



## Reuse, Recycle, and Renovate for Reinvestment (4R) Program

Ramsey County is required by Minnesota state statutes to hold, manage, and sell tax-forfeited properties on behalf of the state in a manner that enables the highest and best use of those properties. In addition, state and county solid waste management policy includes a preference that waste products be recycled instead of landfilled whenever possible. As a way to address both responsibilities, Ramsey County established the Reuse, Recycle, and Renovate for Reinvestment Program - the "4R Program" for short - in April 2010.



Its mission is two-fold: 1) to promote productive reuse of old building materials from deconstructed buildings in order to keep those materials out of landfills thereby minimizing the effect on our natural resources and environment, and 2) to renovate dilapidated structures back to being appealing, taxable properties with an emphasis on using sustainable building practices and incorporating sustainable components in each renovation project. Through this mission, the 4R Program reduces the County's eco-footprint and promotes livelier, healthier neighborhoods.

[4R Program](#) (video)

### Program Goals

- Give durable building materials from deconstructed buildings a second life by **reusing** them in other projects.
- Break down the components of worn-down materials from deconstructed buildings in order for them to be remade and reused in another form through **recycling** efforts.
  - The County's goal is to salvage, reuse, recycle, and recover not less than 75% of the eligible building materials available for recovery from deconstructed buildings.
- Where applicable, **renovate** dilapidated buildings for productive use instead of deconstructing them. Renovation saves money, effort, and resources and represents the pinnacle of reuse and recycling.
- **Reinvest** in the community by making neighborhoods safer and more cohesive through the improvement of individual properties.

### The Process

If a tax forfeited property is not repurchased or conveyed to a governmental agency, it takes one of two paths; building removal and land restoration, or renovation. Sometimes this decision is made early on in the tax forfeiture process in order to preserve the County's investment in a property due to an enforcement action being taken by a city.

If the property is a candidate for renovation, the intent is to correct code violations, at a minimum. Typically in our projects a structure is renovated to a level that will ensure that low- to moderate-income home buyers will not be burdened with major repairs, such as a new roof, new furnace or hot water heater, etc., within the first

five years of ownership. Typically the structures are renovated from top to bottom (or attic to basement) with EnergyStar-rated windows, HVAC systems, newly painted interior, new floor coverings, new kitchen and bath with improved layouts and new exterior siding. The property is made safe and livable utilizing as many green product components and practices as possible for sustainability, energy efficiency and low environmental impact.

In cases where it is not cost-effective to remedy the code violations or circumstances dictate the removal of the house, the structure would be removed or dismantled in a way to allow for the maximum amount of building materials to be recycled or reused by implementing various methods. Contractors are encouraged to salvage and reuse building components by soft-stripping architectural items, removing construction materials such as reusable wood, doors, or windows for future markets, and removing and donating operating appliances. Concrete and metal are separated on site and delivered directly to the recycler. The remaining construction and demolition debris are sent to a mixed Construction and Demolition facility for further separation of the materials.

Eventually the property is sold by public auction, whether it's a vacant lot or a fully renovated home. Revenue coming from the sale of tax-forfeited properties is used to replenish the fund for costs incurred and will also be used in future forfeited property projects.

## **Current Projects**

## **Completed Projects**

## **Recycling Statistics**

Each of the properties deconstructed or renovated using 4R Program funding have been subjected to structural evaluations and complete inventories of all structural materials, to identify materials for hazardous waste disposal, salvage, and recycling. The amount of materials handled is ever-growing and to date, we have recycled:

- 3-1/2 tons of "E" (electronic)-waste (computers, televisions, etc.)
- 192 household appliances (refrigerators, microwaves, washing machines, etc.)
- 33.29 tons of municipal solid waste/garbage, which has been transported to the Newport Resource Recovery Facility for energy burning
- 234 discarded tires of various size

## **Contact Information**

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