

Nashville's Long-term Zero Waste Master Plan Waste Characterization Process Summary

Metro's Solid Waste Master Plan contractor CDM Smith is conducting a waste characterization study of Nashville's waste and recycling to see what we are landfilling and recycling. A waste characterization looks at random samples of material going in to a waste transfer station, landfill or recycling facility to determine the composition of a city's waste stream. Metro Government will use Information gathered from the waste and recycling characterization to make decisions on how best to approach our zero waste goal.

Below is a brief description of the process with photos of the CMD Smith Team at the Republic Transfer Station. Similar processes are being followed at the Waste Management transfer station and all the recycling facilities in Davidson County.

Step 1 – Take a random sample of material from an incoming truck. The sample is photographed with tracking information that will let the team know where the waste came from in Davidson County and if it was a residential or commercial route.



Step 2 – The team places the waste on a sorting table and sorts the material into categories.



Metro Nashville Waste Characterization Categories

Material Group		Material Group	
PAPER	1 Newsprint	ORGANICS	29 Yard Waste - Compostable; leaves, grass, branches <0.5"
	2 High Grade Office Paper		30 Yard Waste - Woody; branch >0.5"
	3 Magazines/Catalogs		31 Food Scraps
	4 Uncoated OCC		32 Bottom Fines and Dirt
	5 Kraft		33 Diapers
	6 Boxboard		34 Other Organic
	7 Mixed Paper - Recyclable		35 Aluminum Beverage Containers
	8 Compostable Paper and 'other' paper		36 Other Aluminum
	9 Milk and Juice cartons/boxes, coated		37 Ferrous containers (bi-metal cans)
PLASTICS	10 #1 PET Bottles/Jars	METALS	38 Aerosol cans
	11 #1 Other PET Containers & Packaging		39 Other Ferrous
	12 #2 HDPE Bottles/Jars - Clear		40 Other Non-Ferrous
	13 #2 HDPE Bottles/ Jars - Color		41 Other Metal
	14 #2 Other HDPE Containers & Packaging		42 Carpet and carpet padding
	15 #6 Expanded Polystyrene Packaging (EPS)	43 Clothing and other textiles	
	16 #3-#7 Other - All	C&D	44 Construction and Demolition materials
	17 Other Rigid Plastic Products	MISC INORGANICS	45 Televisions
	18 Grocery & Merchandise Bags		46 Computer Monitors
	19 Trash Bags		47 Computer Equipment/ Peripherals
	20 Commercial & Industrial Film		48 Electronic Equipment
	21 Other Film		49 Household bulky items, batteries, tires, fluorescents, other misc. organics
	22 Remainder/ Composite Plastic	HHW	50 Household Hazardous Waste materials
GLASS	23 Glass Bottles and Jars - clear		
	24 Glass Bottles and Jars - brown		
	25 Glass Bottles and Jars - green		
	26 Glass Bottles and Jars - blue		
	27 Flat Glass		
	28 Other Glass		

Step 3 – Sorted items are placed into labeled containers by material type.



Step 4 – After the entire sample has been sorted, the containers are weighed and recorded.



Two different studies will be conducted (summer study and fall study) and all the data compiled into a report.