

Time Warner Center, NYC

Type

Commercial Typology 4: Service Elevator to Shared Compactor Containers

Best Practice Strategies

- 2.01 Determine waste streams and quantities
- 2.02 Plan a route
- 2.03 Design storage space
- 2.04 Plan for collection
- 2.05 Consider staff procedures
- 2.07 Considerations for multi-tenant buildings
- 2.09 Provide equal convenience disposal
- 2.12 Develop awareness and education programs
- 2.15 Provide shared assets and services
- 2.22 Volume reduction equipment

Summary

The Time Warner Center (TWC), designed by Skidmore Owings & Merrill, marks the southwest corner of Central Park with two 44-story towers rising from a 10-story podium. On the lower levels, a retail mall, restaurants, concert hall and large Whole Foods Market together attract over 16 million visitors annually. The towers are shared a 250-room luxury hotel, 190 condominium apartments and offices. To handle the high volumes and diverse streams of waste flowing through the 2.8 million sq ft operation, the loading dock includes storage space and four compactor containers, one each for organic waste; MPG; paper and cardboard and trash.



Above:
Section perspective
of Time Warner Center

Left:
Compactor containers
in loading dock

The compactors feature highly visible, clear signs to ensure building staff separate materials correctly. There is also video monitoring for security purposes, which can also be used to identify the source of contamination in recycling compactors. Such monitoring is critical since 10%–15% contamination can result in an entire organics or recycling compactor going to landfill or incineration.

To best coordinate the removal of waste material from a loading dock receiving 250 deliveries each day, building management has arranged for a single carter to collect all four daily waste streams. Shared compactors are available 24/7 in order to accommodate the different business needs of the building occupants and to minimize the area that must be allocated for waste storage. The building rules lay out requirements for use of the compactors in accordance with the city's recycling laws. For the retail component specifically, lease language requires tenants adhere to these rules to ensure that waste is moved efficiently through service corridors and elevators, and tenant staff properly separate materials.

Challenges

As in most buildings, there is no built-in mechanism for tracking occupant use of compactors. Instead, Related, as managing agent for the building, conducts an annual 7-day, 24 hour audit to create the usage allocation by which the building ownership groups are billed. For retail tenants, monthly waste management fees are estimated based on leased space, type of business and other factors. This system creates little incentive for tenants to reduce or divert waste.



Movement of organic waste via freight elevator

Training occupants to avoid contamination is a challenge in a building with so many businesses and frequent tenant staff turnover.

The organics program is used by Whole Foods Market, the largest food waste generator on site, as well as the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. The building operator aims to bring all 10 TWC restaurants into the program ahead of the city's expanded ban of commercial organics, a process that will require extensive staff training.