

Recycling

Recycling is normal practice now in the majority of industries across the UK and Film and Television are no exception. As best practice it is recommended that you aim to achieve a minimum of 80% recycling rate – there is not all that much nowadays which cannot be recycled (mainly just crisp packets and camera tape).

There are so many ways in which you can approach your waste management system that it would be difficult to cover every eventuality. The best advice is to take the time before you start your production, to run through the kinds of waste each department is likely to produce and cater for those needs. It is also important to communicate what systems you have in place so that people know where to go with 'one-off' items.

- **Paper**

Paper is a commodity with a stock market value so is a valuable resource. There are hundreds of companies out there who would love to take single streamed office paper (collected as just paper alone). They will usually collect it from your various offices for you. Don't forget to roll this out on the relevant trailers when on location.

- **Confidential paper**

Again, paper is big business. Make sure that your confidential waste contractor is compliant with the *BSIA standard EN:15713 for the Destruction of Confidential Material*.

- **Mixed recycling**

You may choose to arrange a mixed recycling collection, in which case all recyclables can go into one bin to be sorted by your waste contractor. This is much easier to implement because you can essentially have one bin on set which doesn't involve much thought by the crew member at source. If you are doing this, ask your contractor to provide you with a monthly recycling report so that you can see their average recycling rates and what they do with the un-recyclables. It is also a great motivational tool to feedback to crew on how many tones they have recycled each month.

- **Single stream recycling**

If you are rolling out single stream recycling (separating every material) you are likely to get a better rate from a recycling contractor, however this is reliant on crew getting the separation right at the source. A 'contaminated load' will often be discarded and end up in landfill, or if it is highly contaminated, a contractor may refuse to take it.

(If you are rolling out mixed recycling, it is still advisable to have separate bins for tins, glass, plastic and card at the back of the catering van. Experience has shown that this helps to avoid contamination in the food waste bins.)

- **Cardboard**

Make sure that this is set up by craft and catering as food packaging produces an abundance of card. Some studios have their own balers on site now because you can get a good price for pure baled card. If you don't have access to a baler, it is still advisable to keep card separate to get the best price from your contractor.

- **Tins/Cans/Foil**
- **Glass**
- **Plastics**

- **Composting**

There are numerous commercial composting companies now available. If you will be in one place for the majority of your shoot, it is very simple to set up a weekly or twice weekly regular collection service. If you will be on the road, plan ahead to find composting companies who will service your locations.

At the very least, composting can be done by the caterers. Talk to your chefs (and kitchen hands) in advance to establish what will work best for their kitchen i.e. table top bins/slim jims/ 660 litre dumpsters near the prep area.

Commercial composting is still fairly new so take the time to communicate your schedule to the contractor so they can plan for times where you may need extra support.

- **Animal by-products**

If by any chance you have any animals or animal products which contain brain, spine, digestive content or which are imported from abroad, you must dispose of them via a registered handler of Category 1 and 2 Material. It sounds far-fetched but it can happen. E.g. Where real, whole animals are used for market/butcher scenes. More info here: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2011/12/01/pb13688-animal-by-products-controls-111130/>

Less common streams

- **WEEE** (Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment) – In the UK producers of electronic equipment are responsible for the collection and disposal of these items. You may be able to return items to your supplier, or there are also schemes in place, funded by electronics producers, providing UK-wide collections. Recycling contractors and most studios will be able to advise you on your local options. Computer Aid will also take end of life PCs and Laptops for a good cause.
- **Ink and toner** – Again manufacturers will usually have a take-back scheme in place but are often particular about receiving only their own brand which is impractical with an office collection point. Some studios already have a collection point, such as Shepperton (stores), otherwise there are various companies online offering a free collection service. Computer Aid (www.computeraid.org) will provide your recycling boxes and a collection service with all profits going to charity.
- **Batteries** – It is strongly advisable to use rechargeable batteries which will save you a huge amount of waste (and money) in the first instance. If you do have single use batteries to dispose of, there are take-back schemes available, funded by battery manufacturers. A great resource for this is www.batteryback.org. (More info at Julie's Bicycle's Better Batteries page www.betterbatteries.info).
- **Film ends** – You should make sure that short ends are used up and that the minimum amount of film is wasted, if still shooting on film. The film ends you do produce should be stored up and then sent to a specialist reclaimer as they contain the precious metal silver.

(http://www.remondis.co.uk/en/ruk/spektrum_4545/stoffe_dienstleistun_4545/fotolabore_4545/) or www.bettsevirometal.com

- **Wood** – If you are able to produce such quantities of wood that you can have a single stream skip of wood, it is usually worth more or even better, may be able to go straight on to be reused.
- **Metal** – There are various companies who will provide a metal skip and will actually give a rebate to your production depending on the market value. This can prove very rewarding.
- **Paint** – Re-paint are an organisation who will collect excess paint and put it to great use in community projects. Equally you can donate paints to local charity organisations.
- **Lighting gels** – As you will know, lighting gels are expensive and are often used and replaced before they are spent. These are a very valuable resource for film schools, even the off-cuts.
- **Hazardous Materials** – See the Hazardous Materials section for more information. If anything is marked as Hazardous it must be disposed of responsibly. This will usually involve paying for a specialist collection so it is within your interest to use the minimum possible toxic and hazardous substances. Most waste contractors will be able to do this or advise you.
- **Fluorescent tubes** – Tubes which are unused and in good condition, (if not being kept for future use) should be donated to film schools or theatres etc. Broken fluorescent tubes must be disposed of as hazardous waste.
- **Green/garden waste** – This can go in with your composting. For large amounts and soils ask your waste contractor to refer you to a specialist. Plants or trees used for set decorating can be donated to nurseries, or possibly to charities.
- **Hardcore/concrete** – These substances are used to ‘cap’ landfill sites and so can be in demand. Make sure that your waste contractor has a designated brick, hardcore and rubble stream. (www.hawesrecycling.co.uk).
- **Polystyrene** – You should avoid polystyrene like the plague as it does not break down in the ground (it will literally last thousands of years). If you accidentally receive a package which happens to be packed with polystyrene peanuts however, you can send them to Remarkable, (www.remarkable.co.uk/new-life-closed-loop.php) who will turn them into useful stationery and gifts.
- **Textiles** – Used and surplus costumes can be donated to charities or an organisation such as The Upper Room, which provides food and clothing to a wide range of charities. Torn or unusable clothing, rags or other textile wastes can be collected as a regular service or as a one off upon wrap. A great charity is TRAIID (Textile Recycling to Aid International Development).
- **Food** – Any un-opened, in-date packaged food or un-cooked fruit and vegetables can be donated. The Upper Room and Fareshare are two great organisations who will come and collect. See the Composting and Waste Legislation sections for more information.

