle. Factor in the location, space, containers, accessibility, personnel.
- Determine the volume of OCC your business is generating.
- Locate a hauler/buyer for the OCC.
- Find out what prices are being paid for OCC, loose and flattened or baled. Get the price paid per ton by the buyer over the past 12 months.
- Find out the minimum and maximum quantities acceptable for pick-up.
- Find out if hauler/buyer will provide collection containers at no charge.
- Find out maximum percentage of contamination that buyer will accept.
- Determine if it is cost-effective for your business to recycle OCC.

If your business does not generate enough OCC for a hauler/buyer to collect at a cost level acceptable to you, you can save on pick-up charges by taking the OCC to the buyer yourself.