



Miller Recycling
CORPORATION

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10 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE CHOOSING A RECYCLING COMPANY

Choosing a partner to help you recycle your materials can be daunting. It's important you find someone who you trust, and who can maximize your assets so they don't turn into liabilities. There are many stages to the recycling process from collection, baling or compacting, to storage, transportation and marketing. We've put together a checklist of things you should to ask to all potential vendors to ensure you select the recycling vendor that's best for you.

- 1 Are they a broker, or do they own and operate a processing facility?**
Many "recyclers" only broker material and do not have a warehouse or processing facility. This is not the end of the world, but note that it can create problems, and can add costs to the project. It also makes it more challenging to handle materials in "less than trailer load" quantities. Also, in a down market a broker may have difficulty moving your material, where a company that owns a processing facility can warehouse your materials if required.
- 2 Do they have the experience necessary to properly market your materials?**
Strong and profitable markets do not always exist for various recyclable commodities. It is important to contract with a company that is aware of market fluctuations, and has the experience and financial stability to endure these market variations. A reputable vendor can advise you on market trends, and whether or not it makes sense for you to collect certain low grade, low volume items.
- 3 Are you confident that their staff has the experience handling projects and materials of your scope?**
It is not unreasonable to request a list of current clients being serviced by the vendor. Specifically request those whose engagement is similar to yours, along with contact information for client references. Any reputable company will be happy to provide this information.
- 4 Do they own and operate their own fleet of service equipment?**
Relying on outside subcontractors to provide equipment such as trailers, transportation, and recycling equipment adds additional layers of complexity, and often cost to recycling initiatives. If you are communicating with one company representative, and when it's time to ship your materials and a company you are unfamiliar with appears, it can create problems.

At Miller Recycling, we would be happy to speak with you to determine if we would make a good partner. Please reach out to us at any time at **800.783.6766** or email us at **info@millerrecycling.com**.

5 Similarly, is the company familiar with, and can they provide, the proper on site equipment, such as collection containers, balers, or compactors?

Supplying the wrong equipment can create headaches and add to your labor costs with regard to collecting and suitably packaging your recyclable material. When determining what you'll need, ensure the company representative can clearly explain the different types of equipment, and the pros and cons to each. If they are proposing a baler, can the material you generate easily be baled? Due to the physical variations of certain material – not all material should or can be baled. Should the material be removed in containers or gaylord boxes? Would compacting be a better option – and have they explained the difference and cost between these options? You don't want to be surprised at the end of the experience when the labor required to process your material exceeds the material value, or that the bales you are producing cannot be easily handled and stored.

6 Do they have the ability to collect and market various materials?

There are many companies that “specialize” in only one material, such as paper, plastics, or specific types of metals. This is fine if you only generate one grade. A large commercial printer, for example, may generate paper, aluminum litho and possibly film scrap. As a printer, if your recycler only handles paper you will be required to contract with several additional vendors to market the remaining materials. This can add time and cost to your recycling program.

7 Do they service your area?

It can be cost prohibitive to engage with a vendor that is too far from your business location. In addition, you want to be sure that a company representative will be close by in the event you have a question or need assistance.

8 Are they offering fair and competitive pricing?

Just as you should strive to obtain a fair price for your recyclables, you also need to be aware of companies that are offering considerably more than the nearest competitor. Recyclable material prices are fairly consistent based on individual geographic regions. If a company is offering dramatically more than the nearest competitor, you need to find out why, and how. It is not unusual for high prices to be quoted to “get in the door”, only to find them adjusted several months later due to “market conditions” or material quality.

9 Are their promises too good to be true?

Many companies will make promises, such as free equipment offers, high pricing, or even advanced payments in an attempt to land a new client. These types of deals usually do not prove to be in the best interests of the client, even though at the time they seem to be financially lucrative.

10 Do they have a long standing, positive history in the community?

Many “startup” companies jump into the recycling business when markets are strong. These companies can be long gone when markets turn down, (and they will), and they are unable to market your commodities or follow through with previous promises. You want to be sure that the company has familiarity with market cycles, and can withstand the fluctuations of the recycling business.

Choosing a recycling vendor can be a daunting process. It's always advised to get multiple quotes, and meet with a few different organizations prior to making your final decision. When going through the process, pay attention to what the company representatives say and almost more importantly, what they don't say.

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