



INDEPENDENT RECYCLING SERVICES



My name is Joshua Perez-Cramer, I am the Operator of Independent Recycling Services, a Construction & Demolition facility in East Oakland. We are family owned. I'm the second oldest, my older brother would help with the first business, a Collision repair center. Our founder my pops remembers putting a recycling program in the body shop because it generated a lot of cardboard and plastics that were necessary but single use and would generate a lot of metal so we recycled it to reduce our dump fees. My dad has a class C and was a hauler and truck driver and would also haul Hazardous waste. Unlike a transfer station where they take everything, our yard strictly takes Construction & Demolition material. We take all sorts of C/D Material including Mixed C&D, Metals, roofing, Woods, Pallets & lumber, sheetrock, concrete, cardboard, plastic, papers. We do not accept any green waste or hazardous waste or non C & D Material.



In some cases, we encounter what the LEA calls “incidental Green waste”

- Tearing down a fence and there’s some shrubs and brushes.
- Doing a roofing job and they tear down the roof and gutters and encounter some brushes, that would be okay.
- However, there are several green waste bans in effect so I would have to transfer it to a Green waste facility, Or do the unfavorable and try to hide it and mix it in. That would be an ethical issue for me and would cause environmental problems.
- We accept materials from hauling companies, contractors, as well as the general public (as long as its C&D) and measures the weight of the material via certified scale upon entrance of the facility.

- The Scale is an Avery Weightronix w a capacity of 160,000 pounds. We have a weighmaster license which is issued by the department of Food & agriculture and we have 8 Deputy Weighmasters. So the scalemaster cant just be any cashier, they have to be a licensed Deputy Weighmaster. Independent Recycling is permitted under the Alameda County Dept. of Environmental health Office of Solid Medical Waste Management.



- According to CalRecycle, in a 2014 Disposal Facility Based Characterization of Solid waste in California, Construction & Demolition Materials are estimated to account for between 21.7 to 25.5 percent of the disposed waste stream. As stated, metals, woods, drywall, inerts, papers. Many of these materials are recyclable and many are reusable. Reusables include wood such as lumber and pallets, plywood and particle boards, sheetrock.



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- As far as what we do, as long as you have good systems in place you can make it basic. We have a spotter conduct load checks and doing traffic control, They go to the tipping area and dump the load and go back to the scale to pay for the load. In which, sorters or laborers go and do a positive floor sort. Hand pick the materials and take them to the appropriate bunkers. We also use a skid steer Bobcat to put in metals or woods and machine operator drives them to the appropriate bunkers, Being family owned and the one that's out here. I get to wear several hats. So I'm Human Resources, Accounts receivables and payables, scalemaster, sorter, machine operator. Executive Assistant to the Owner, but im really just my Dads right hand Man, so that only sounds nice.

- . Then our Excavator operator loads out the materials in a highside end dump, or transfer truck to appropriate facilities. And residuals go to the landfill. So we receive the material, customer dumps the material, sorters pick the material and separate, then we ship them off to local markets. Sounds basic right? Yay! Well, there is also a lot of regulations in place and finding the right markets at an affordable price, in the right time frame, and trying to find the right Buyer; if anything. Then there is the fact that most people, drivers, haulers and contractors only want to bring the Construction Waste and keep the "Good stuff" This results in less recoverable material and lower diversion rate.

- And with LEA regulations, I have to move out material every 48 hours, so we cant just keep it and process it and process it and keep mixing and sifting it and recovering more and more material. We have to move it regularly. Also, it cost so much to pay a Truck Driver and pay for the disposal fees, so you wouldn't want to take out more and more trucks, you would want to get more bang for your buck and fill that truck up and get at least 20 tons or close to the legal limit.

- Also, you can have good systems in place, but bad employees and poor management can result in a facility having a lower Diversion rate.
- For example, I've seen cases where employees didn't want to get off a machine and pick the materials, didn't want to start sorting. I'll admit, it can be a lot especially on a hot day.
- There can be employees that don't want to sort so instead they just push the material into the pile with the bobcat and as time goes on and more material comes in, it just gets lost in the pile.
- If an excavator operator didn't want to get off the machine but stay busy for hours so they just keep on mixing the pile and moving material in. In that case we would stop them and redirect them.

- . We have 15 days to process a pile or else it is considered illegally dumped. If we had more time to process the material or at least longer than 48 hours to move residuals, we wouldn't be as rushed and would have more time to maximize diversion, even without all this extra equipment.

- I have had many experiences working with different departments and jurisdictions. There is an old Spanish Dicho, or Proverb “El que Sirve a dos amos los decepciona a ambos” which translates to “ He who serves two masters disappoints both of them” Well that cannot be the case with us, as we have many departments to work with, many to please, many to pay, many to report to, many to submit reports to, etc. I’ve worked with Stopwaste of Alameda County, the LEA, RecycleSmart, The Central Costa Costa Solid Waste Authority, City and County of San Francisco SF Dept. of The Environment, City of San Jose, San Benito County, Santa Clara County, Calrecycle, The fire department, Planning and Zoning, neighbors, public works etc. which all have different rules, regulations and requirements. Our main office and other location is in Hollister, where we store equipment, trucks, tires, cardboard, and our facility is in Oakland. We are on the CalRecycle Tire program, but have two separate Tire Program i.d numbers. Since our facility is in Oakland, we work with the Local Enforcement Agency as far as our operations and facility inspections. We also work with StopWaste of Alameda County, as they are The Authority, and the Local Task Force. So we are a business in California in the city of Oakland. Easy right? Nope. We still have to have City contracts and be approved by public works and have a permit to be able to take in material from a specific facility. Or we may be able to do business in that city but we are not on The Green Halo Program for that city, so we cannot take in that material. It can be a bit confusing for a hauler a contractor but everyone has diff rules, so so be it.
- Right now we are not participating in the San Francisco Recovery program. So we cannot take in material from the City and county of San Francisco legally, otherwise that is considered illegal dumping. However, we are also Haulers, and registered Transporters with San Francisco, so we can haul material from S.F, but we just cannot haul it to ourselves. Also, per city officials, the recycling rate for any facility that processes Mixed C&D is 50% for planning purposes. Builders are required to source separate more. unless a facility is RCI Certified they will remain at that diversion rate. That is not always the case. Sometimes we are higher, sometimes we are lower. Its not fair to someone who had the project approved over a year ago and brought in the material six months ago is now dealing with this nowadays. But somethings gotta give and I understand that its time for a change.



- I think we need Zero waste representatives elected, we need more deconstruction ordinances, we need a statewide landfill bans. Be more strict on landfills for taking C&D Material if a load isn't diverted enough. Just like a Mandatory recycling law, we need mandatory recycling education. Or how I think its Swana or Zero waste USA, have a course that's mandatory for C&D Operators, transfer station operators. That way they will at least have basic recycling education, wont be able to play dumb if they break any rules, and will know the harm that goes to sending more material to the landfill. They should have mandatory courses for haulers and contractors. I've seen Haulers bringing me C&D Material, but then their business debit said such&such landscaping, so I wondered if they had the appropriate permits. I've seen good ones where they brought green waste and I told them I can only do C&D, and they were honest and told me they only had a permit for green. Most people would like to go to the landfill if they can, and would not care about the harm if theyre getting a cheaper rate. So most only go to a place like mine or Davis because of the Mandatory recycling Law, so we need to continue the pressure and momentum and require more source separation and deconstruction.

- . I had a time where a contractor to bring 3 loads of source separated sheetrock at a way lower rate. Then they just brought it all mixed, said it was easier. We recovered most of it, but once it was mixed with painted sheetrock, especially if its broken up so much, so demolished, its a lot harder to spot out and separate the clean sheetrock. At least if it was deconstructed and source separated, it could've been 50% demo/painted sheetrock, 30% clean sheetrock, and 20%wood, that could have worked, and source separated it could be taken to the wood bunker, then they drive and take it to the clean sheetrock bin, then the rest to the pile. At least if it was deconstructed to a point, they could bring it in as Mixed C&D and it would be a lot easier spot out and pick. Big boards of sheetrock, of wallboard is easier to separate from the big boards that are painted. So if we had more education and policies requiring deconstruction and source separation, diversion can be maximized. If we did more community outreach for C&d Regulations and deconstruction, maybe at more construction events and farmers markets and home shows and festivals. We should have more recycling billboards set up. We need a SWEET for C&D regulations and deconstruction, and a DPIE SOMETHING SIMILAR. That's where 3rd party verification comes in. We need to level the playing field and put facilities up for everyone to see so one knows where they are going to. One could see others numbers and work to surpass it. It would make city officials lives easier thus making mine easier and government would have more money and resources and time because they wouldn't be chasing diversion reports and putting so much extra work.