



# BOSTON

## Recycling & Trash Directory



Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor, City of Boston

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## Recycling & Trash Directory



CITY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Friends,

You've probably heard a lot of talk about climate change, but maybe you haven't heard a lot about what you can do about it right in your own neighborhood. Recycling and properly disposing of trash are two important ways you can improve our environment. This recycling and trash guide will provide you with information you need to help us green Boston even further.

Together, we have already made Boston one of the greenest cities in the nation, but we still have a lot of work to do. Recycling, in particular, is very important. More recycling means less trash in landfills across our country. To make it easier for you to recycle, starting in July, all residents will be able to mix their recycling together in their recycling bins. This means you will not have to separate paper from plastic, and new larger recycling carts will be delivered across the city throughout the year so that you can recycle more.

Recycling does more than improve our environment. It helps keep our streets clean, and it saves the City money by decreasing the amount of solid waste that we dispose of. I appreciate everything you have done so far, and I urge you to continue increasing your recycling efforts.

Thank you for all you do to make Boston the best city on earth.

Sincerely,

THOMAS M. MENINO  
Mayor of Boston

[www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling)



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# RECYCLING



## Recycling Container Options

### Clear Plastic Bag

- *clear* plastic only
- 32-gallons or less
- heavy duty
- available at local retailers (visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling) for a complete list)
- separating redeemable cans and bottles into a separate container is recommended



### Converted Trash Can

When you recycle more, you'll have less trash and won't need as many trash cans. Convert an unneeded can into a recycling container. The can must be no larger than 32 gallons and have a lid.



Call 617-635-4500 to request an official sticker to label one of your existing trash cans as a recycling container.

### Large Wheeled Cart

The city can provide your building with a large wheeled cart if the building is on a street accessible by the large recycling truck.

If you would like a cart, please call 617-635-4500 to place a request. Your street will be evaluated and, if accessible, your building will receive a cart.



### Small Blue Recycling Bin

You may continue to use your small blue bin. New or replacement blue bins, however, will no longer be provided by the city.

## Placement of Recycling Carts for Pickup

These new carts are large and must be wheeled to the recycling truck instead of carried. To ensure that the recycling collectors can access your cart, please place it in front of your residence in one of the following locations:



1. On the curb, away from parked cars\*



2. On the street, in front of the curb, between parked cars\*

\*During winter, place carts next to or in front of snow banks. Do not place carts behind snow banks.



# RECYCLING



## Acceptable Materials for Recycling

Beginning July 1, 2009, mix all of these materials together in your recycling cart or container. Leaving plastic windows, staples, paper clips, and spirals in paper is ok. Remember to rinse out cans, bottles, and jars. Leaving labels and lids on is ok.



newspapers with inserts, magazines, catalogs

junk mail, colored paper

flattened food boxes

paperback books

pizza boxes (empty)

flattened cardboard boxes

telephone books

milk and juice cartons

juice/soymilk boxes

glass jars and bottles

aluminum and tin cans

all plastic containers

**NEW ITEM** spiral cans (potato chip/coffee cans, etc)

**NEW ITEM** rigid plastics (laundry baskets, buckets, toys, etc)

## Recycling in Large Apartment Buildings and Condos

Buildings with seven or more residential units are considered large. Large buildings that receive city trash pickup services are required by law to have recycling programs.

Large building owners or condo associations are required to provide and maintain large wheeled carts that go in centralized locations for all building residents to use.

To place a large building recycling program request, call 617-635-4500.



## Donate Reusable Household Items

- Reusable clothing, furniture, small appliances: donate to charity.
- Reusable doors, windows, bathroom fixtures: donate to the Boston Materials Resource Center. For details, visit their website at [www.bostonbmrc.org](http://www.bostonbmrc.org) or call them at 617-442-8917.

## Recycle on Trash Day

Set recycling out by 7am on the same day you set out your trash. If your trash is collected twice per week, set your recycling container out by 7am on the first day. If your trash is collected three times per week, set your recycling container out by 7am on Friday. Remember to separate recycling from trash on the curb.

## Unacceptable Materials for Recycling

Keep these items out of your recycling cart or container:



- X styrofoam
- X plastic bags
- X motor oil containers
- X chemical containers
- X ceramics or dishes
- X lightbulbs
- X window glass, mirrors
- X yard waste (see pages 9,10)
- X food waste
- X televisions and computer monitors (see pages 7,8)

# TRASH



## Acceptable Items for Regular Trash

- household trash
- food waste
- household appliances
- electronics
- mattress/box spring
- furniture
- carpet (must be no longer than 3 feet and tied)
- washer or dryer\*
- stove\*
- dishwasher\*
- hot water heater\*

## Trash Items Needing Special Pickup

Call 617-635-4500 or e-mail [trashtvcrt@cityofboston.gov](mailto:trashtvcrt@cityofboston.gov) to schedule pickup of these items:

- computer monitors\*
- televisions\*
- water coolers\*
- dehumidifiers\*
- refrigerators\*
- air conditioners\*

\*these items are recycled



## Unacceptable Trash Items

If these items are reusable, donate them. Or, you must hire a commercial rubbish hauler to collect them; search the yellow pages for listings:

- bricks
  - automotive components
  - dirt, rocks, stones
  - fire debris
  - construction and demolition material
  - fences
  - oil drums
  - plumbing fixtures
  - more than a gallon of liquid waste (including cooking oil)
  - **recyclable material** (see pages 4,5,6,7)
  - **yard waste** (see pages 10,11)
- See pages 12,13 for info on the following unacceptable materials:
- **tires**
  - **hazardous material**
  - **syringes and needles**

## Trash Preparation

### Barrels

- made of metal or durable plastic
- lid required
- no larger than 32 gallons in capacity
- when full, no heavier than 50 pounds



### Bags

- **black** trash bags
- 32-gallons or less
- made of 2-ply plastic
- *Setting trash out for pickup in kitchen bags, grocery store bags, paper bags, cartons, or boxes is not acceptable.*



Set trash out neatly at the curb by 7am on your trash day(s) or after 5pm the night before. Remember to separate trash from recycling on the curb.



**NOT THIS**

Report trash violations to Code Enforcement at 617-635-4896

**THIS**



# LEAF & YARD WASTE



## Seasonal Leaf and Yard Waste Collection

Leaf and yard waste is collected in the fall and spring, then composted. Place yard waste on the curb by 7am on your recycling day during yard waste collection weeks. For collection dates, visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling) or call 617-635-4500. Leaf and yard waste is not collected during the two weeks before the special pickup begins.

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

Stickers to label barrels are available by calling 617-635-4500 (up to 2 stickers available per household; paper leaf bags do *not* need labels).

Tie branches with string. Make sure they are no longer than 3 feet and no wider than 1 inch.



## Christmas Trees

Set tree out at the curb on your recycling day during the first two FULL weeks in January. Remove decorations and stands. Do not put tree in a plastic bag.

## Home 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.

### Backyard Compost Bins and Kitchen Scrap Buckets for Sale

You can compost in your own backyard using a compost bin.

Bins are available to Boston residents at subsidized prices. Kitchen scrap buckets are also available. Call 617-635-4500 or visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling/composting.asp](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling/composting.asp) for details.

Compost bins can be purchased Monday through Saturday, 9am-3pm at the Boston Building Materials Coop, located at 100 Terrace St in Mission Hill. See pictures of sample compost bins below.

Compost bins can also be purchased on special dates and times at neighborhood community centers. Visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling/composting.asp](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling/composting.asp) or call 617-635-4500 for specific locations, dates, and times.



# HAZARDOUS WASTE



## Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Days

Do not place hazardous waste with your regular trash. Instead, residents may bring up to 50 gallons of products labeled hazardous to the City's drop-off days, held up to four times per year.

In addition to hazardous materials, residents may also bring tires and propane tanks to drop-off days.

Visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling/hazardouswaste.asp](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling/hazardouswaste.asp) or call 617-635-4500 for locations, dates and times of drop-off days, and to obtain a detailed list of acceptable materials.

**Proof of Boston residency is required to drop-off hazardous waste. Commercial waste will NOT be accepted.**



### Mercury

Old style thermometers, thermostats, and compact fluorescent light bulbs all contain mercury and are hazardous. Bring these items to a hazardous waste drop-off day.

Compact fluorescent light bulbs may also be taken to any Home Depot. Home Depot will safely dispose of these bulbs for free.



## Surplus Paint and Used Motor Oil Recycling Drop-Offs

### Free Interior and Exterior Paint Available

Residents may bring containers of reusable paint, stains, varnishes, polyurethane, or paint thinner to a Drop-Off. Residents may take away as much paint as they want—for FREE!



### If You Change Your Own Oil

Bring used oil from your car, boat, or other vehicle to a Drop-Off. Do not mix the oil with any other substance. Antifreeze and steering wheel fluid will NOT be accepted.



### Regulations

- **Proof of Boston residency required**
- 20 containers maximum
- Paints must be in original containers with legible labels
- Containers must not be open or leaking
- Items must not be mixed
- Evaporated or empty cans and aerosol paint cans will NOT be accepted
- Commercial waste will NOT be accepted

### Schedule

Drop-off sites are open **May through August, 9am-1pm** on the following days and locations:

- 1st Saturday of the month: Roxbury Public Works Yard, 280 Highland St
- 2nd Saturday of the month: Hyde Park Public Works Yard, 58 Dana Av
- 3rd Saturday of the month: Brighton Public Works Yard, 315 Western Av
- 4th Saturday of the month: East Boston Public Works Yard, 329 E Eagle St

### Safe Syringe & Needle Disposal

Contact the Boston Needle Exchange Program at 617-592-7828.





## HOLIDAY! Collection Schedule

To find out if your trash and recycling collection is delayed due to a holiday and to obtain the most up-to-date holiday collection schedule, please visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/sanolidays.asp](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/sanolidays.asp) or call 617-635-4500.

You can also find information about collection days at [www.cityofboston.gov/myneighborhood](http://www.cityofboston.gov/myneighborhood).



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q** Who do I call if my recycling and/or trash is not picked up?

**A** Call the Mayor's 24-hour hotline at 617-635-4500.

**Q** Where does my recycling go?

**A** Recyclable material is brought to a recycling processing facility where a series of machines and people sort the material. The recyclables are then baled and delivered to product manufacturers for remanufacture.

**Q** What do I do with household batteries?

**A** Non-rechargeable batteries are non-hazardous and may be placed with your regular trash. Rechargeable batteries are hazardous and should be taken to a hazardous waste drop-off day (see pages 12,13).

**Q** Where can I recycle plastic bags?

**A** Many major supermarkets collect plastic bags for recycling. Visit [www.plasticbagrecycling.org](http://www.plasticbagrecycling.org) for details.

**Q** Can I recycle wrapping paper?

**A** Yes, wrapping paper is acceptable for recycling.

**Q** How can I recycle at work?

**A** Contact your trash hauler. Trash haulers that pickup trash in Boston are required to provide recycling services. You can also find information at [www.massrecycle.org/recycleatwork.html](http://www.massrecycle.org/recycleatwork.html).

**Q** Where can I recycle my cell phone?

**A** Visit [www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/plugin/cellphone](http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/plugin/cellphone) for information about the best way to recycle your cell phone. Or, obtain a pre-paid mailing envelope, available at most wireless retailers.



**Q** Where can I recycle electronics?

**A** Visit [www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/electron.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/electron.htm) or contact the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for resources related to electronics recycling. You can also visit [www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling](http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/recycling) for information on the city's annual electronics recycling drop-off.

**Q** How can I recycle my computer?

**A** You can recycle CRT computer monitors (see pages 7,8). The other computer components are not hazardous. You can give them away, recycle them independently (see electronics recycling above), or place them with your regular trash.

**Q** Where can I learn more about greening my home?

**A** Visit [www.cityofboston.gov/environment](http://www.cityofboston.gov/environment) and [www.mass.gov/dep/service/greenliving.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dep/service/greenliving.htm) to learn more.

**Q** Can I recycle at school?

**A** Yes; Boston Public Schools have recycling programs.

### Stay in Touch

If you have feedback, the Recycling Office wants to hear from you. E-mail [recyclemore@cityofboston.gov](mailto:recyclemore@cityofboston.gov) or call 617-635-4500.

To receive e-mail updates about recycling opportunities in Boston, visit [www.cityofboston.gov/subscribe](http://www.cityofboston.gov/subscribe) to join the recycling listserv.



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**For more information, call 617-635-4500**



Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor, City of Boston

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