



# ENGAGING JANITORIAL STAFF

It takes a team to ensure that a building's trash and recycling program works well for residents and staff. Property managers set up hauling contracts and resident recycling programs, residents use the program, and janitors make sure everything works.

Janitorial staff are the eyes and ears of the recycling program - they see and hear about issues before others might notice. Property managers should foster ongoing, two-way communication with janitorial staff on trash and recycling issues, regularly soliciting their thoughts on what is working well and what needs improvement in the following areas.



## SPACE

Janitors are tasked with keeping trash and recycling areas neat, ensuring bins are not overflowing, boxes are broken down, and that residents are using the system properly. Providing clear instructions to residents through signage and supervision is key to getting everyone participating correctly.

Janitors may also need to transport trash and recycling from collection points to a central location so haulers can access it when they come for pickups.

**TIP:** Janitorial staff can photograph/document shipping labels on boxes that are not broken down so that the property manager can reach out to the tenant to tell them to break down boxes or remove foam transport packaging, etc.

**TIP:** Janitors can empty bagged recyclables to help buildings prevent contamination fees or having their recycling rejected by the hauler.



## IDENTIFYING CONTAMINATION

With support from property managers, janitorial staff can make a big difference in preventing contamination. A daily or weekly checklist can help staff monitor contamination and provide an opportunity for the janitor to notify property managers of issues. For more information, see the sample checklist of trash and recycling responsibilities.

Property managers should inform janitorial staff when recycling loads are rejected or contamination fees are levied by the hauler. That will help janitors know when recycling is too contaminated so that they can take corrective action. In addition, communicating violations or warnings from city inspectors will help staff be aware that the city spotted an issue.



## TRAINING AND SAFETY

Buildings are required to train janitorial staff on the trash and recycling program at least once per year. This training video is a helpful starting point [youtube.com/watch?v=sDvGj6sKxDo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDvGj6sKxDo). Whether onboarding new staff or refreshing current staff, the full training should cover procedures specific to the building, such as:

- What safety equipment to use when handling trash and recyclables, including personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves
- Whether the recycling program is dual or single-stream
- How to reduce contamination (items that cannot be recycled) and answer resident questions such as:
  - Why bags aren't recyclable
  - Where to donate textiles and furniture
  - How to properly dispose of batteries, electronics, and household chemicals
- Pick-up days and times
- Protocols and procedures for missed pick-ups
- What to do with bulky/too large items
- How do deal with illegal dumping



## REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Everyone wants to feel recognized for good work. Property managers should acknowledge janitorial staff who champion recycling and go above and beyond to ensure a safe, clean, and effective program through newsletters, social media, and other channels.

Property managers may also be able to grant monthly or quarterly bonuses if the building can avoid contamination fees and rejected loads from their hauler.

