

Multi-family Waste Diversion Educational Tips

Waste Bylaw 4M2020 requires property and building owners to inform their residents about their waste diversion program when a new resident moves in and again annually.

Making sure your residents understand how to use your program is key to making it successful and preventing issues. Below are some education tips that can be shared one at a time in building e-newsletters, letters, Facebook groups and other building communications.

Please note: This tip page will be updated regularly with new content for your communications.

Garbage/Landfill

- If you're ordering takeout, here's what to do with the containers. Food scraps and food-soiled pizza boxes go in the food scraps bin. Plastic takeout containers go in the recycling. Be sure to empty and rinse them out first. Plastic cutlery, condiment packets, foam containers go in the garbage.
- All polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) goes in the garbage, even if marked with the recycling symbol. This includes foam shipping materials, take-out food containers and meat trays. If improperly placed in recycling bins, foam products are too light to be sorted by machines during the recycling process and contaminate other good recyclable material. Put them in a garbage bag in the garbage bin to prevent them from blowing away during collection.
- Non-stretchy bags or pouches can't be recycled and belong in the garbage. This includes baby food pouches, frozen fruit pouches, cheese string wrappers, spinach or salad kit bags, fruit bags and mesh fruit and vegetable bags.

Recycling

- Bundle stretchy plastic bags, bubble wrap and cling wrap into a single plastic bag and securely tie closed. Why? Loose bags get stuck in the sorting machines and also contaminate other valuable recycling materials. They need to be bundled together so the workers can sort them properly.

Here are a few ideas: Hang a hook inside a cabinet door to hold bags. Hang an empty bag on a door handle or clip to the side of your indoor recycling bin. Fill the bag with stretchy bags, then tie closed and put in the recycling. Hang up another empty bag and start filling again.

- Recyclable containers must be empty and clean with lids and caps removed. Make sure to pour out liquids and scrape or rinse out food bits. Labels can be left on.
- Shredded paper can also be placed in a securely tied clear plastic bag.
- Only food and beverage glass bottles and jars are recyclable. Separate lids from the jars as they are made of a different material. If the lid is larger than the palm of your hand, recycle it separately. Smaller lids are too small and light to be sorted and go in the garbage.

Glass is recycled into a sand blasting agent used to remove paint and rust by commercial painters. Learn more at calgary.ca/whatgoeswhere.

- Improve your tin and foil recycling habits with these tips. Rinse off food residue then crumple used tin foil into a ball for recycling. If you can't get it clean enough (without chunks) it goes in our garbage. Take empty aluminum pop or drink cans to a bottle depot or put in our recycling. If possible remove paper labels from containers and recycle separately. When in doubt, check out calgary.ca/whatgoeswhere.

Tin cans and foil are recycled right here in Canada. They are smelted and turned into new products like rebar used in the construction industry or in new tin cans and foil. Next time you're shopping, look for the aluminum foil that says it's made from recycled materials.

- Caps and lids – some recyclable materials, like caps and lids for beverage containers, are too small and light to be sorted properly at the recycling facility and end up contaminating other recyclables. Tip: If it's smaller than the palm of your hand, it belongs in the garbage.
- Did you know that there are some things that should never go into our recycling bin? These include plastic cutlery and straws, non-recyclable packaging like foam containers, chip bags and food pouches, household items like frying pans, hoses and clothing; and loose plastic bags (make sure to bag all plastic bags before recycling).

Composting

- When buying compostable bags, look for the certified compostable logos printed on the box and on the bags. Do not put plastic bags or bags labelled "biodegradable" in your kitchen pail or compost bin because they do not break down.
- You aren't required to bag your food scraps before placing them in the bin but some people prefer to line their kitchen pail. You can use flyers and newspaper, paper lunch or fast food bags, and certified compostable bags are all great options to handle food waste in your pail.
- Remove food from its container before putting it in the compost. Plastic containers and tubs, plastic bottles, jars and metal food cans – rinse and put in the recycling. Foam meat trays and crinkly plastic bags (such as salad or chip bags) go in the garbage.
- All food scraps go in your compost bin. This includes food from meal prep, cleaning out the fridge or plate scrapings. Use certified compostable bags to keep your kitchen pail tidy and empty the pail into the compost bin every 2-3 days to minimize odours.

Did you know? Food waste doesn't break down when buried in the landfill. Your food scraps are too good to waste. Composting your food waste helps turn it into something new and saves valuable space in our landfills.

- When the temperature dips, food scraps can sometimes freeze to the inside of our bins. You can place food in compostable bags and drain liquids from soups and cereal before composting the solid parts.

- All pet waste and kitty litter must be bagged for safety. Use a certified compostable bag or paper bag and tie/roll closed. For larger pet waste cleanup, use a kitchen pail compostable bag or paper yard waste bag.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

- Paint, chemicals, propane tanks, and aerosols don't belong in any bins. These household chemicals need to be disposed of safely by bringing to a designated fire station or City Landfill. Find a full list of acceptable items at calgary.ca/hhw
- Package and label properly – before you drop off your household chemicals:
 - Make sure your container has a lid and it's on tight. The label must be readable
 - Keep material in the original container so staff know how to safely handle the contents.
 - If you use a different container:
 - Pick a sturdy leak-proof container like an empty bleach bottle. Avoid thin plastic containers like pop bottles or milk jugs.
 - Label the container clearly

Electronics

- Take non-rechargeable batteries to a participating retailer for recycling, free of charge. Visit <https://www.calgary.ca/uep/wrs/what-goes-where/batteries-nonrechargeable.html>
- Unwanted computers, televisions and other electronics can be recycled at various locations around Calgary and at the three City landfills. DO NOT put these items in our recycling, food scraps, or garbage bins.
- Microwaves, network equipment, home audio/video, gaming consoles, and cell phones can only be recycled at City landfills.

Metal

- Household items made of metal Examples: frying pans, brake discs, shelf units. If your household items are still usable, donate them to a local charity. You can take scrap metal to a City landfill Throw 'n' Go area or a metal recycler. Do not put these metal items in our recycling bin as they can cause major injury and damage at the recycling facility.

Holiday Waste

- Here are some easy ways to reduce your waste during the holidays. Give someone the gift of experience with an electronic ticket to a great show. Give the gift of time and lend a hand to someone who needs it by doing their shopping. Make your own gifts or use recyclables for crafts or cards. Cut down on wrapping paper by reusing boxes and bags, using cloth or leaving your gifts unwrapped.
- Recycle right this holiday season. Wrapping paper, cardboard boxes, cards and envelopes, and paper gift bags (with the handles removed) can all be recycled. Remember to put all your recycling in loose (do not use black garbage bags or blue plastic bags).

Kitchen Waste Set Up Tips

- Home hardware stores carry a wide variety of different waste containers. Some are available in divided compartment styles or in stackable options. These make waste sorting simple and convenient for apartments if you are tight on space or want to keep your waste options in one organized place.
- Kitchen pails are available to purchase at most home hardware stores in both plastic and metal. You can also re-use any container that has a sealed lid and handle. Ice-cream pails are a popular choice. Choose something that fits easily under the sink to save counter space. Think 'Re-use' and visit your local thrift store to find a decorative container with lid and handle that will look great on your kitchen counter space.
- A recycling tote bag is a useful tool for apartment residents to carry recyclables to the shared waste station. They are light, reusable, and can be stowed away easily when not in use.
- There are some materials that cannot be recycled or composted. With the knowledge of how to recycle and compost correctly, residents should only require a small garbage container in their unit. The smaller the better!
- A small bathroom recycling tote bag or box is a handy addition to have by your bathroom waste bin or under the sink. Items such as cardboard toilet paper rolls and recyclable hygiene product containers can be captured at this point and added to your recycling.

Reduction

- Send less to the landfill by focusing on reducing and reusing. Use sustainable replacements for single-use items like paper coffee cups, plastic beverage bottles and bags. Seek out local info and tips @plasticfreeyc and @greencalgary. Use the What Goes Where tool on calgary.ca to correctly dispose of unwanted items.
- Donate usable clothing to a local charity. You can also take them to a City landfill for [free textiles recycling](#).