



Bar and Restaurant Recycling Case Study: **Laughing Seed**

Recycling since: 1991

Type of facility: restaurant and bar, serving primarily vegetarian food, beer, wine and mixed drinks

Recycles: brown, clear and green glass, office paper, cardboard, cooking oil and plastic buckets

Average cost of service: \$20 per month per can for weekly pick up and \$200 monthly for two 2-cubic yard rolling dumpsters

Interviewed: Jason Sellers, kitchen manager

Location:
40 Wall Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Web:
www.laughingseed.com



When Joan and Joe Eckert started the Laughing Seed Cafe in 1991, the restaurant was a small lunch counter on the lower level of the Asheville YMCA. In June of 1993 they moved to their current location on historic Wall St., becoming one of the first businesses to spearhead Asheville's downtown revitalization.

The restaurant quickly became a favorite of vegetarians and has been the subject of many magazine and news articles by such publications as *Southern Living*, *Vegetarian Times* and *The New York Times*.

Laughing Seed began recycling when it first opened and has been continually improving its program ever since.

"The decision to recycle was a no-brainer," said Kitchen Manager, Jason Sellers. "The only difficulty we've had with the program is in re-training employees who have worked for other establishments that don't recycle. Otherwise the recycling program runs very smoothly."

Laughing Seed's recycling program is spilling over into the employees' home lives – they take home food scraps for their compost bins. However, the restaurant is planning to set up an in-house composting system in the near future.

Laughing Seed recycles all glass, office paper, cardboard, cooking oil and plastic buckets. Laughing Seed is planning to convert its take-out containers to recyclable ones.





A local recycling company is providing services for Laughing Seed. Glass containers are source-separated by color. Corrugated cardboard is collected in wheeled dumpsters.