

# Recycling & Waste Reduction Practices on Home Renovation Job Sites

Survey Results, May 2009



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# Survey Design

- The survey was distributed to Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association (GVHBA) members in-person (4-page paper survey) at the monthly Renovation Council March meeting and online (SurveyMonkey.com).
- The survey included a mix of open-ended and multiple choice questions.
- The survey resulted in a sample size of 29 responses.



# Survey Findings

The survey confirmed that the top three barriers that hinder diversion of waste from renovation projects include:

## **Lack of information and education:**

- 76% agreed that trades are not willing to participate or are not buying in to recycling on the job site
- 59% agreed that they did not know what can/can't be recycled in the region

## **Lack of appropriate hauling services:**

- 76% agreed that there is a lack of hauling services available to collect recyclables from smaller construction sites

## **Space constraints on the job site:**

- 79% agreed that there is no space on site to sort and place recyclables



These findings confirmed the need for a waste collection system and hauling services tailored to cater to the needs of the sector.

Metro Vancouver has decided to work with local service providers to design and test a new waste collection system that would facilitate sorting of recyclables and waste on residential renovation projects. This system will be tested on an actual renovation project. The survey findings will also guide the design of targeted educational and information materials.



# Survey Overview

- A high number (62%) of companies indicated they have a waste reduction, recycling, or environmental policy.
- An overwhelming 83% answered “yes” when asked if they recycle on the job site.
- The majority of respondents (61%) said they receive their industry related environmental/ recycling info through their Industry Association (GVHBA).
- Most respondents (76%) said information for recycling on construction sites is NOT readily available.



# Industry Norms & Demographics

<b>Average years in business</b>	15.8 years
<b>Average number of employees in company</b>	11.4 full-time 3.8 part-time
<b>Gross annual revenue</b>	28% - \$500,000–\$1,000,000 17% - \$1,000,000–\$2,000,000 14% - \$4,000,000 or more



# Industry Norms & Demographics

Do other renovation contractors you know recycle regularly?	38% said yes <b>45% said no</b> 3% said "don't know"
Is recycling an accepted industry practice among renovators?	<b>48% said yes</b> 41% said no 3% said "don't know"
Do clients look at recycling favourably i.e. they might pick your company over another because of its greener?	<b>59% said yes</b> 38% said no



# Industry Norms & Demographics

- Respondents were overwhelmingly concerned about their impact on the environment. 83% answered “I am concerned about the environment” as a motivation to reduce waste and recycle.
- Respondents also highly ranked “Waste reduction and recycling is a priority for me personally” (76% ).
- Respondents also said they were motivated because “Waste reduction and recycling helps to foster good customer, public and employee relations” (72%).



# Environmental/Recycling Knowledge & Education

## Knowledge of Banned Materials in Metro Vancouver

### Respondent Top 3 Answers Given:

- Drywall (45%)
- Paint (41%)
- Asbestos (31%)
- No answer (21%)

### Items Not Mentioned in Respondents Top 3 (from Metro Vancouver's List of Banned Materials):

- Newsprint
- Corrugated Cardboard
- Office paper
- Lead-acid (car) batteries
- Electronic waste (computers, TVs, cell phones)
- Solvents, flammable liquids, gasoline, pesticides and other household hazardous waste
- Tires, oil, oil filters
- Green waste (yard trimmings)
- Blue Box recyclables (type 1,2,4 & 5 plastics, metal & glass food containers)
- Beverage containers (all except milk cartons)
- Medications/ pharmaceuticals



# Environmental/Recycling Knowledge & Education

- The majority (59%) said they receive industry-related environmental/recycling information from their Industry Association (GVHBA). This was followed by their waste hauler (34%) and industry publications (31%).
- Respondents preferred to receive information regarding waste reduction and recycling via email (69%) and website (41%).



# Current Practices

## Those responsible for sorting recyclables on the job site

Site superintendent	45%
Site staff	38%
Trade contractors	17%
Waste hauler	17%
Other	3%

## Type of waste collection containers used on site

Waste piles	48%
Roll-off bin	52%
Trailer	48%
Other	14%



# Current Practices: Materials Recycled On Site

## Materials usually\* recycled on site

- Gypsum 72%
- Leftover paints and solvents 62%
- Cardboard 62%
- Only 34% usually recycle wood

## Materials rarely\*\* recycled on site

Plastic film 59%

Beverage containers 34%



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\* The categories “usually” and “always” were collapsed into one

\*\* The categories “rarely” and “never” were collapsed into one

# Current Practices: Waste Hauling

- When asked if they do their own hauling, the majority of respondents answered “sometimes” (34%) and “usually” (34%).
- The top 3 facilities respondents used were: Vancouver Transfer Station (55%); North Shore (52%); and Coquitlam (45%).
- The primary factor in determining who they hired to haul their waste was “Cost” (62%), followed by “Long-term relationship” (52%).



# Current Practices: Reuse

- 38% said homeowners rarely require/request recycling on projects (34% said "sometimes").
- 41% said they sometimes salvage/reuse/donate used building materials from projects. 21% said usually; 17% said rarely; 7% said never.
- Of those who do salvage/reuse/donate used building materials from projects, 66% said they donate or sell materials to building materials reuse stores. 59% reuse materials on site.



# Challenges to Recycling on the Job Site

- 76% agreed\* that trades are not willing to participate or are not buying in to recycling on the job site.
- 59% agreed that they did not know what can/can't be recycled in the region.
- 79% agreed that there is no space on site to sort and place recyclables.
- 76% agreed that there is a lack of hauling services available to collect recyclables from smaller construction sites.

*\* The categories, “moderately” “strongly” and “slightly” were collapsed into one*



# Challenges: I would recycle if...

- 79% agreed\* with “More clients are asking for it”.
- 79% agreed with “More convenient and easy to use hauling services were available”.
- 97% agreed with “More drop-off facilities for recyclables are available across the region”.
- 62% agreed with “Materials such as wood are banned from disposal”.
- 42% disagreed they would recycle more if “I have to pay more for waste disposal”.

