

Waste management

Diverting waste from landfill

Bell has integrated much of its installation and construction functions. This makes us accountable for managing a large part of our network waste ourselves. Outsourcing such functions would allow us to reduce our waste-to-landfill results, but we would not be able to maintain direct control over functions that directly influence customer service and operations.

To minimize the amount of waste we send to landfill, Bell runs several programs to reduce, reuse, recycle or repurpose waste generated to operate our business.

WHY IT MATTERS GRI 103

We generate waste in all aspects of our business operations. Waste reduction is essential because it is part of our engagement to improving on our operational efficiency and it aligns with the values and expectations of our team members.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

We have been running waste sorting, reduction, and recovery programs for over 25 years at Bell. We have established objectives, monitoring processes, and reporting on our waste generating activities.

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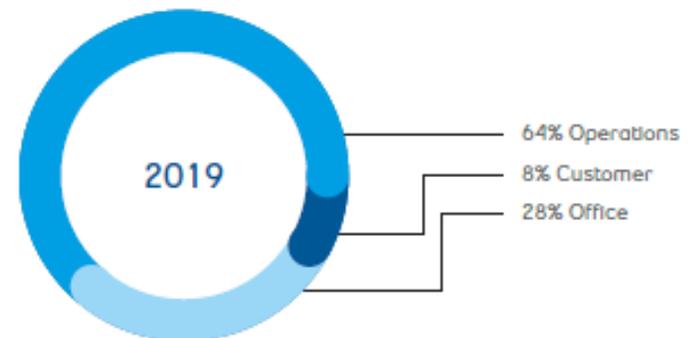
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Overall waste diversion performance

100% of customer-facing and hazardous waste is diverted from landfill every year. In 2019, we diverted 63%¹ of waste from landfill. Waste from operations represented 64% of the total generated at Bell, while offices generated 28%, and the amount associated with customers represented 8%.

Overall waste diverted from landfill (In%)



¹ PwC provided limited assurance over this indicator. See [PwC's assurance statement](#).

Of the operational waste generated, we diverted 54% from landfill. 75% generated in offices was diverted from landfill

We still face a challenge with fibre optic cable, which cannot be recycled or reused at this time. We continue to seek partners to explore ways to valorize this material.

Waste from operations (field, fleet and network)

Bell has been recovering residual materials from operations for more than 3 decades. Telecommunications cable, terminals, utility poles, cable reels, wood pallets, lead-acid batteries and some hazardous materials produced by Field, Fleet, and Network activities are reused and recycled.

Hazardous waste

By law, some residual materials are defined as hazardous, because they may be a threat to human health or the environment. Federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations strictly regulate the management of these hazardous materials, especially when stored, transported or sent for disposal. When these materials are not properly disposed of, contaminants can enter the atmosphere, migrate through the soil or even leach into groundwater.

Bell collects hazardous materials generated by its operations and manages them according to the most rigorous standards. Some materials are recovered and managed centrally, including batteries, small non-spillable batteries, oily containers, contaminated rags and absorbents, aerosols and other pressurized containers, paints, solvents, and glues. The special containers used to collect these hazardous materials are sent to the Hazardous Materials Recovery Centre in Laval, Québec. At this site, we sort and store the materials before returning them to stock, recycling them or sending them for safe disposal.

Recovered waste

2019 (in tonnes)

	2019	% DIVERTED 2019	TREND	2018	% DIVERTED 2018	CHANGE IN DIVERSION RATE (% POINTS)
Operations						
Fleet ²	461	100	➡	508	100	➡ -
Hazardous Materials ³	1,481	100	➡	1,320	100	➡ -
Packaging products ⁴	1,667	70	⬇	1,406	80	⬇ -10
Hardware ⁵	18,089	47	⬇	17,199	56	⬇ -9
Office	9,696	75	⬆	9,419	65	⬆ +11
Customers ⁶	2,709	100	➡	2,479	100	➡ -
Totals	34,103			32,331		

1. PwC provided limited assurance over this indicator. See [PwC's assurance statement](#)

2. Tires, batteries, oil and oil filters and used engine antifreeze

3. Lead-acid batteries, alkaline batteries, fluorescent tubes, oily containers, contaminated rags and absorbents, aerosols and other pressurized containers, paints, solvents, and glues

4. For network equipment, such as wood pallets, cardboard boxes and plastic wrap

5. Telecom materials, such as cables, terminals, utility poles and cable reels

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In some cases, materials generated from Bell's operations are managed locally, such as at work centres, at switching centre, and in Bell stores. In such cases, the local site deals with transportation, recycling and disposal suppliers directly, and ensures these materials are properly managed with the help of the Corporate Responsibility and Environment team. Federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations regulate each step of local hazardous residual material management.

We promote efficient use of potentially dangerous products to minimize our environmental impact. In addition, we reduce our financial impact on the company by procuring cost-effective products. Bell has implemented an evaluation process for new "controlled" products to achieve this. The Corporate Responsibility and Environment team continually gathers information on new products to be introduced into company operations, assessing them based on best operational practices and environmental impact.

Hazardous waste recovery objective

In addition to other waste objectives, we report our progress toward our objective of recovering and diverting to certified recyclers 100% of generated hazardous waste by 2024. Currently, we are diverting 100% of the hazardous materials we recover, including all of our network batteries and residual material from our fleet services. Our indicator illustrates the gap between *generated* and *recovered* hazardous waste.

Last year, we reported having collection gaps in Atlantic Canada and Manitoba for aerosols, fluorescent tubes and paint. In 2019, we closed the gap in Atlantic Canada and we are working on implementing an improved collection program in Manitoba for aerosols, fluorescent tubes, and paint. Although these categories of hazardous waste represent only about 4% of the total quantity of waste that we generate, we believe that they should be recuperated and sent to certified recyclers. We aim to have such collection services operational by 2024.

In 2019, we were able to recover and divert to certified recyclers approximately 99% of all generated hazardous materials.²

² PwC provided limited assurance over this indicator. See [PwC's assurance statement](#).

Objectives of our hazardous waste management program:

- **Minimize the purchase of hazardous materials**
- **Recover all hazardous materials used in Bell's operations**
- **Minimize the landfilling and the incineration of hazardous materials by maximizing reuse, recycling and energy recovery**
- **Ensure the transportation of residual dangerous goods complies with regulations**
- **Maintain all required documentation with regard to the shipping of hazardous materials**
- **Have comprehensive information on the hazardous material inventories at the recovery centre and be able to effectively communicate this information**
- **Ensure the proper management of batteries owned or serviced by Bell and removed from client premises.**
- **Inform customers on proper disposal methods for batteries.**

Waste from administrative buildings

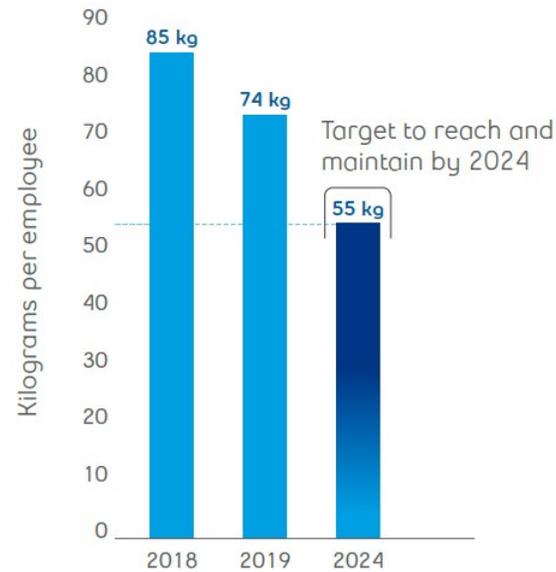
Bell's reuse and recycling programs address residual materials such as electronic waste, toner cartridges, and office furniture. Our waste initiatives also focus on reduction at the source, such as reduced consumption of paper for administrative purposes and packaging.

In 2009, we began our Sort-It program, which encourages employees to sort their waste at central stations by separating paper, cardboard, glass, steel, aluminum, and organic matter. 93 sites now offer this program. We plan to deploy the program to 6 more buildings in 2020. Without action on the part of every team member, reducing waste in our offices would not be possible.

The formulation of our administrative waste objective has the advantage of being tangible for team members. We report our progress on reaching and maintaining 55 kg of waste sent to landfill per employee per year in Bell-owned or -leased administrative buildings by 2024.

In 2019, we sent an average of 74 kg of waste to landfill per employee from administrative buildings.³ This represents a 11 kg decrease per person in our first year (almost 13% less than 2018, and 19 kg from our goal).

Waste from administrative buildings sent to landfill



³ PwC provided limited assurance over this indicator. See [PwC's assurance statement](#).

Environmental stewardship for customer-facing electronic devices

Recovery of mobile devices is difficult to predict and control, as it depends on the rate at which customers upgrade to newer devices. Often, recovery relates to economic activity: during economic downturns, people upgrade their devices and sign up for new plans less frequently. It is also dependent on customer behaviour. A 2017 CWTA/Recycle My Cell [study](#) reports that 62% of Canadians say they have cell phones in their possession that they are not using and are being stored. This has made it difficult for us to predict how many phones we would be able to collect and therefore difficult to set an objective.

Bell recovers mobile phones through two complementary programs: the Bell Trade-in program and the [Bell Blue Box program](#). Launched in 2003 and available at all Bell stores, Virgin Mobile stores and participating The Source locations, the Bell Blue Box program was the first cross-Canada collection program established by any company for re-using and recycling mobile phones. Bell donates the net proceeds from the Bell Blue Box program to a partner in the Bell Let's Talk mental health initiative.

In addition, Bell participates in provincial recycling programs for other electronic products, such as tablets, headsets, TVs, computers, and batteries.

For more details on these programs, visit Bell.ca/recycling.

WHY IT MATTERS GRI 103

Due to the rapid obsolescence of communications devices, particularly mobile phones, they represent an increasing proportion of electronic waste (e-waste). E-waste disposal is a global issue with global attention with respect to the health of those who end up sorting the components.

Our relationship with customers provides an opportunity for effective management of product recycling, reuse, and disposal. Telecommunications companies like Bell, therefore, face increasing regulatory compliance requirements related to this issue. Multiple jurisdictions across Canada have implemented separate and sometimes conflicting e-waste collection and recycling regulations, requiring companies to finance the collection, treatment, recycling, or proper disposal of devices. Our relationship with customers also creates a risk to our reputation if we do not properly address the e-waste issue.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

We have implemented an effective program for managing e-waste recycling, reuse, and disposal, including national take-back programs, drop boxes, and mail-in instructions.

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In 2019, thanks to our customers' participation in our recovery programs, Bell diverted more than 2,709 tonnes of electronics from landfill. This represents an increase of 231 tonnes since last year.

We also support the Centre de formation en entreprise et récupération (CFER), a school that teaches useful skills in recovery and refurbishing to young people without a secondary school education. CFER collects and sorts recyclable materials generated at 16 of our work centres in Québec.

Customer-facing electronic waste collected

(in tonnes)

ITEM	2019	TREND	CHANGE	2018
TV receivers	1919	↑	166	1753
Modems	770.7	↑	81.7	689
Mobile devices	18.4	↓	-15.6	34
Mobile phone batteries	1	↓	-0.5	1.5
Mobile phone accessories	0.4	↓	-0.6	1
Total	2,709.5	↑	231	2,478.5

Bell's customer-facing device recovery objective

We believe that we have an important role to play in the recovery of used electronic devices from customers given our close relationship with them. Last year, we began reporting on our progress toward our objective of recovering 10 million used TV receivers, modems, and mobile phones between January 1, 2016 and the end of 2020.

In 2019, we recovered 2,502,226 units.⁴ We have recovered 9,644,704 units since January 2016, and on target to meeting our 2020 objective. The following table details the breakdown of how many of each type of device we have collected since January 2016.

Customer-facing electronic devices recovery

2016 – 2019 (number of units collected)¹

	2019	2018	2017	2016
TV receivers	1,199,381	1,151,635	1,268,793	1,103,220
Modems	1,133,372	1,052,726	1,051,270	945,715
Mobile phones ²	169,473	248,193	176,981	143,945
Total	2,502,226	2,452,554	2,497,044	2,192,880
Cumulative yearly total	9,644,704	7,142,478	4,689,924	2,192,880

1. PwC provided limited assurance over this indicator. See [PwC's assurance statement](#)

2. Numbers of mobile phones collected for 2016, 2017, and 2018 are restated to adjust for double-counting in previous methods. The cumulative yearly totals have been adjusted accordingly. The impact of the error is an overall decrease of 2% from 2016 to 2018.

⁴ PwC provided limited assurance over this indicator. See [PwC's assurance statement](#)