

How to optimize waste management at your new warehouse?



Warehouses and distribution centers are often very large, consisting of several floors and sometimes even several buildings. The waste handling and transportation can be a major challenge in this type of environment. When building new or making additions to existing warehouses, it is important to organize the waste management strategically and effectively, so that the final result turns out as well as possible.

Unfortunately, waste management might be forgotten or at least less prioritized at the planning stage, which can result in unnecessarily expensive and ineffective solutions. In this article, we will review what is important to consider regarding waste management solutions when building a new warehouse or adding a new section to it.

Regardless what the reasons are for building a new or expanding an existing warehouse or logistics center, the challenges are similar, and it does not really matter if it is a warehouse or logistics center, the principle is the same. There are goods coming in and goods sent out, and a huge volume of packaging waste, often in the form of corrugated cardboard and plastic wrappings, is left behind and needs to be taken care of.

Optimize valuable retail and storage space with efficient waste management

One of the most common reasons for building a new warehouse is to have *one* central warehouse, thus optimizing the retail space by removing as much as possible of the storage space from the individual stores. But with a large central warehouse, there will be more waste and higher demands on efficient waste management solutions.

The ever-present challenge of new construction or extension is to get maximum storage space on a surface that is as small as possible. Storage space is valuable and therefore smart solutions are required to optimize the area you have to work with.

Think about waste management from the beginning

A common mistake for both small and larger companies when planning a new building or an extension is to forget about how the waste streams shall be handled.

It is often so, that the drawings of the entire construction are finished before anyone takes the waste management solutions into account. It can have expensive consequences and result in a less efficient flow in the warehouse. It is ideal for all parties, if a supplier of waste management solutions gets involved at an early stage of the planning to make suggestions and recommendations. At that point the supplier is able to recommend different solutions, than if it is only involved later, and it is very likely that the warehouse will get a sustainable solution instead of an emergency last minute solution.

Consider how it will actually work and look at similar solutions

The waste equipment supplier Orwak comments: “If we come in early in the process, we will first and foremost gather information to get a clear picture of what it will look like when it is ready. What type of goods will be received and where? What kind of packaging and what volumes of it are expected? How to organize the waste handling most effectively in the warehouse; centralized, decentralized or perhaps a combination of both?”

“It is important to ask the right questions. Of course, there will be some assumptions and you must roughly estimate the kind of waste and the potential volumes, which the warehouse will have to deal with. Then we can start thinking about different solutions and look at similar reference cases to see how they have solved their waste management. We have helped many warehouses and distribution centers with their waste management, so we have a lot of knowledge and best practices to share.”



It is expensive to make mistakes, so do it right from the start

“The smart way to achieve a sustainable waste management solution is therefore to involve us at the very beginning of the process. Do not wait until the new warehouse is already in place. It can be very expensive to make mistakes, when it comes to waste management. On the other hand, you can save a lot of money with the right solution.”