

# **SecurPLACE™**

## Waste Not Want Not

Much like dealing with graffiti, proper waste management goes to the quality of life, desirability of the residence, and the appearance of the premises. But can you control your tenants waste disposal? To a great extent you can. Here is how (and why) you should manage the process of waste management.

Choosing your waste removal firm is usually a cost-based decision. But the way you choose to portray life at your property should influence that decision. You already know that just as lighting and landscape do, the look of your waste removal area speaks volumes about living conditions and the management philosophy at your property. It helps convey to current and future residents that you care about them and want a pleasant and safe environment for them to enjoy.

Overstuffed trash dumpsters, debris thrown alongside trash areas, broken glass and old mattresses sticking from a dumpster tell a lot about a property. Chemicals dripping from a dumpster onto your driveway not only look unattractive, but they may bring environmental responsibilities that endure.

Do full trash dumpsters accumulate more frequently than they are removed? Are there not enough bins? Is the nature of your residents' trash such that the volume is too high or the quantity and size of trash inappropriate to the size of containers? Are you seeing more solid waste, more food waste, more household refuse (*junk?*) These may be signs that your waste removal frequency is out of line with your tenant needs to remove trash from their homes.

If dumpsters fill to overflowing before trash is removed, you may not have enough dumpsters on your premises to reflect your tenant capacity. Perhaps your removal schedule is spaced too far apart. Make sure that removal cycles reflect the needs at your facilities. Be certain also to monitor your waste removal cycle to ensure that partially full bins are not being picked up too soon either. You will be bearing unnecessary costs to have trash picked up more often than needed. Smart scheduling of waste removal is not a "general contract" application. Cost effective, tenant friendly removal schedules may be one case where a "one size fits all" approach doesn't apply. Consider also scheduling one day per year for tenants to dispose of large rubbish or household items. It tells the tenants that you care. Equally as important, it keeps unwanted oversized items from sitting in your drive or in the waste bin area. Coordinate such a pickup with your waste removal contractor.

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Are your managers reporting signs of illegal dumping at their bins? ... On the property? ... Automobile oils? ... Fuels? Be sure that your signage reflects your rules. Repost your rules if necessary. Have your site manager remind your tenants of the rules – especially relative to hazardous waste or harmful materials (sharp edged cans, broken glass, fuels, pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers, industrial cleansers and solvents.)

If you see illegal dumping or contamination from hazardous materials, report it promptly to the proper authorities. If illegal dumping persists, consider a professional surveillance to identify the abuser, seek monetary compensation and possibly court enforced clean-up. Begin your clean-up processes immediately. Sickness, illness or serious property clean up costs may arise otherwise. Ask your tenants to be your eyes and ears to help identify and report illegal dumping. Chances are they do not care for the look and risk posed by contaminants at their residency either.

Maintain the dumpster fence or wall enclosures in good repair and keep the trash area swept, as necessary to remove clutter. When shoveling and snow plowing, remember to clear paths to the bins in winter and plow snow away from dumpster areas so residents and removal trucks have appropriate access. Since residents will likely be carrying trash bags, be certain that walks and pavement are ice free. Plow snow away from enclosures, their gates and the fence lines surrounding waste bins.



Clean, neat and tenant friendly -your property will look much more attractive to existing and prospective tenants when the dumpster area is regularly maintained in a clean state.