BOSTON TRASH AND RECYCLING GUIDE

We offer recycling and trash collection for residential properties in the City of Boston.

Includes a detachable 2020 yard waste calendar
Dear Neighbors:

My administration is deeply committed to making Boston a greener, more sustainable city. We’ve committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050, and we’re preparing our neighborhoods for the impacts of climate change. We’re also working to become a Zero Waste City.

I’m very proud that last year we released our first-ever Zero Waste Plan. The set of 30 near- and long-term strategies aim to reduce our consumption of natural resources, increase the amount of materials we compost and recycle, and reduce the amount of waste we send to waste-to-energy facilities. By taking these steps, we can more than triple the amount of waste we compost and recycle from about 25 percent to 80 percent.

This is a big undertaking. To be successful, we need our residents, business owners, and visitors to pitch in and do their part. To help people get started, the City of Boston recently joined a statewide effort, led by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, to launch a new educational campaign called Recycle Smart. The goal is to make sure people are recycling the correct way. We want to explain what items should be recycled, and what items should not be recycled, including materials that can jam machines at recycling facilities, making the process less efficient.

The City of Boston also provides a free, easy-to-use Trash Day app. It enables Boston residents to search a directory of hundreds of household items to learn how to dispose of them properly. App users can also view a calendar for their home collection dates, set reminders, and get notifications about schedule changes.

This guide was prepared by the City of Boston Public Works Waste Reduction Division. It’s part of our expanded outreach efforts. The guide includes important information about all the services provided to residents, including leaf and yard waste collection dates, food composting, and household hazardous waste drop-off events.

I’m asking residents to read through this brochure carefully. Keep it in a place where you can easily access it so you can refer back to it often. If we all Recycle Right, we will achieve our ultimate goal: making Boston a Zero Waste City. By developing greener habits today, we can ensure a healthier Boston for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Mayor Martin J. Walsh
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**ZERO WASTE**

Zero waste means reducing, repairing, and reusing the materials in our lives. The Zero Waste Boston initiative strives to move Boston toward zero waste through planning, policy, and community engagement.

The Boston Zero Waste plan has developed guidelines to make Boston a zero-waste city. This means Boston will reduce, reuse, recycle, and compost at least 80 to 90 percent of its solid waste. We'll also cut disposal in landfills and incinerators.

Learn more at [boston.gov/zero-waste](http://boston.gov/zero-waste)

**TRASH DAY APP**

With our free Trash Day app, you can view a calendar for your home's collection dates, set reminders, and get notifications of schedule changes. Search a directory of hundreds of household items to find out the right way to dispose of them.

You can even use the app to find out if your trash and recycling collection is delayed due to a holiday, and to get the most up-to-date holiday collection schedule.

Learn more at [boston.gov/trash-day](http://boston.gov/trash-day)
RECYCLING TIPS

RECYCLE ON TRASH DAY
Set recycling out by 6 a.m. on the same day you set out your trash. If your trash is collected twice per week, place recycling out on both days. Remember to separate recycling from trash before placing it on the curb, and please rinse and wash your items.

RECYCLING CONTAINER OPTIONS
All recyclable material must be in one of the following options:

1. Large wheeled carts

If your residence is six units or less, the City can provide you with a large wheeled cart.

These carts are large and must be wheeled to the recycling truck instead of carried. Please keep these tips in mind:
• For easy access, place your cart in front of your home on the curb, away from parked cars and not on private property.
• During the winter, place your cart next to or in front of snowbanks. Do not place carts behind snowbanks.

2. Converted trash cans

You can convert a trash can into a recycling container by placing a recycle sticker on the outside. Recycling cans should not be larger than 32 gallons. If they are larger, they must be able to attach to a lifting mechanism on a recycle truck.

You can request an official recycle sticker or recycling cart (subject to approval) through BOS:311 by dialing 3-1-1 or 617-635-4500. Visit boston.gov/311 for more information.
3. Clear plastic bags

Clear plastic bags are only allowed if you do not have enough space for a blue recycling bin in the following neighborhoods:

Back Bay/Bay Village, Beacon Hill, Charlestown, Chinatown, Downtown, East Boston, Fenway, Mission Hill, North End, Roxbury, South Boston, the South End, and the West End.

Please note: Bags need to be 32 gallons or less. **Do not** put recyclables in plastic grocery bags. Clear plastic recycling bags are available at local retailers.

Learn more at [boston.gov/recycling](http://boston.gov/recycling)

**RECYCLING IN LARGE APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND CONDOS**

Buildings with more than six residential units are considered large. Large buildings that receive City trash pickup services are required by City ordinance to have recycling programs.

Large building owners or condo associations must provide and maintain large wheeled carts that go in centralized locations for all building residents. To request recycling in a large building, contact BOS:311 by dialing **3-1-1** or **617-635-4500**.
ITEMS YOU CAN RECYCLE IN THE BLUE BIN
Remember to always rinse and wash your items before putting them in the recycling.

• Pizza boxes: remove food, pizza savers (pizza tables), and liners
• Aluminum and tin cans: including potato chips and coffee cans
• Paper: newspaper, magazines, catalogs, paperback books, white and colored paper
• Boxboard: paper bags, egg cartons, and cereal boxes
• Glass: jars and bottles
• Plastic: all containers (except plastic bags), including food, soda, water bottles, and jars

ITEMS YOU CAN’T RECYCLE IN THE BLUE BIN
• Plastic shopping bags: plastic grocery and garbage bags (return clean plastic bags to a participating retailer for recycling)
• Disposable items: styrofoam, cups, plates, napkins, paper towels, tissues, straws, and coffee pods
• Plastic wraps: bubble wrap, film, and tarps
• Tanglers: no coat hangers, hoses, extension cords and wires, or chains
• Medical waste: syringes and pills
• Containers: specifically containers used for chemicals and motor oil
• Electronics: rechargeable batteries and light bulbs
• Clothes: including shoes and stuffed animals
• Drink and food boxes: juice, milk, and frozen food boxes (plastic juice and milk containers are OK, if properly washed)
• Ceramics: pots, pans and glass
• Food waste

See page 10 and 11 for detachable recycling guides.
TRASH TIPS

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR TRASH

1. Trash should be neatly stored on your property in barrels or containers. Barrels or containers should:
   • be metal or made of a durable plastic
   • have a lid
   • not be larger than 32 gallons (unless it can attach to a lifting mechanism, then it can be up to 96 gallons), and
   • not weigh more than 50 pounds.

2. Trash must be placed at the curb by 6 a.m., or after 5 p.m. the night before your scheduled trash day.

3. All trash materials must fit inside the barrels and containers. If you use trash bags, they must be .9 mil or greater plastic material and can’t be larger than 32 gallons.

4. Placing trash in kitchen bags, grocery bags, paper bags, cartons, or boxes is not acceptable, and might result in a code violation.
Certain items can’t be put in the regular trash or recycling. Instead, they need to be scheduled for a special pickup. Call \texttt{3-1-1} or \texttt{617-635-4500} or visit \texttt{boston.gov/311} to schedule a pickup of these items:

**ITEMS YOU CAN’T PUT IN THE TRASH OR RECYCLING**

If these items are reusable, donate them. Otherwise, you have to hire a private company to collect them.
LEAF AND YARD WASTE

SEASONAL LEAF AND YARD WASTE COLLECTION

Leaf and yard waste is collected from April through December on designated yard waste collection weeks. Here are some tips:

• Place leaves and yard debris in large paper leaf bags or open barrels labeled “yard waste” (do not use plastic bags).

• You can get yard waste stickers for your barrels by contacting BOS:311. Dial 3-1-1 or 617-635-4500, or visit boston.gov/311. We allow for five stickers per household. Paper leaf bags do not need labels.

• Tie branches with string. Branches can be a maximum of 3 feet in length and 1 inch max diameter.

• Place yard waste on the curb by 6 a.m. on the first recycling day of the week, or after 5 p.m. the night before your scheduled day.

• We also hold 20 drop-off events at our composting facility in Mattapan. Visit boston.gov/yard-waste for dates.

If you have two recycling days per week, leaf and yard waste collection is only on your first recycling day of the week. We don’t collect leaf and yard waste curbside on non-scheduled yard waste weeks.

For collection dates, visit boston.gov/yard-waste

CHRISTMAS TREES

We collect Christmas trees during the first two full weeks in January after the Christmas holiday. If you have two recycling days, we pick up trees on your first recycling day. Set your tree out at the curb on your recycling day. Remember to remove decorations, wires, lights, and stands. Do not put your tree in a plastic bag.
FOOD WASTE COMPOSTING

COMMUNITY COMPOSTING
Composting is the controlled decomposition of organic material, such as yard waste and food scraps. Composting is a great way to reduce your waste and produce a natural soil fertilizer.

Project Oscar is the City of Boston’s community composting program. Large containers, resembling trash barrels, are made available for people to dispose of their household organic waste.

To learn more visit boston.gov/project-oscar

COMPOSTING AT HOME
Through Boston Building Resources, you can buy subsidized compost bins and kitchen and scrap buckets. Bins and buckets are available to purchase Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., at the Boston Building Resources location on 100 Terrace Street in Mission Hill. Contact BOS:311 by dialing 3-1-1 or 617-635-4500, or visit boston.gov/compost for more information.

DONATING HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
Please consider donating reusable clothes, furniture, and small appliances to charity. You can also visit boston.gov/recycling for updated information on City of Boston textile recycling programs.

Looking to donate doors, windows, or bathroom fixtures? Check out Boston Building Resources at bostonbuildingresources.com
HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF

We hold drop-off days for household hazardous waste during the year. Boston residents can safely dispose of hazardous waste and shred unwanted documents for free. Please note:

• We only take waste from Boston residents. You need to show us proof of your residency. We will not take any waste from businesses.

• Latex and acrylic paint are NOT hazardous. Just let the paint dry out in the can and put it out on your trash day.

• We offer paper shredding at all of our events. We will shred up to 10 copy paper size boxes or containers of your personal documents.

• We accept all clothing and textiles, including pants, coats, hats, and suits.

• You can also recycle electronics at this event. We don’t take commercial material from businesses.

To learn more about what items we will and won’t accept, visit boston.gov/hazardous-waste

MEDICINE AND SYRINGES

Did you find a syringe or needle on the street? To safely dispose of it, contact BOS:311 by dialing 3-1-1 or 617-635-4500 for help.

Have unused or expired medications? There are MedReturn Drug Collection Kiosks at 11 Boston Police Department Stations. The kiosks are open to all residents, 24 hours a day, seven days a week – no questions asked. To learn more visit boston.gov/drug-kiosks
# Items You Can Recycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pizza Boxes</strong></td>
<td>Remove food, pizza savers (pizza tables), and liners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aluminum and Tin Cans</strong></td>
<td>This includes potato chips and coffee cans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paper</strong></td>
<td>White and colored paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boxboard</strong></td>
<td>Paper bags, egg cartons, cereal boxes, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glass</strong></td>
<td>Jars and bottles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plastic</strong></td>
<td>All containers (except plastic bags), including food, soda, water bottles, jars, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cardboard</strong></td>
<td>Flattened cardboard boxes (no larger than 3 feet by 3 feet; must be bundled and tied)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books</strong></td>
<td>Paperback books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publications</strong></td>
<td>Newspapers, magazines, and catalogs</td>
</tr>
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</table>
ITEMS YOU CAN’T RECYCLE

**MEDICAL WASTE**
Syringes, pills, etc.

**DISPOSABLE ITEMS**
Styrofoam, napkins, paper towels, tissues, straws, coffee pods, etc.

**CONTAINERS**
For chemicals and motor oil

**ELECTRONICS**
Including rechargeable batteries and light bulbs

**PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS**
Plastic grocery and garbage bags (you can return clean plastic bags to a participating retailer for recycling)

**PLASTIC WRAPS**
This includes bubble wrap, film, and tarps

**CLOTHES**
Including shoes and stuffed animals

**DRINK AND FOOD BOXES**
Juice, milk, and frozen food boxes (plastic juice and milk containers are acceptable if properly washed)

**TANGLERS**
No coat hangers, hoses, extension cords or wires, or chains

**CERAMICS**
Pots, pans, and glass

**FOOD WASTE**
**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF LOCATIONS**

- **JUNE 20 | SOUTH BOSTON**
  - Central DPW facility
  - 400 Frontage Rd.
- **JULY 25 | WEST ROXBURY**
  - West Roxbury DPW
  - 315 Gardner St.
- **AUGUST 1 | DORCHESTER**
  - John W. McCormick middle school
  - 315 Mt. Vernon St.
- **AUGUST 22 | SOUTH BOSTON**
  - Central DPW facility
  - 400 Frontage Rd.
- **OCTOBER 31 | SOUTH BOSTON**
  - Central DPW facility
  - 400 Frontage Rd.

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**Leaf and yard waste curbside collection**

- Place leaves and yard debris in large paper bags or open barrels labeled "yard waste."
- Tie branches with string 3 feet max length and 1 inch max diameter
- Place barrels, bags, and branches curbside by 6 a.m.
- If you have two recycling days per week, collection is on your first recycling day of the week
- We don’t collect leaf and yard waste curbside on non-scheduled weeks
- We collect Christmas trees from January 4 – 15, 2021

- No plastic bags
- No dirt
- Don’t put branches in barrels
- Don’t place bags
- Place leaves and yard debris in large paper bags
- Leaf and yard waste curbside drop-off

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**Household hazardous waste drop-off locations**

- **MAY 21 | SOUTH BOSTON**
  - Central DPW facility
  - 400 Frontage Rd.
- **JUNE 24 | SOUTH BOSTON**
  - Central DPW facility
  - 400 Frontage Rd.

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**Compost AT HOME**

- You can buy backyard compost bins and kitchen-scrap buckets at:
  - Boston Building Resources
  - 100 Terence St. Mission Hill, Roxbury

For more information, go to:

- boston.gov/trash
The City of Boston is dedicated to transforming Boston into a zero waste city. Help us reach that goal by reducing, repairing, and reusing materials before recycling or throwing them away. Learn more at boston.gov/zero-waste.

IS IT CLEAN?
Rinse recyclable items before you put them in the blue bin.

DON'T CONTAMINATE
Download the Boston Trash Day App to learn what items you can and can't recycle.

BREAK IT DOWN
Break down all cardboard before you recycle it.

DONATE
Donate unwanted items instead of throwing them out.

BOS:311
TRASH REDUCTION
WASTE DAY APP
CITY of BOSTON
Mayor Martin J. Walsh