

Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

Q: What types of items can I bring to your facility?

A: We operate as both a recycling center and a solid waste transfer station, so we accept a wide range of materials.

Recyclables: Most recyclable items are accepted at no charge. Some specialty items require a fee because of handling and processing costs, including TVs and monitors, tires, appliances, pallets, clean wood waste, and certain items from businesses. Please call for details.

Solid waste (garbage and construction debris): A \$20 minimum charge applies per load and covers up to 600 pounds of garbage and around 500 pounds of C&D or bulky waste. Loads over those weights are charged at the per-ton rate for the additional weight only—you are not charged for a full ton unless your load reaches that amount.

For a complete list of accepted materials, fees, and special handling requirements, please visit our Services tab.

Q: What do I do when I arrive at your facility? A: If you have materials to dispose of, pull onto the scale first, then come into the office for instructions.

Recycling and Special Materials

Q: Why do TVs and computer monitors cost so much to recycle? A: We charge only part of the cost required to recycle TVs and monitors legally. Proper e-waste recycling is expensive, and we cover a portion of that cost for every unit we accept. If needed, we can also provide documentation showing that your e-waste was recycled legally.

Q: Can someone help me unload my TV or appliance when I bring it? A: We're happy to help when we can, but our insurance policy does not allow staff to unload materials because of liability concerns. Please bring someone with you if you need help unloading.

Q: Where does recycling go after we bring it to you? A: We bale some materials on site and market them to mills in Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Some commingled recyclables are sent to another processor for sorting and baling. All materials that are recyclable are processed for recycling.

Appliance Recycling

Q: Why does the Recycling Center charge a fee for appliances?

A: In Iowa, appliances must be demanufactured by a certified appliance demanufacturer before they can be recycled. This process ensures hazardous materials—such as refrigerants, mercury, oils, and other regulated components—are removed and managed safely and legally.

Because we use a permitted, certified demanufacturer to process appliances, we pay a fee for each item. Our appliance recycling fee simply covers the cost of this required service.

Q: Can I give my appliance to someone who will take it for free?

A: Be cautious. If someone offers to take appliances at no cost, they may not be certified and may not handle hazardous materials legally. Improper disposal can harm the environment and may violate state and federal regulations.

Q: Why is certification important?

A: Certified demanufacturers follow strict environmental requirements to ensure hazardous materials are removed, captured, and disposed of properly. This protects public health, prevents illegal dumping, and ensures compliance with Iowa law.

Q: What risks are there from not recycling an appliance correctly? A: Improper handling of appliances can release hazardous substances that pose real risks to human health and the environment. Refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners contain **refrigerants** that can displace oxygen in enclosed spaces and contribute to respiratory distress if inhaled. Many older appliances include **mercury switches**, and even small amounts of mercury can damage the nervous system, especially in children and pregnant women. **Used oils and lubricants** can contaminate soil and groundwater and expose people to toxins linked to skin irritation, organ damage, and long-term health effects. Proper, legal demanufacturing prevents these hazards by ensuring regulated components are safely removed and managed before recycling begins.

Waste Disposal and Appointments

Q: Do you take construction and demolition debris? A: Yes. We accept C&D waste as long as pieces are 6 feet long or less. Large demolition projects are handled case by case and must go through our facility or be hauled directly to the Carroll County Landfill with prior approval.

Q: Do I need an appointment to bring items to the recycle center or transfer station? A: No appointment is needed for regular waste or recycling. Appointments are required only for hazardous waste, such as paint, cleaners, or pesticides, because a certified HHW operator must be on site to accept those materials. If you arrive without an appointment, the required staff member may not be available.

Q: Do I have to separate my load when I bring items there? A: Some materials, such as tires, appliances, and e-waste, must be unloaded in designated areas. We also encourage you to separate recyclable items whenever possible to help save landfill space. Cardboard, scrap metal, and wood waste that meet recycling requirements should be separated.

Q: Do I have to recycle? A: We strongly encourage everyone to recycle because landfill space is limited and expensive. It also costs money to haul waste to the landfill, which is about 54 miles from our facility. Recycling helps conserve landfill space, reduce hauling needs, and save taxpayer dollars. Recycling is simple, but changing habits can take time.

Landfills and Waste Management

Q: Are landfills bad for the environment?

A: Modern landfills—especially in Iowa—are highly engineered facilities designed to protect public health and the environment. While older, unregulated dumps did create environmental problems, today's landfills operate under strict state and federal regulations. Protective liners keep waste from contacting soil, leachate collection systems capture and manage wastewater, groundwater wells monitor for contamination, gas monitoring helps detect methane, and daily cover controls litter, odors, and pests. Regular inspections and reporting help ensure ongoing compliance. Together, these systems keep waste contained and reduce environmental risk.

Q: Is burning waste a good alternative to sending it to the landfill? A: No. Open burning is dangerous and often illegal. It releases harmful emissions into the air and leaves behind toxic ash that can settle on soil, plants, and water sources. Even waste-to-energy facilities require special permits and are very expensive to operate. The best approach is to reduce, reuse, and recycle whenever possible. While landfills are safe and necessary, recycling and waste reduction are the most effective ways to conserve resources and extend landfill life.

Collection Services

Q: My garbage or recycling was not collected. Why? A: We do not provide collection service, so please contact your city or hauler directly for information.

Q: Do you do collections of large or bulky items? A: No, we do not do any collections. We can give you contact details on companies that do offer collections and Rolloff container rental.