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Retail Recycling Case Study

Wyman's Liquors

Leominster, MA

Wyman's Liquors is a 15,000 square foot full-service liquor store and redemption center in downtown Leominster, MA. The family-owned business has been operating since 1966 and has 50 employees between their main location and two satellite stores. In 2008, the business received a failed load letter for excessive amounts of cardboard, a material banned from disposal, in their trash compactor. Wyman's enacted simple changes to their recycling program to bring the business back into compliance with Massachusetts waste bans. Thanks to committed leadership, effective communication, and a new mindset, the business has sustained and expanded recycling programs in their stores and redemption centers.

Diversion Programs

When Wyman's received the failed load letter, they were utilizing a 10-yard front load dumpster for cardboard and a 40-yard compactor for trash. After communicating with their hauler, the business made the decision to switch the designation of the containers to more effectively manage the relative volume of each material. Switching the containers also meant that the dumpsters were moved to locations that were more user-friendly for employees moving material from the store.

Beyond cardboard recycling, Wyman's identified opportunities to divert additional materials and improve their waste diversion programs. Throughout their retail space and offices, Wyman's uses a consistent set up of co-located unlined bins for paper, bottles & cans, and trash. The business also wanted to provide more opportunities for their customers to divert waste in the redemption center, so they added bins to collect cardboard and film plastics in the area. Staff noticed that the trash can located near the redemption center entrance was often filled with recyclable materials (non-redeemables and cardboard), so they moved the trash behind the attendant counter. The business also worked with TOMRA, which collects their redeemable containers, to establish a program to recycle non-redeemable containers that were otherwise going in the trash.



At-a-Glance:

After receiving a failed load letter for excessive amounts of cardboard in the trash, Wyman's made simple changes to their recycling program to come back in compliance with MA waste ban regulations.

Wyman's diverts 90% of materials generated on-site, and collects 5.7 million bottles and cans for redemption and recycling.

By adjusting their containers and pickup frequencies, Wyman's avoids paying full price for a partial load pick-up.

RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is funded by MassDEP and delivered under contract by the Center for EcoTechnology.

Cardboard & Paper



MIXED PAPER & CARDBOARD

Flattened cardboard
White & colored paper
Magazines, newspapers
Paper bags, snack boxes
Mail, envelopes



NO

Tissues, napkins, paper towels
Waxed paper, wrappers
Plastic, metal, glass



Do not bag recyclables!

Signage and Employee Training

Wyman's identified the importance of clear signage to communicate to their staff and customers about proper recycling procedures to reduce potential contamination. Every bin and consolidation point is labeled, and the store is transitioning to signage provided by RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts that features images of specific materials found in the store. New employees are trained on the store's recycling program, which includes a walk-through following the movement of materials and highlights the collection programs that are most relevant for their position. Bins and rolling hampers in the redemption center include signage with clear instructions to customers on breaking down boxes, and a Wyman's staff member is present to assist with additional recycling questions and separation of materials.

Program Logistics

The store's recycling program includes material collected from in-house operations, as well as the customer collection bin in the redemption center. Every day, staff transport collected materials to the loading area using rolling carts for consolidation into the appropriate compactor or container.

In the redemption center, customers bring their non-redeemable containers to a Wyman's staff member who uses an innovative computerized scanning system to sort these containers by size and type. These bags of bottles and cans are labeled as non-redeemable, but are still recycled through the TOMRA program.

Program Evaluation

Wyman's has achieved a 90% diversion rate of materials generated in the store. They collect approximately one ton of cardboard each week, and collect and sort 5.7 million bottles and cans annually in their redemption center. Their improved and expanded recycling program is now ingrained in the culture of the store and its employees. Wyman's continues to look for opportunities to reduce additional waste; the store collects and compacts clean film plastic and is waiting for a viable recycling outlet.

Wyman's has reduced the frequency of pickups for their cardboard compacter (on call, approximately once every six weeks) and trash container (once every two weeks), so that they are only emptied when full. This ensures that Wyman's is not paying full price for a partial load pick-up. During the first year of their updated cardboard recycling program, the business saved \$7,000 in disposal costs!

View our guidance for managing materials such as [cardboard](#), [bottles and cans](#), and [single stream recycling](#).

View the full case study video [here](#)

