

MINNESOTA WASTE WISE  
FACT SHEET  
**CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION DEBRIS**

### RESOURCES AND FACTS

- Construction and demolition debris can make up 15-40% of landfill space, depending on region
- Waste disposal from construction sites can account for 2-5% of construction budgets (Hawken et al, 1999)

### What buildings are good candidates for deconstruction?

- Wood-framed buildings – or other unique wood used in construction
- Specialty materials – hardwood flooring, unique doors, multi-paned windows plumbing and electrical fixtures
- High-quality brick
- Structurally sound – prevents decay and rotting of materials (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 2000)

### Design your building project to prevent waste and utilize the latest technology in building materials

- Smaller is better: With high quality, durable materials resource use can be minimized if there is less to build. Smaller surface areas also reduce energy use
- Design for adaptability – especially true for commercial buildings, buildings that are better suited to adapt to changes will be more useful for longer periods of time

### OVERVIEW

Construction & demolition (C & D) debris is generated during the construction, remodeling, deconstruction or demolition of buildings, roads, and bridges. Businesses can both reduce waste and improve their bottom line in numerous ways with C&D debris. These goals can be accomplished **by utilizing salvaged materials from the demolition of other buildings during construction or reducing disposal costs by donating or offering salvaged materials for sale.** This will also reduce the need for virgin materials, which can lower overall environmental impact and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### REDUCING/REUSING/RECYCLING C&D WASTE

#### Construction- find creative solutions to reduce waste on site

- Plan ahead. Look at ways to prevent waste when designing the project
- Some material can be recycled into the same product for reuse
- Train construction personnel to separate recyclable material as it is generated. This will make recycling easier when the job is complete

#### Building demolition or deconstruction- minimize what is considered waste

- Work with your contractor to keep reusable materials out of the waste stream. By either reselling or donating salvageable materials to non-profit vendors, not only are waste disposal costs avoided, donations to a non-profit are often tax deductible. Check with the ReUse Center or your local Habitat for Humanity to find acceptable items for donation
  - The ReUse Center (Minneapolis)  
<http://www.thereusecenter.com>
  - Habitat for Humanity – ReStore (various MN locations)  
[http://www.habitat.org/cd/env/restore\\_detail.aspx?place=56](http://www.habitat.org/cd/env/restore_detail.aspx?place=56)
- If donating is not an option, advertise quantities of a quality material as a first come free takeaway which will eliminate disposal costs. Posts on Craigslist, the Twin Cities Free Market or Minnesota Materials Exchange are all good places to start
  - Twin Cities Free Market: [www.twincitiesfreemarket.org](http://www.twincitiesfreemarket.org)
  - Minnesota Materials Exchange: [www.mnexchange.org](http://www.mnexchange.org)
- Sorting through the waste stream for recyclable materials can also help minimize disposal costs. Train construction personnel to separate material on-site as work progresses. This will make recycling easier when the job is complete. Select a refuse hauler that will recycle the most possible.
- Deconstruction can provide valuable job training for new employees. The act of taking something apart can help employees understand the way things work and are put together
- **Hazardous materials** - If hazardous materials (i.e. asbestos, lead paint, underground fuel oil tanks) are suspected a professional should be consulted

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