

South Carolina State House
Columbia, SC



South Carolina State Agencies & Colleges/Universities
RECYCLING & BUYING RECYCLED
Annual Report • Fiscal Year 2025

Prepared for **Gov. Henry McMaster**
and the **Members of the S.C. Legislature**



Prepared by the S.C. Department of Environmental Services
Division of Mining and Solid Waste Management

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Introduction

The S.C. Solid Waste Policy and Management Act of 1991 (Act) – S.C. Laws § 44-96-140 – requires state agencies and state-supported colleges/universities to:

- **Provide recycling programs** for the collection of selected materials including aluminum, cardboard, glass, lead-acid batteries, paper, plastic, tires and used motor oil;
- **Make necessary modifications** to their programs to ensure material is recycled to the maximum extent possible; and
- **Report the type and amount of materials recycled**, as well as all products purchased containing recycled-content material each year to the S.C. Department of Environmental Services (SCDES). The Act [Section 44-96-140 (E)] also sets a goal that at least 25 percent of all product purchases contain recycled-content material.

SCDES is required to submit a report on this information to the Governor and General Assembly by November 1 of each year. This report reflects recycling and buying recycled activities for fiscal year (FY) 2025 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025).

Data for this report is submitted directly from state agencies and colleges/universities as well as from vendors providing recycling

services. Both public and private colleges/universities are included, although only state-supported colleges/universities are required to provide information according to the Act.

In FY25, a total of 57 state agencies, to also include 17 S.C. Department of Transportation locations, reported their recycling efforts. In addition, 18 colleges/universities (both public and private) reported recycling. This year saw a decrease in state agencies and colleges/universities that reported.

As changes evolve to the work environment and daily operations for state agencies and college/university campuses, SCDES would like to commend those agencies and collegiate institutions that maintain their recycling programs and report. Government agencies and colleges/universities continue to lead by demonstrating that recycling is the standard in South Carolina. SCDES offers for training and technical assistance upon request.

The percentage of state purchases that contain recycled material cannot be determined because no statewide system to track those purchases exists. The recycled-content products purchased most frequently by reporting state agencies and colleges/universities were office paper, paper products, and inkjet/toner cartridges.

Note that due to rounding, percentages do not always equal 100.

FY24 & FY25 Comparison for State Agencies

TOTAL FOR FY24		TOTAL FOR FY25	
MATERIAL	TONNAGE	MATERIAL	TONNAGE
Banned Items	192.14	Banned Items	212.35
Commingled Recyclables	119.67	Commingled Recyclables	196.31
Glass (containers & packaging)	7.60	Glass (containers & packaging)	2.25
Metal	1,846.69	Metal	443.16
Organics	0.00	Organics	0.00
Paper	1,057.60	Paper	9,335.72
Plastic	4.78	Plastic	5.66
Miscellaneous Items	304.94	Miscellaneous Items	352.62
TOTAL	3,533.42	TOTAL	10,548.07

FY24 & FY25 Comparison for Colleges & Universities

TOTAL FOR FY24		TOTAL FOR FY25	
MATERIAL	TONNAGE	MATERIAL	TONNAGE
Banned Items	395.54	Banned Items	179.74
Commingled Recyclables	813.56	Commingled Recyclables	863.54
Glass (containers & packaging)	23.16	Glass (containers & packaging)	4.13
Metal	628.84	Metal	336.27
Organics	2,876.91	Organics	3,680.90
Paper	2,228.91	Paper	1,544.83
Plastic	32.28	Plastic	32.36
Miscellaneous Items	1,472.92	Miscellaneous Items	20,735.55
TOTAL	8,472.12	TOTAL	27,377.32

About this report ...

"The State Agencies & Colleges/Universities Recycling & Buying Recycled Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2025" is submitted by SCDES in compliance with the Act – Section § 44-96-140 (C) – and is published by SCDES's Bureau of Land and Waste Management (BLWM). In addition, Act 119 of 2005 mandates that agencies provide all reports to the General Assembly in an electronic format. **This report was published on November 1, 2025.**

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SPECIAL THANKS – SCDES would like to commend those agencies and colleges/universities that maintained their recycling programs and reported. As always, even more so now, SCDES stands-by for training and technical assistance.

State Agencies

State agencies reported recycling **10,548.07 tons** of material – **an increase of about 198 percent** from FY24. The S.C. Department of Corrections' (SCDC) recycling service primarily collects from state agency programs. Materials that saw significant changes in FY25 include:

- **Metal decreased** from FY24 to FY25; and
- **Paper saw an increase** from FY24 to FY25.
- **Six of the eight categories** reflected increases.

CHART 1: Percentage of Recyclables Collected by State Agencies

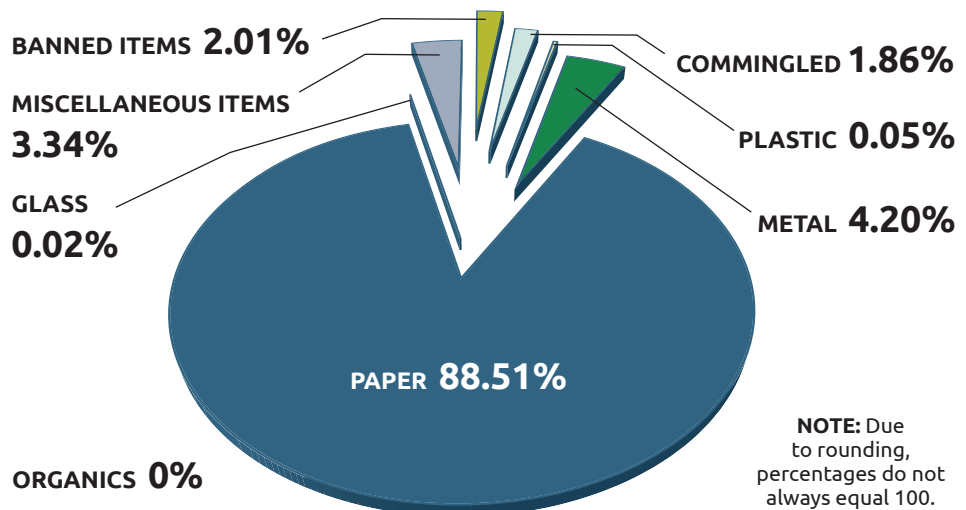


TABLE 1: Commodities Recycled in Tons by State Agencies in FY25

COMMODITIES RECYCLED			AMOUNT	COMMODITIES RECYCLED			AMOUNT
Banned Items	Appliances		0.68	Miscellaneous Items (continued)	Mattresses/Box Springs		0.00
	Electronics		39.51		Paint (oil or latex)		0.14
	Lead acid batteries		15.99		Rechargeable batteries		0.14
	Tires		76.58		Used oil filters		9.56
	Used motor oil		79.59		Wood*		223.80
TOTAL BANNED ITEMS			212.35		Other**		2.44
Commingled Recyclables	May include: cardboard, paper, glass bottles, plastic, aluminum & steel cans		196.31	TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS			352.62
	TOTAL COMMINGLED RECYCLABLES		196.31	Organics	Food waste (composted)		0.00
Glass (containers & packaging)	Brown		0.42		Yard trimmings (composted)		0.00
	Clear		0.25		Yard trimmings (mulched)		0.00
	Green		1.00		Yard trimmings (boiler fuel)		0.00
	Other/mixed glass		0.58	TOTAL ORGANICS			0.00
TOTAL GLASS			2.25	Paper	Beverage cartons (aseptic & gable-top)		0.00
Metal	Aluminum (cans, foil)		104.48		Cardboard		8,133.94
	Ferrous metals		146.48		Magazines		8.34
	Steel cans		64.26		Newspapers and inserts		2.33
	Other/mixed metal		127.94		Office paper		1,021.02
TOTAL METAL			443.16		Paperboard		0.73
Miscellaneous Items	Antifreeze		6.96		Other/mixed paper		169.36
	Carpet		0.36	TOTAL PAPER			9,335.72
	Carpet padding		0.00	Plastic	HDPE		1.57
	(C&D) debris		102.71		LDPE		1.57
	Cooking oil		0.00		PET		0.08
* Wood includes furniture, cabinets and pallets	Fluorescent bulbs		5.25		Other/mixed plastic		2.44
	Inkjet/toner cartridges		1.26	TOTAL PLASTIC			5.66
** Other includes alkaline batteries, non-hazardous sludge and oil absorbents				TOTAL FOR ALL			10,548.07

For more information, visit des.sc.gov/community/sw-recycling-reports.

Colleges & Universities

During FY25, 18 colleges and universities reported recycling of **27,377.32 tons** of material – a significant increase from the previous fiscal year.

Significant changes in FY25 recycling included:

- **Banned items saw a decrease** from FY24 to FY25;
- **Metal saw a decrease** from FY24 to FY25;
- **Miscellaneous items saw an increase** from FY24 to FY25; and
- **Paper items saw a decrease** from FY24 to FY25.
- **Four of the eight categories** reflected increases.

CHART 2: Percentage of Recyclables Collected by Colleges/Universities

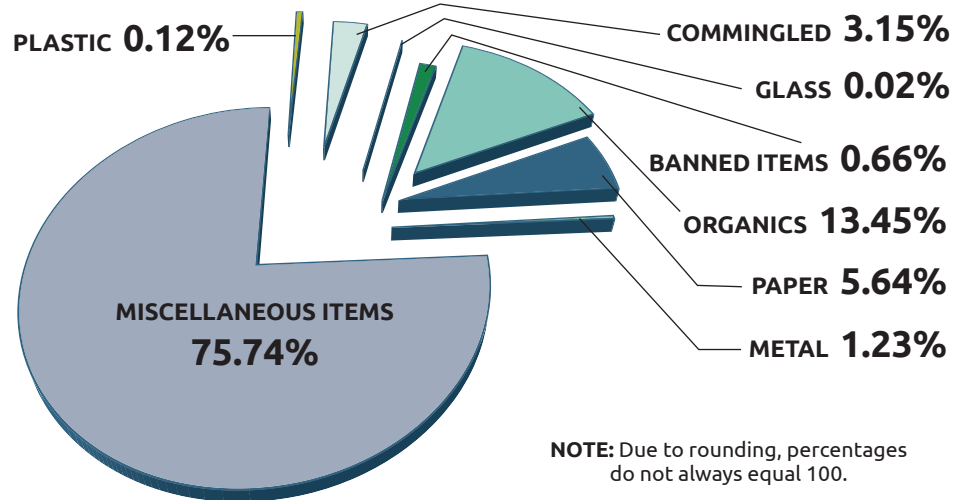


TABLE 2: Commodities Recycled in Tons by State Colleges and Universities in FY25

COMMODITIES RECYCLED			COMMODITIES RECYCLED		
		AMOUNT			AMOUNT
Banned Items	Appliances	0.66	Miscellaneous Items (continued)	Inkjet/toner cartridges	280.44
	Electronics	152.29		Mattresses/Box Springs	2.46
	Lead acid batteries	14.58		Paint (oil or latex)	0.04
	Tires	5.21		Rechargeable batteries	9.03
	Used motor oil	7.00		Used oil filters	0.59
TOTAL BANNED ITEMS		179.74	Miscellaneous Items (continued)	Wood*	101.45
Commingled Recyclables	May include: cardboard, paper, glass bottles, plastic, aluminum & steel cans	863.54		Other**	1.54
			TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS		20,735.55
TOTAL COMMINGLED RECYCLABLES		863.54	Organics	Food waste (composted)	4.00
Glass (containers & packaging)	Brown	0.00		Alternative Daily cover	1,433.54
	Clear	0.00		Yard trimmings (composted)	2,008.91
	Green	0.00		Yard trimmings (mulched)	234.45
	Other/mixed glass	4.13	TOTAL ORGANICS		3,680.90
TOTAL GLASS		4.13	Paper	Cardboard	870.86
Metal	Aluminum (cans, foil)	13.82		Magazines	0.40
	Ferrous metals	229.22		Newspapers and inserts	0.08
	Steel cans	1.55		Office paper	263.62
	Other/mixed metal	91.68		Paperboard	0.00
				Other/mixed paper	409.87
TOTAL METAL		336.27	TOTAL PAPER		1,544.83
Miscellaneous Items	Antifreeze	0.61	Plastic	HDPE	0.41
	Carpet	3.01		LDPE	0.11
	Carpet padding	1.50		PET	0.05
	Clothing/textiles	3.52		Other/mixed plastic	31.79
	(C&D) debris	15,275.91	TOTAL PLASTIC		32.36
	Cooking oil	30.64	TOTAL FOR ALL		27,377.32
	Fluorescent bulbs	5,024.81			

For more information, visit des.sc.gov/community/sw-recycling-reports.

Santee Cooper

The recycling activities of Santee Cooper, a state-owned electric utility, are separated from traditional state agency reporting. This is done due to the significant differences between Santee Cooper's recycling and that of other state agencies.

This separation provides a more realistic picture of the recycling of traditional state agencies.

Santee Cooper recycled **2,416,482.39 tons of material in FY25** – compared to 2,325,412.87 in FY24. Significant increases in FY25 include:

- **Metal increased** from FY24 to FY25;
- **Banned items increased** from FY24 to FY25.



TABLE 3: Commodities Recycled in Tons by Santee Cooper in FY25

COMMODITIES RECYCLED		AMOUNT
Banned Items	Electronics	11.90
	Lead-acid batteries	6.41
	Tires	29.61
	Used motor oil	257.87
	Other banned items	0.00
TOTAL BANNED ITEMS		305.79
Commingled Recyclables	Aluminum cans, office paper, mixed paper	43.60
TOTAL COMMINGLED RECYCLABLES		43.60
Metal	Ferrous metals	3,154.76
	Other/mixed metals	139.34
TOTAL METAL		3,294.10
Miscellaneous Items * Other includes bottom ash, fly ash and pond ash	Mixed wood	185.79
	Fluorescent tubes	0.41
	Rechargeable batteries	1.00
	Used oil filters	3.89
	Other*	0.41
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS		191.50
Construction & Demolition (C&D) Debris	Combustion Ash	2,412,691
TOTAL C&D DEBRIS		2,412,691
TOTAL FOR ALL		2,416,525.99

Recycling Services Offered

SCDC currently collects and processes* recyclables from state agencies, colleges/universities and K-12 schools in the Midlands area. Participants see a significant reduction in the amount of material going to the landfill and may be able to reduce disposal costs. There is a fee for this service, and participating programs need to provide their own recycling containers. For more information, call (803) 896-2364 or 1-800-768-7348.

* While collection of material by SCDC is typically included in arrangements for this service, due to manning issues, please expect some potential delays for pick-up. Dropping off recyclables at the SCDC facility is allowed and free of charge.



Green Government Initiative

The Green Government Initiative (GGI) assists state agencies in meeting their recycling requirements, bringing South Carolina closer to its recycling goals. GGI encourages agencies to lead by example through:

- **Reducing its environmental footprint** (which can also save money);
- **Buying recycled-content products;** and
- **Supporting South Carolina's recycling industry.**

Visit des.sc.gov/recycle or call 1-800-768-7348 to learn more.



RecycleU

RecycleU is a comprehensive SCDES program that helps South Carolina colleges/universities to improve waste reduction, recycling and composting programs on campus. Free, non-regulatory services include:

- **Site visits** to assess waste reduction, reuse, and recycling successes and opportunities;
- **Technical assistance** (e.g., phone/email consultations, research and contacts for markets, service providers, and reuse; and
- **Training and workshops.**

Please visit des.sc.gov/recycleu for more details.



State Agencies Reporting for FY25

- Comptroller General's Office
- Office of the Adjutant General
- Patriots Point Development Authority
- S.C. Administrative Law Court
- S.C. Commission of Higher Education
- S.C. Commission on Indigent Defense
- S.C. Department of Administration
 - Federal and State Surplus Property
- S.C. Department of Consumer Affairs
- S.C. Department of Corrections
- S.C. Department of Education
- S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce
- S.C. Department of Environmental Services – Aiken Office
- S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
- S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles
- S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism
- S.C. Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services
- S.C. Department of Revenue
- S.C. Department of Transportation
 - Darlington Maintenance
 - Darlington
 - Dillon
 - District 1
 - District 3
 - District 6
 - Florence Maintenance
 - Georgetown
 - Horry Maintenance
 - Kershaw Maintenance
 - Marion
 - Marlboro Maintenance
 - Office of Materials and Research
 - Pickens Construction
 - Richland Maintenance
 - Sumter
 - Williamsburg
- SCETV
- S.C. Education Lottery
- S.C. Emergency Management Division
- S.C. Forestry Commission
- S.C. Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission
- S.C. Law Enforcement Division
- S.C. Office of the State Auditor
- S.C. Public Employee Benefit Authority
- S.C. Department of Public Health
 - Aiken County Health Department
 - Chester County Health Department
 - Fairfield County Health Department
 - Lancaster County Health Department
 - Laurens County Health Department
- S.C. School for the Deaf and Blind
- S.C. Sea Grant Consortium
- S.C. Secretary of State
- S.C. State Library
- S.C. Worker's Compensation Commission
- SFAA-Insurance Reserve Fund
- State Ethics Commission

Colleges/Universities Reporting for FY25

- Aiken Technical College
- Clemson University
- Coastal Carolina University
- College of Charleston
- Florence Darlington Technical College
- Francis Marion University
- Furman University
- Horry-Georgetown Technical College
- Medical University of South Carolina
- Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College
- Trident Technical College
- University of South Carolina (USC) – Main Campus
- USC Upstate
- Voorhees University
- Williamsburg Technical College
- Winthrop University
- Wofford College
- York Technical College

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