

Easy Guide to C&D Resource Recovery – METAL

TWO pages of the best tips from the REBRI Guide to C&D Resource Recovery series on metal

The construction and demolition (C&D) industry is one of the largest waste-producing industries in New Zealand. Not only does C&D waste contribute around 17% of waste to landfills in this country but also the majority of waste to our cleanfills.

The C&D industry has taken up the challenge of reducing waste to landfill and cleanfill, and many developers and builders are starting to demand recycling services for materials such as timber, plasterboard, metal and concrete.

The metal recycling industry in New Zealand is well established. This guide is not about how to process or recycle metal but gives tips on providing a collection and transportation service that suits the demands of the building industry. This is relevant both to the recycling operators who provide a collection service and to the transport operators who serve the recycling industry.

Details are found in the REBRI Metal collection and transportation guidelines. The REBRI series has been developed to help the resource recovery industry to provide a top service to the C&D industry, develop new skills, provide quality feedstock for recycling and reuse options and do things in a way that maximises C&D waste diversion from traditional disposal options.

Can't wait for the details? Keep reading for the best tips in the industry.

What type of metals do you find in C&D waste?

Some of the types of metal found in the average waste skip from a construction or demolition job are:

- roofing and cladding
- reinforcing bar
- steel beams
- aluminium window and door frames
- electrical wire
- aluminium soft drink cans and steel food cans
- wire mesh
- plumbing fixtures and pipes
- spouting
- empty paint cans
- heating and air-conditioning ducts
- light fixtures (not including bulbs).

What's involved?

- Provide collection services and/or drop-off arrangements that meet the requirements of the building industry.
- Provide good information to your clients regarding the types of metal you will accept and the charges or payments for transportation.
- Skips are the most common container provided for waste metal, but bins, trailers, trucks or 44-gallon drums may be more suitable to the type and volume of metal depending on the type of job.
- Think outside the square in terms of collection arrangements. Small volumes of metal collected from various sites in one collection run may make as much business sense as collecting one large load from one site. Even charging small amounts for pick up may still save the site manager money for waste disposal.

- Provide drop-off services – talk to site managers about the volumes/weights you can receive and how metal should be transported to your premises.
- Operate hours that are convenient for the building industry.

Some things to think about

- Confirm your markets before you start. Getting it wrong can cost you.
- A common misconception in the building industry is that recyclers are only interested in copper pipes and steel – providing good information on the range of metals you will accept for recycling will boost your business and help the building industry.
- Many site managers are put off recycling because of recycling operators who won't collect small volumes or low weights of metal. Be flexible to meet the needs of these types of building jobs.
- Get endorsement from your peers and give your clients confidence. Consider certification by Enviro-Mark® NZ or ISO14001. An authorised third party will check that you're doing all the right things. If that sounds too serious, check your performance against the REBRI Metal collection and transportation guidelines by using the audit sheet. Providing certification or audit information will help clients to feel more confident about your service and win you more business.

Examples from those out there doing it



Waste Management NZ Ltd provided a segregated waste service to Fletcher Construction during the renovation of student accommodation at St Bede's College, Christchurch.

Waste Management discussed with the site manager the requirements of the waste removal service, including an estimate of the type and amount of scrap metal that would come from the project. A small amount of metal was expected from removal of fittings and from off-cuts from the construction of roofing, spouting, flashings and reinforcing bar. The solution for this project was to provide a half-sized skip for metal collection only.

Waste Management did not charge Fletcher Construction for the collection service, as the resale value of the metal covered the transportation costs. Both Waste Management and Fletcher Construction benefited from the tailored collection service.