

Vendor Information Gathering

Time: 20 minutes

Supplies:

- Pencil or pen
- Vendor Questions Worksheet
- Phone book or internet access

If your school does not have a recycling program or is interested in changing the recycling program, it is important to know what items potential recycling vendors accept prior to beginning the waste audit. This way you will know which items are actually recyclable.

Have students volunteer to contact or research available vendors. Options vary greatly depending on your school location, but some options may include having recycling picked up at your school by a recycling vendor or waste management company or having someone drive the recycling to a drop-off location. Keep in mind that while it might cost less to have a volunteer drop off recycling, this is usually not a long-term sustainable option for most schools. Vendors often charge per pick up and/or rental fees for the collection containers.

Provided is a list of questions students can ask vendors when researching recycling options for their school. The questions were taken from the Recycling at School webpage from MassRecycle at <http://www.massrecycle.org/recyclingatschool.html>. This list of questions is also available in worksheet format.

- What types of material does the recycling service provider accept for recycling? Are these the same materials that you are looking to recycle? Be as specific as possible.
- How should the recyclables be prepared for collection? Is there a minimum quantity requirement for pick up?
- Will they provide collection containers and/or dumpsters for recyclables? Do they provide a slotted dumpster for cardboard? Do these cost extra?
- What would be the collection frequency and estimated costs for the amount of recyclable materials from your school? Will this cost vary depending on which materials you choose to recycle?
- Does the recycling service provider require a contract, or is it an informal arrangement?
- Can you negotiate an "on call" pick up for waste collection? Now that you will be generating less waste, will you see a decrease in your current disposal costs?