

Reduce Waste. Maximize Value.

FIELD GUIDE TO C&D RECYCLING

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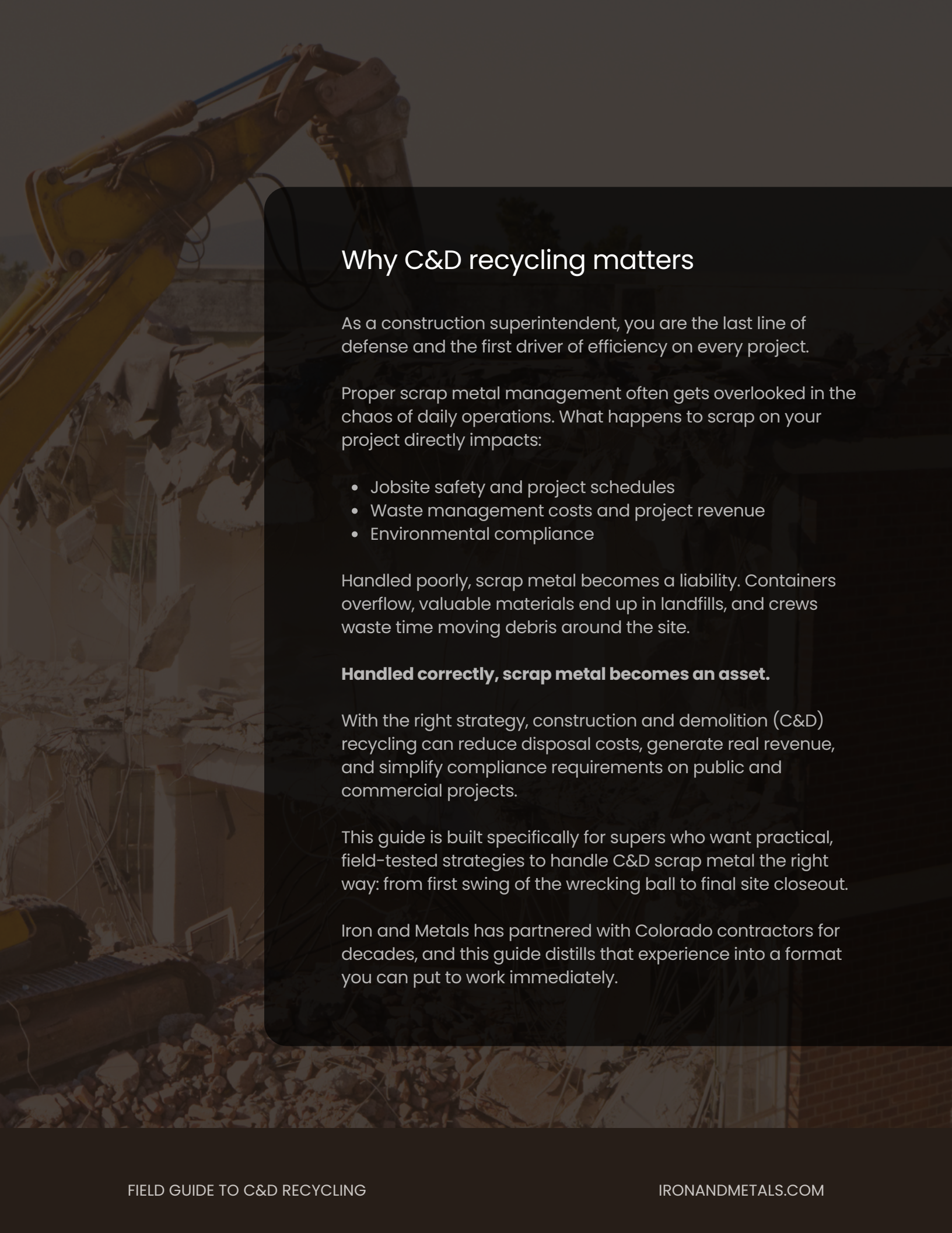
WORKING WITH IRON & METALS

FIELD TOOLS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

LET'S TALK SHOP

Practical, field-tested strategies superintendents can use to turn C&D scrap metal into a revenue stream.





Why C&D recycling matters

As a construction superintendent, you are the last line of defense and the first driver of efficiency on every project.

Proper scrap metal management often gets overlooked in the chaos of daily operations. What happens to scrap on your project directly impacts:

- Jobsite safety and project schedules
- Waste management costs and project revenue
- Environmental compliance

Handled poorly, scrap metal becomes a liability. Containers overflow, valuable materials end up in landfills, and crews waste time moving debris around the site.

Handled correctly, scrap metal becomes an asset.

With the right strategy, construction and demolition (C&D) recycling can reduce disposal costs, generate real revenue, and simplify compliance requirements on public and commercial projects.

This guide is built specifically for supers who want practical, field-tested strategies to handle C&D scrap metal the right way: from first swing of the wrecking ball to final site closeout.

Iron and Metals has partnered with Colorado contractors for decades, and this guide distills that experience into a format you can put to work immediately.

SCRAP METAL AS A REVENUE STREAM

CREATING A BUSINESS CASE

Scrap metal can be one of the most valuable materials removed from a construction site. Ferrous and non-ferrous metals recovered from C&D sites can generate hundreds of thousands of dollars per project. That money that goes directly back to your bottom line or offsets disposal costs.



Did You Know?

The average commercial demolition project generates **40–60 lbs** of scrap metal per square foot.

Copper, aluminum, and stainless steel command the highest spot prices. A single mid-size commercial demo in Denver can yield **\$50,000–\$200,000+** in scrap value.

Diverting metal from landfill **reduces** your waste disposal fees dollar-for-dollar.

Benefits of Jobsite Recycling

- C&D recycling **reduces landfill disposal costs**. Dense and heavy metals dramatically increase landfill tipping fees.
- Scrap metal generates **direct revenue**. Ferrous metals generate value based on tonnage, while non-ferrous metals often command much higher per-pound prices.
- The result is a waste stream that can help **offset hauling costs**, container fees, and even portions of demolition labor.

WHAT COUNTS AS C&D RECYCLING

Know Your Metals

Superintendents don't need to be metallurgists, but knowing how to recognize valuable metals on site makes a major difference in how effectively materials are recovered.

Ferrous vs Non Ferrous Metals

The simplest field identification method is the magnet test.

Ferrous metals contain iron and are magnetic. Non-ferrous metals are not magnetic and are generally worth significantly more per pound.

Metal Type	Magnetic?	Common C&D Sources
Structural Steel	Yes	Beams, columns, decking
Rebar	Yes	Concrete demo, foundations
Cast Iron	Yes	Pipes, HVAC components
Copper	No	Wiring, plumbing, gutters
Aluminum	No	Siding, gutters, windows, ductwork
Stainless Steel	No (usually)	Kitchen equip, handrails
Brass	No	Valves, fittings, fixtures
Bronze	No	Bearings, bushings, gears



HIGH-VALUE TARGETS ON A DEMO PROJECT

KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR

During demolition, the most common recyclable metals include:

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS



- Copper wire and conduit; strip insulation to maximize value
- Bus bars & switchgear components
- Transformer cores (*coordinate with utility before removal*)

PLUMBING SYSTEMS



- Copper supply lines & waste lines
- Brass valves, backflow preventers, & fittings
- Cast iron soil pipe (*weigh separately from copper*)

STRUCTURAL & ARCHITECTURAL



- Wide-flange beams, HSS tubing, angle iron
- Metal decking & roof panels
- Aluminum curtain wall & storefront framing
- Stainless steel kitchen equipment & counters

MECHANICAL SYSTEMS



- HVAC units (*refrigerant must be recovered FIRST by a certified tech*)
- Boilers & pressure vessels
- Steel piping & ductwork

While new construction usually generates less scrap per square foot than demolition, the volume can still add up on large commercial and industrial projects. Recognizing these materials early allows crews to separate them before they become mixed debris.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A photograph of a chain-link fence with a rectangular sign attached to it. The sign has a red background with a white border and the word "DANGER" written in white, bold, capital letters. The background of the photo is a blurred outdoor scene with a warm, golden light, possibly from a sunset or sunrise.

Protect Yourself & Others

Before scrap metal can be recycled, it must be free from hazardous contamination.

Older buildings frequently contain lead-based paint or asbestos insulation on structural components and piping. These materials must be properly identified and abated before demolition begins.

Sending contaminated material to a scrap facility can result in rejected loads and costly disposal fees.

Mechanical equipment requires additional precautions.

Refrigerants must be removed from HVAC systems by certified technicians before equipment is dismantled. Federal regulations under EPA Section 608 require refrigerant recovery, and violations can carry significant penalties.

Transformers and electrical infrastructure may also require coordination with utility providers before removal.

Planning for these issues during pre-construction prevents costly delays once demolition begins.

BUILD THE SCRAP STRATEGY EARLY

Pre-Project Planning

The difference between a successful scrap program and a chaotic one is almost always determined **before** demolition begins.



Demo Audit Checklist

- Walk all floors and mechanical rooms
- Photograph and note location of copper, aluminum, and high-value items
- Flag or mark areas with potential hazmat conflicts
- Estimate tonnage by metal type (use building SF and age as proxies)
- Identify items requiring specialist removal (transformers, refrigerant equipment)

Choosing Your Recycling Partner

Early coordination with a partner like Iron & Metals allows us to:

- Provide containers/roll-off bins sized for your project
- Establish pricing agreements (spot or contract) before market fluctuations
- Schedule regular pickups so metal doesn't accumulate and create safety/theft hazards
- Advise on segregation requirements that maximize your payout

SCRAP MANAGEMENT ON JOB SITES

Field Operations

With prep work complete, here are some daily and weekly practices that keep your scrap program running profitably.

Site Layout Strategy

- Place containers as close as practical to primary demo areas to reduce carry distance
 - Separate ferrous and non-ferrous containers clearly – label and use different colors if possible
 - Never mix metal with general C&D debris – commingled loads pay less or nothing
 - Ensure container placement doesn't obstruct emergency egress or fire lanes
 - On multi-story demos, stage containers to minimize vertical haul; use chutes where feasible
-

Scrap Metal Segregation

The biggest driver of scrap revenue is segregation. A container of clean, segregated copper is worth 4–8x that of a container of mixed metal.

1. Clean copper wire (stripped) → Highest payout
2. Clean copper wire (insulated) → High payout
3. Clean aluminum → High payout
4. Brass and bronze → High payout
5. Stainless steel → Medium-high payout
6. Clean structural steel / iron → Medium payout
7. Mixed metals (commingled) → Lowest payout or rejection

DEMOLITION-SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS

Demolition projects are where the most scrap metal is generated and where the most value is either captured or lost.

The sequence and method of your demo, including a “soft strip” phase beforehand, directly determines scrap yield.



PHASE 1

HAZMAT CLEARANCE & UTILITY DISCONNECTS

- Complete all asbestos, lead, and hazmat abatement
- Utility disconnects confirmed in writing by utility providers
- Transformer removal coordinated with utility

PHASE 2

SOFT STRIP (INTERIOR)

- Start top-down, floor by floor
- Electrical: panels, wiring, conduit
- Plumbing: copper supply, brass fixtures, drainage
- HVAC: air handlers, fan coils, piping, controls
- Specialty: kitchen, medical gas systems, specialized industrial equipment

PHASE 3

STRUCTURAL STEEL & EXTERIOR

- Roof metal decking, joists, structural steel
- Exterior curtain wall and skin
- Foundation rebar (coordinate with concrete demo sub)

PHASE 4

MECHANICAL DEMO & CLEANUP

- Remaining concrete and mixed debris after metal recovery is complete



NEW CONSTRUCTION SCRAP MANAGEMENT

Sources & Best Practices

While new construction generates less scrap than demo, the steel, rebar, aluminum materials and roofing metals can accumulate quickly on large-scale projects.

New Construction Best Practices

Establish Scrap Stations Early

Set up clearly labeled scrap containers in each work zone. Waiting until material has accumulated in a mixed debris pile costs you money.

Educate All Subs at the Pre-Construction Meeting

Every sub should understand metal scrap goes in the designated containers, not the general dumpster.

Regular Pickups Keep the Site Clean

Overfull metal containers create safety hazards and encourage workers to throw material in general waste. Schedule pickups frequently enough to stay ahead of accumulation.

Scrap Sources in New Construction

- Structural steel: offcuts, stubs, damaged members
- Rebar: cut ends, bent or damaged bars
- Metal decking: offcuts and damaged panels
- Aluminum stud framing: offcuts from rough-in
- Copper and aluminum wire: ends and pulls from electrical rough-in
- HVAC ductwork: offcuts and damaged sections
- Roofing: metal panel offcuts and flashing scrap

WORKING WITH IRON & METALS, INC.

Your Colorado Recycling Partner

Iron and Metals isn't just a scrap yard. On commercial and industrial C&D projects, your recycler is a project partner whose capabilities and responsiveness directly impact your schedule and bottom line.

Services Available

- Roll-off container supply and delivery in sizes from 10 to 40 yards
- Flatbed and crane-equipped trucks for structural steel and heavy equipment
- Locked and secured container options for high-value non-ferrous metals
- Certified weight tickets for LEED and owner reporting
- Flexible pickup scheduling including emergency same-day service
- Project-specific pricing agreements for large-volume projects

Pricing

Scrap metal prices are commodity-driven and fluctuate daily based on global metal markets.

I&M considers several factors, including the verified weight, classification and quality of your haul, to offer **fair, transparent pricing** that reflects current market conditions while ensuring solid service value for superintendents and their crews.

THE NEW BRONCO STADIUM & DENVER WATER RELOCATION

Colorado Spotlight

The Denver Broncos are developing a new stadium, and in connection with that project, Denver Water is relocating some of its existing facilities currently occupying a portion of the site.

This multi-phase infrastructure move represents one of the largest C&D undertakings in Colorado's recent history.

The Scrap Metal Opportunity

Projects of this magnitude generate scrap metal volumes that dwarf typical commercial work.

Material Category	Estimated Opportunity
Large-diameter steel pipe	Hundreds of tons of structural steel piping
Pump stations and equipment	Significant ferrous and non-ferrous components
Electrical infrastructure	High-value copper switchgear and wire
Specialty water treatment metals	Stainless steel, aluminum, and specialty alloys
Structural building steel	Beams, columns, and metal decking from facilities

Why This Project Demands a Partner Like Iron & Metals

Projects of this scale require a recycling partner with the capacity and expertise to handle:

- Multiple simultaneous container needs across a large, active site
- Specialized equipment for large removals
- Coordination with multiple demo and specialty subcontractors
- Rigorous documentation for public agency reporting requirements
- Rapid response times to keep demo and construction schedules on track

I&M has the equipment, C&D experience, and relationships to be the preferred metal recycling partner for projects in this category.

Superintendents working on the Denver Water facility move or the broader stadium-area development would benefit from engaging a partner like I&M early in the pre-construction phase.

Lessons from Large Projects for Every Superintendent

Even if you're not working on the stadium project, the principles that make large infrastructure demos successful apply to your jobsite:

- Early engagement with your recycler — months before demo, not weeks
- Pre-demo audit and metal quantity estimation to right-size your program
- Clear subcontractor scoping that includes scrap segregation requirements
- Sequenced soft strip before mechanical demo to maximize non-ferrous recovery
- Real-time documentation that satisfies owner, regulatory, and LEED requirements

COLORADO REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

Metal recycling isn't just about revenue. It's increasingly a regulatory and contractual obligation. Understanding what you need to document and report protects everyone.



CDPHE Construction & Demo Debris Rules

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulates C&D debris disposal. Large projects in Denver metro may be subject to:

- Waste management plan requirements at permit application
- Mandatory diversion rate targets (varies by jurisdiction and project size)
- Documentation requirements for waste manifests and recycling receipts

Denver Green Building Ordinance

Local jurisdictions have also implemented additional requirements.

Denver's Green Building Ordinance includes construction waste management provisions for many commercial developments. These projects often require documentation showing diversion rates and recycling totals.



REPORTING & LEED DOCUMENTATION

LEED v4 Construction Waste Management Credit

Projects pursuing LEED certification must also document waste diversion. LEED v4 awards points for recycling at least 50% of construction waste, with additional points for diverting 75% or more.

Proper scrap metal recycling is one of the easiest ways to meet these diversion goals because metals are widely recyclable and easy to track by weight.

Certified weight tickets from recycling facilities help satisfy these reporting requirements and protect the superintendent if questions arise during audits or inspections.

Documentation and Reporting

Every transaction with Iron and Metals generates a weight ticket and a payment record.

Request:

- Certified weight tickets for every load (required for LEED documentation)
- Monthly summary reports for long-duration projects
- Material-specific breakdowns when your project has reporting requirements
- Recycling certificates for projects requiring formal diversion documentation

FIELD TOOLS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

PRE-PROJECT CHECKLIST

- **Complete** or commission a scrap metal walkthrough/audit
- **Identify** and flag hazmat conflict areas (lead, asbestos, PCBs)
- **Engage** Iron and Metals for site assessment and pricing conversation
- Include **scrap segregation** requirements in all subcontractor scopes
- **Define** scrap ownership in writing (GC, sub, or shared)
- **Arrange** container delivery schedule with Iron and Metals
- **Establish** secured containers for non-ferrous metals
- **Brief** all subs on scrap protocols at pre-construction meeting

WEEKLY SITE SCRAP CHECKLIST

- **Inspect** all scrap containers. Properly segregated? Approaching full?
- **Coordinate** pickups with Iron and Metals for any full or near-full containers
- **Confirm** all subs are depositing material in correct containers
- **Log** all outbound loads with weight ticket number
- **Verify** weight tickets received match loads dispatched
- **Update** project-to-date diversion totals

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. Not engaging your recycler until the job is already underway.
2. Allowing demo subs to commingle metals with general debris.
3. Permitting MEP subs to walk off site with 'their' copper.
4. Demoing mechanically before soft-stripping non-ferrous metals.
5. Failing to recover refrigerant before demo'ing HVAC equipment.
6. Sending materials with suspected lead paint or asbestos to the scrap yard.
7. Not documenting loads (leaves you unprotected for LEED and owner disputes).
8. Using unsecured containers for copper and aluminum in urban areas.
9. Waiting until project closeout to reconcile weight tickets and revenue.
10. Not asking Iron and Metals for a site walkthrough — it's free and usually finds value.



LET'S TALK SHOP

Scrap metal recycling is one of the simplest ways supers can improve jobsite efficiency, reduce waste costs, and support sustainability goals.

By planning early, separating materials properly, and coordinating with experienced recycling partners, construction teams can turn demolition waste into a valuable project resource.

I&M has supported Colorado construction projects for more than 60 years, providing reliable scrap recycling services for every project, large or small.

Call us to get started or to request a quote before your next big project.

Learn about our C&D recycling services

ironandmetals.com

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Receiving Hours:

Monday and Friday, 8am - 4pm

Business Hours:

Monday and Friday, 8am - 4:30pm



IRON AND METALS INC.
INDUSTRIAL SCRAP PROCESSORS