

## Industry fact sheet

## Timber and furniture industry

### Recycle wood and axe costs

Wood fills just over half the typical waste bin in the furniture and timber manufacturing industry, with paper, cardboard, textiles and plastic taking up the rest of the bin<sup>1</sup>.

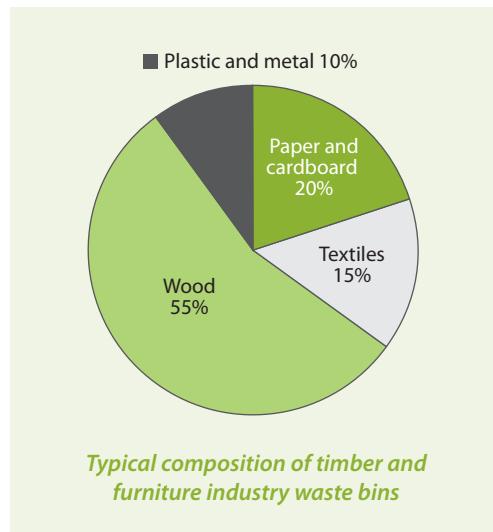
That means around 90 per cent of the contents of each bin could be recycled rather than being removed with rubbish to landfills.

As a timber or furniture manufacturer, you can greatly reduce waste collection charges by putting this material in the right recycling bins instead of sending it off as general waste.

Not only will you be cutting your costs, you will also be helping our environment and reducing greenhouse gas pollution.

### Simple ways to reduce waste and save

Think in terms of the waste hierarchy. How can you avoid, reduce, reuse or recycle?



**Avoid** → **Do we need it?**

**Reduce** → **Do we need so much?**

**Reuse** → **Can we use it again?**

**Recycle** → **Can someone else use it or turn it into other products?**



#### AVOID

Avoid using raw materials that produce a lot of waste as well as products with excessive packaging.

Review how you handle goods. Train staff to avoid wasting raw materials by preventing damage to timber or manufactured board.

Maintain equipment regularly so that it is working efficiently. For example maintain spray booth filters to enable extraction fans to work longer, reduce fire hazards and prevent dust. Vacuum, sweep and wipe surfaces to get rid of dust build up around blades during cutting to reduce wear. Use water-based paints and adhesives instead of solvent-based ones.



#### REDUCE

Look for ways to get the most out of timber and manufactured board. Reduce off-cuts and save raw materials costs. Ask suppliers for standardised or cut-to-size pieces.

Save money by matching your bin collection timetable to your business needs. If your bins are not normally full after a week, then consider moving to a fortnightly collection cycle.

Here are some other ways to reduce waste:

- If the volume of a particular recyclable is still not large enough to warrant a dedicated bin, consider sharing a recycling bin with a neighbouring business.

- Look at how you manage dust. Collect dust close to source. Connect cutting and sanding machines to dust extractors. Collect dust from dust extractors in strong plastic bags that can be sealed before they are moved.
- Separate timber dust and shavings from manufactured board dust and shavings. If possible find someone who can use the dust and shavings instead of paying to dispose of it.

## REUSE

Work with your suppliers to reduce waste and reuse items. Ask suppliers to deliver goods in reusable containers and if possible return unused solvents and solvent containers to them. If your supplier will not collect them, find others who will. What is more, you might even get cash back.

Reuse timber where you can, to help avoid the environmental impacts of using new timber.

## RECYCLE

Find out what you can recycle. It's cheaper to have recycling bins picked up than sending waste bins to landfill.

Go to **BusinessRecycling.com.au** to find a local recycling service provider. This website allows you to search for service providers in your area that collect specific materials for recycling or that allow you to drop them off.

Here are some other ways to improve recycling:

- Send clean sawdust, shavings and chips to commercial composting facilities or pet shops.
- Buy timber with sound environmental credentials. Ask suppliers to provide you with timber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Use your environmental credentials to differentiate your product in the market and boost your company's reputation.
- Design products for easy reuse or future recycling and use this as a selling point.
- When possible, use recycled wood to manufacture your own products.

## TIPS FOR TIMBER RECYCLING

Ensure your employees understand which wood or timber products can or cannot be recycled. Painted, coated and preservative treated products may contain toxic components, so they are often sent to landfill.

Follow government guidelines for disposal of timber waste treated with Copper Chrome Arsenate (CCA). Waste chipboard, laminated bench tops, treated timber and lacquered or painted timber can contain toxic chemicals. Do not burn CCA treated timber waste and do not use this treated timber as mulch or soil additive.

Non-chemically treated wood can generally be recycled. But there are materials that can be attached to otherwise useful timber which limits its reuse value. These materials can include nails or metal connectors, plaster board, plastic wrapping, oils , dirt or sand, laminates (including some plywoods), edge bandings, glue and resins.

Removing some of these contaminants will add value and provide an opportunity for the reuse of this wood.

To prevent storm water pollution, sweep driveways and work areas. Get rid of litter and other contaminants. Put litter in bins and provide containers for cigarette butts. Store waste bins, chemicals and dust bags away from storm water drains.

Publicise your waste reduction goals and achievements. Your sustainable waste policies could help attract or retain customers as well as benefitting your budget and the environment.

### For further information

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