

Proper Recycling & Waste Management

Hiring a Hauler

A Guide to Doing it right in Lawrence and Mercer Counties

Do you have a garage that needs cleaned out? Are you looking for someone to pickup your trash and recyclables on a regular schedule? Doing a construction job? What about that old couch that is taking up space? You need a hauler!

Recycling and waste haulers offer a variety of services for residents and businesses. This includes recycling, trash collection, dumpster service, roll-off service, bulky item disposal, and even garage/basement cleanouts.

What Should I Look for When Hiring a Hauler?

In Pennsylvania, anyone hauling trash is required to have their name, address, and phone number on both sides of their vehicles. Additionally, waste haulers using vehicles over 17,000 pounds are required to be licensed with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection if they are using Pennsylvania facilities.

What Items may not be Accepted by a Hauler?

Most States, landfills, transfer stations and recycling centers have policies and State laws that dictate what may and may not be accepted. These policies and laws will vary so always follow any guidelines issued by your hauler.

Common unacceptable items include tires, electronics (especially TVs and computer equipment), household hazardous wastes, paint, and liquids. Some companies offer services specifically these materials. Your county recycling coordinator should be able to provide you with a list of options for many hard-to-dispose materials.

What Types of Hauling Service are Available?

There are multiple types of service providers available to suit your needs.

Contract Services

Some municipalities contract with a single hauler to provide all trash disposal and recycling needs. Services offered will vary by the contract and municipality.

Subscription Services

In municipalities without contracts, residents pick the hauler of their choice for their regular trash and recycling services. Haulers must provide curbside recycling to residents and businesses in municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 people. Some haulers will offer curbside recycling to their customers regardless of the population. For additional fees, some haulers may offer recycling or disposal for some of the hard-to-dispose items and bulky waste.

Roll-off Services

Roll-off services include the temporary placement of a roll-off box/dumpster that you fill at your own pace. Roll offs are a good option for those cleaning out their garages, homes, and basements who have significant amounts of material to dispose of. Many haulers offer this service with some specializing in it.

General Hauling

General haulers provide house and garage cleanout service. Unlike roll-off service, the hauler will do the cleanout, not the customer. General haulers are usually small businesses/individual owners who use vehicles such as dump trucks and pickup trucks instead of the large packers and roll-off trucks used by other service providers.

General haulers provide a valuable service to communities because they offer services that traditional hauling businesses don't usually offer.

Construction Contractors

Construction and demolition contractors can generate significant amounts of waste during construction projects. Some contractors use roll-off services and others haul their own material. Be sure to ask where your material will be disposed and don't be surprised if there is a charge for waste disposal. Good business-minded contractors will always include waste disposal costs in their quotes. As an alternative, residents may provide a roll-off for the job on their own.



Recycling/Solid Waste Department



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Illegal Dumping and Disposal

Illegal dumping is a significant problem for our communities. It occurs when waste is dumped illegally along and off our roads, waterways, and other areas. Residents, contractors, and haulers (usually general haulers) all contribute to the illegal dumping problem. It's expensive for communities and a hazard to our health and environment.

Tips and Warning Signs

As with any business, there are always those who break the rules to make money. When this happens in the waste and recycling industry it usually involves a hauler getting paid to do a job and then dumping or burning the material illegally. In Pennsylvania, it is illegal for any business to burn any material. In the case of trash dumped illegally, you could be held responsible and punished by fines, cleanup costs, or both if the debris is traced back to you.

- Always pay with a check and demand an itemized receipt. In the event illegally dumped trash is traced to you, this information will help you defend yourself and have justice served against the person who deserves it. This includes a contractor hauling construction/demolition debris from a job at your home. Construction/ demolition waste is one of the most frequently dumped materials along our roads and waterways.
- Always be skeptical of deals that seem too good to be true. They usually are. Get quotes from several haulers to compare. Most legitimate quotes will be in the same price range.
- Ask questions such as: "What landfill or transfer station do you use?", "Where are you taking the tires or electronics?" and so forth. There are not many disposal and recycling options in our area. Contact our office if you have questions about a specific facility or hauler.
- Look for a name, address, and phone number on the sides of vehicles (this includes pickup and dump trucks) used to haul trash. At the minimum, look for a name and phone number on the truck. Don't hire someone who is not following this simple rule.
- Question haulers or people accepting TVs for free or for a very low price. TVs and electronics are expensive to manage properly.
- Be skeptical of haulers that mix hard-to-dispose (tires, electronics, etc.) with typical household trash.
- Many businesses want to recycle. All local subscription based haulers have access to recycling centers and normally pick up recycling where it is mandated. Write your specs and contracts to include recycling. Don't let the hauler tell your business that it can't recycle. Dictate the terms of the contract to the hauler, not vice versa. Do this within reason. A hauler might not be able to take your electronics, but they can definitely take your plastic bottles, metal cans, and cardboard.
- Contact us via E-mail (recycling@lawrencecounty.pa.gov) or phone (724-658-6925) with questions or for information.



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