Businesses in New York City: Avoiding Common Sanitation Violations

The NYC Department of Sanitation keeps our City healthy, safe and clean by collecting, recycling and disposing waste, cleaning streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice. Businesses, however, must hire private carting companies for collection and disposal service. Sanitation's Enforcement Division monitors compliance with the laws governing clean streets – and business owners can avoid the most common fines by following these guidelines.

Hire a private carting service and display the required information.
Contract with a private carter to pick up your commercial garbage and recyclables. Post your carter's sticker and pick-up schedule in your window, and keep a copy of your contract or receipt easily available at your business.

Fine Avoided: $100. NYC Administrative Code §16-116(b).

Prepare for garbage and recycling collection at the correct time.
Keep waste in heavy-duty, securely tied bags or covered bins. Business waste should never be placed in or beside DSNY's corner litter baskets.
Daytime Pick-ups: Leave waste for collection within two hours of the scheduled pick-up.
Nighttime Pick-ups: Leave waste within an hour of closing your business for the evening.
Remove the bins after collection.

Fine Avoided: $100 - $300. NYC AC §16-120(c) and (e).

Clean your sidewalk and gutters.
Be sure to clean your sidewalk area (extending 18 inches into the street). Sanitation's Enforcement Division checks sidewalks and gutters during a regular schedule. Call 311 for enforcement times.

Fine Avoided: $100 - $300. NYC AC §16-118(2).

Clear snow and ice.

Snow and ice on a sidewalk can severely injure passersby – and your customers. After a winter storm, remove snow and ice to create a path that's at least four feet wide (but don't move it into the street), and clear space around fire hydrants, litter baskets and sidewalk corner ramps.

Fine Avoided: $100 - $350. NYC AC §16-123.

Remove tripping hazards and debris.

Storefront areas must be clear, without signs and other things on the sidewalk. In some locations, displaying products within three feet of the building is legal – if the display is lower than five feet high. Call 311 to learn if displays are allowed on a specific street.

Fine Avoided: $100 - $300. NYC AC §16-118(2).

Advertise your business – without creating more litter.

It's illegal to put flyers and business cards on car or truck windows – and to post them on City-owned property, such as lampposts and traffic signs.

Fine Avoided: $75 - $500. NYC AC §§10-117(a); 10-119 – 121; and NYS Vehicle Traffic Law §375(1).

Be sure to recycle.

All businesses in New York City are required to recycle metal, glass, plastic, beverage cartons, paper, cardboard and, with some exceptions, construction waste. Depending upon your type of business, you may be required to recycle other designated materials. To learn more, visit nyc.gov/zerowastebusinesses.

Fine Avoided: $100 - $400. 16 Rules of the City of New York §1-10.

For more information, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/sanitation.

Bill de Blasio Mayor
Kathryn Garcia Commissioner

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