



GUIDE TO HAULERS

for Multi-Family Property Managers in DC

Multi-family recycling programs succeed when building management ensures that the services available to residents are well organized and well managed. Here are some ideas for ensuring hauling contracts deliver the highest quality services to residents and help achieve recycling and waste diversion goals.



GETTING READY: *Understand hauler requirements*

- Contracts must be able to support the District’s minimum trash/recycling collection pick-up requirements for multi-family buildings of twice weekly for both recycling and trash. Earliest pick-up time allowed by ordinance is 7:00 AM.
- Haulers, using their full name, must be licensed by DCRA and registered with OWD.
- Haulers must provide receptacles that meet minimum container maintenance requirements.
- All containers and receptacles provided by the hauler will be leak-proof, have tight-fitting covers (unless the customer specifically does not require them), and meet all other applicable legal requirements . The hauler should maintain all equipment provided in good working order.



GETTING READY: *Understand building needs*

Look for a service that works well with your building’s rhythms. Some factors to consider are the number of units and residents and the building layout. It is also helpful to think about the general schedule of the building’s residents. Residents may generate more trash and recycling over the weekends, making Mondays and Fridays ideal days to schedule collection service. Finally, trash and recycling may need to be moved from where residents deposit it to where haulers can access it. Thinking about the holistic needs of the building will help you select the type of collection service (i.e., container type) that works best. Options include:

- Roll-cart service
- Front-load dumpster service
- Rear-load dumpster service
- Roll-off compactor service
- Clear bags for commercial recycling collection are strongly discouraged but allowed.

A waste audit is another activity that could help determine your service needs. There are many ways to conduct a waste audit and the results will allow you to optimize your trash and recycling services. DPW has additional resources that can help:

Explore Zero Waste DC’s full resources at zerowaste.dc.gov



MANAGING MATERIALS

Buildings are required to recycle the items on the Mayor’s List of Recyclables, so it is important to ensure that the hauling contract specifies all items on the Mayor’s List of Recyclables. Establish a protocol in the contract for items not generally accepted for recycling (e.g., furniture, electronics) and work closely with residents to keep these items out of the recycling stream. Then, determine the best container type and size, as well as the level of frequency they need to be serviced in order to manage the materials generated in the building.

Waste brokers and consolidators can help with setting up and managing trash and recycling services at multiple properties. This will ease the burden of month-to-month account management and setting up service contracts but could make the day-to-day relationship and management of unforeseen circumstances more cumbersome.



SETTING UP SERVICES

The contract should describe mutually agreed upon terms for service logistics. This may include:

- Location for dumpsters/bins
- Container access (for trucks, personnel, bin movement)
- Locks for trash room, enclosure, or containers (ensure the hauler has access)
- Collection times/days
- Price and allowable adjustments (if any)
- Bin/cart maintenance - who replaces broken containers; who pays for them; how often are containers replaced?
- Term of contract and cancellation terms - does the length of time the hauler is contracted for provide stability for both parties? How much notice is either party required to give?
 - Typical contracts could range from month-to-month with 30-day cancellation to multi-year contracts with 120+ days' cancellation notice with automatic term roll-over. Commit to what feels comfortable to you, but 1 to 2-year contracts with a 30-day cancellation notice at the end of term with no automatic renewal is a common middle ground.

To ensure ongoing communications, be sure the contract includes contact information for the hauler and property manager both during and after regular business hours. The contract should describe customer service procedures, including who will manage container overflow, what will happen in case of severe weather, protocol for responding to illegal dumping, and a complaint response and resolution process.

MASTER CONTRACTS

Some property management companies use a master contract for all buildings within their portfolio while others allow individual buildings to contract on their own. Determine if there are efficiencies available by standardizing contracting. If starting a new contract, it can help to use a template.



UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

The contract should include provisions and protocols for dealing with unknown or unexpected situations. Proactive planning is key to good communication and a smooth working relationship between building management and the hauler. Examples include:

- **Initial flexibility** - Right-sizing service can be difficult at first. Arrange a trial period where the building works with the hauler to ensure the number of containers and frequency of service are sufficient and needs of both parties are being met. Or, add a contract clause for service flexibility.
- **Delayed or missed pick-ups** - Work with the hauler at the contracting stage to address what happens in the event pick-ups are delayed or missed. Ask if the hauler uses software to track collection.
- **Contamination** - Most people want to recycle right, but contamination in the recycling stream still happens. Work with the hauler at contracting to make a plan for managing contaminated recycling. The hauler can opt to reject loads or levy contamination fees. Some buildings have negotiated caps for the number of times or total amount that their hauler can charge for contamination in a month.
- **Transferring contract terms** - Market changes can result in buying/selling of hauling companies to each other, leading to uncertainty about the continuation of service. Build notification and guarantee of continued service into the contract until a new or transferred contract can be established.



HAULING CONTRACT REVIEW

A periodic review of the contract helps ensure that the agreed-upon service is still the best fit for the building. Establish in the contract a regular time to talk with the hauler to evaluate the following items:

- **Collection days/times** - Are the days and times working well for the residents and building staff? Are there other days or times that might work better? Is the frequency of collection sufficient?
- **Minimum customer service standards** - Does the contract define reasonable response time to issues, how to make service adjustments, and how to ensure container repairs or replacements are made quickly and efficiently?
- **Recycling contamination procedures/fees**