



**South Carolina**  
Department of Commerce

Just right for recycling.

## How to Recycle Biomass/Wood for Manufacturers (or Large Companies)

South Carolina's forestry industry is a major economic contributor to the state, forestry byproducts and residuals add incremental revenues to landowners and forest products. In addition, the state has made a name for itself in the biomass industry. What previously was a small biomass presence has become a thriving industry, providing power for tens of thousands of South Carolina homes and businesses.

### Materials Accepted<sup>1</sup>

- ◇ Pallets (including broken)
- ◇ Wood shipping containers or boxes
- ◇ Wood shavings, chips, or sawdust
- ◇ Lumber/Timber, green waste, softwood, hardwood, and blockboard.

**Please note: This is a general list for this commodity. For a more detailed look, please contact your recycler to confirm what they are able to accept.**

### How to Recycling Biomass/Wood: Questions a Recycling Company May Ask

- ◇ What type of wood do you have?
  - Examples – Softwood, Hardwood, Blockboard, Plywood, Orientated Strand Board (*OBS*), Chipboard, Medium Density Fiberboard (*MDF*), and Hardboard
- ◇ Do you have more than one type of wood in your facility? If so, what types?
  - How to find this information: Facility Engineer or the Material Safety Data Sheet (*MSDS*) for the material
- ◇ What's your monthly volume by type?
- ◇ Can your business keep different kinds of wood separated?
- ◇ Does your business have space to store the material?
- ◇ How is the material contained? (*ex: loose, bailed, etc.*)

**Pictures and/or samples of the material (s) are always helpful, and will likely be requested.**

## How to Recycle Properly

- ◇ Wood should be separated from other materials and stored where it won't be contaminated.
- ◇ Wood with chemicals or treatments must be separated and carefully evaluated for possible recycling use.
- ◇ To get payment for recycled pallets or wood, the handling should show process control to avoid contamination.



### What is Contamination?

- ◇ The smallest amount of contamination can cause expensive repairs or extensive shutdowns of high value equipment downstream, or large fines by a user, and must be avoided.
- ◇ Contamination by chemicals or foreign materials such as large, stray rock, or metal pieces is a major concern for any downstream use. Even a small amount of paint on wood is enough contamination that it may prohibit many end uses.
- ◇ Materials May Not Accepted: Chipboard, Hardboard (*HDF – High-density fiberboard*), Medium Density Fiberboard (*MDF*), Orientated Strand Board (*OSB*), and plywood.

<sup>1</sup>Nottinghamshire County Council (n.d) [WRAP Wood Recycling Guide](#)



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#### Recent Innovations in this Commodity

- ◇ There are new plant-based shipping materials being developed that travel with the wood. Polymer-based foams are being replaced by plant-based, such that the material can be recycled with paper.

#### End Products

- ◇ Wood waste can be used in mulching and biomass applications.
- ◇ Animal Bedding
- ◇ Reclaimed wood: table, chair, decorative, headboard, picture frames, etc.
- ◇ Pallets can be upcycled by disassembling and cut/resurface into usable boards, or cut into shapes for resale. A quick internet search for wood sign blanks shows a whole cottage industry based on pallet wood. In general, wood is recycled in large volumes to mulch or wood fuel for electricity production and/or heat for an industrial process such as in a paper mill.



#### Additional Resources

- ◇ [Biomass Power Association](#)
- ◇ [SC Biomass Council](#)
- ◇ [Smart Business Recycling Program](#) – If you recycle, make sure to report it!
- ◇ [Recycling in SC](#)



For more details, please visit the [SC Recycling Markets Directory](#) or contact us at [recycling@sccommerce.com](mailto:recycling@sccommerce.com).



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