

## Dumpster Diving

### Definition

There are many long winded and overly technical explanations for dumpster diving, however, it is quite simply someone digging through a trash container.

### Some reasons for dumpster diving

- Looking for food
- Looking for recyclable materials (cans plastic, glass)
- Looking for discarded items such as clothing, office equipment, computer equipment
- Looking for other general items such as household items or car parts
- Looking for items for art and crafts projects
- Information gathering for civil lawsuits
- Information gathering for private investigations
- Information gathering for law enforcement investigations
- Competitive intelligence such as customer lists, price lists, project bids, or internal communications such as memos
- Looking for computer logins and passwords
- Looking for personal identity information for identity theft
- Looking for credit card numbers or bank account information for fraud
- Employee theft (throwing items away and retrieving them later)

### Dumpster diving countermeasures

- Locked trash cans
- Fences
- No trespassing sign
- Lights
- Cameras
- Physical security guards
- Having and enforcing a shredding policy
- Paper/Media Shredders
- Shredding/destruction services
- Burn bags
- Employee awareness training

### Legality of dumpster diving

"In 1998, the Supreme Court ruled that Americans do not have a right to privacy regarding trash. The Economic Espionage Act of 1996, which made it a federal offense to steal trade information, doesn't protect firms that fail to take reasonable steps to protect data."

*CIO Magazine, 2007*

[http://www.cio.com/article/28510/Best\\_Practices\\_for\\_Shredding\\_Corporate\\_Documents](http://www.cio.com/article/28510/Best_Practices_for_Shredding_Corporate_Documents)