

Multi-family Waste Diversion Guide

for building owners and managers

Nearly 50 per cent of waste from multi-family homes can be recycled or composted. As the owner or manager of a multi-family complex, you are required to provide on-site recycling and food and yard waste diversion for your residents to help them do their part to keep waste out of our landfills.

Waste Bylaw 4M2020 requires that all multi-family owners:

- Collect and store recyclables and food and yard waste separate from garbage.
- Ensure adequate containers are available for recyclable and food and yard waste materials. “Adequate containers” means having enough containers, of sufficient capacity, in all locations they are needed.
- Post clear signage that shows what materials are to be deposited in each bin.
- Ensure recycling and food and yard waste bins are emptied as necessary and that collected materials are taken to recycling or composting facilities.
- Provide information to new and existing tenants, and employees on an annual basis including:
 - » List of accepted materials and the collection locations.
 - » How to properly prepare and sort material for diversion.

What is multi-family housing?

Waste & Recycling Services defines multi-family housing as any complex with five or more residential units on a single parcel of land.

Flexibility and choice

All multi-family complexes are different, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. The bylaw gives you choice and flexibility about how the recyclables, food, and yard waste are stored and collected.

Four steps to set up a waste diversion program:

- 1. Decide who will provide collection service – pg 2**
- 2. Make sure you accept the right material – pg 4-5**
- 3. Decide where to store your materials – pg 6**
- 4. Inform your residents about your program – pg 8**

This guide has details about what you need to be bylaw compliant. You can also visit calgary.ca/multifamily for information and resources.



By diverting recyclables, food, and yard waste, we can reduce our dependency on landfills. We also minimize environmental impact, and produce useful resources such as a new products and compost.

1. Decide who will provide collection service

Many collection companies service multi-family complexes. They can provide you with a range of collection and container options, signage and support to communicate with your residents.

Hiring a collection company

You can hire a company to collect recycling, food, and yard waste the same way you hire a garbage hauler, landscaper or any other service provider. Cost will vary between service providers depending on the layout of your complex and the type of service you require.

When making your hiring decision:

- Compare apples to apples – make sure you are comparing similar collection container sizes, frequency of collection, educational/communication support, and terms and conditions.
- Get at least three quotes.
- Make sure you fully understand the terms of your contract before signing. Negotiate terms that you aren't comfortable with.

Once you have a contract:

- Stay in frequent contact with your waste service provider and seek out multiple quotes every time your contract comes up for renewal.
- Compare the service you receive to what is shown on your invoice to make sure it's accurate.
- Adjust your bin size and collection frequency if needed so that you are only paying for what your complex needs.

Ask for feedback from your collection company

Your waste service provider may be able to give you feedback about your waste diversion program. This might include tonnes composted and recycled, comments on contamination, damage to bins and reasons for missed collection. Pass along feedback to residents to further support waste diversion in your complex by posting signage near waste stations, newsletters or posters in common areas.

Common Contract Language

- Fuel surcharge – built-in clause to manage the varying cost of fuel.
- Environmental fees – costs related to environmental compliance, this could include collection, transfer, landfill and recycling fees.
- Bin delivery fee – cost to set up the new service.
- Right of first refusal – a requirement to offer the company subsequent work before it is offered to a third party. Various conditions may apply.
- Special fees – special fees for changing bin sizes, extra collections, roll out fees, locking fees, cleaning bins, contamination, etc.
- Evergreen Clause- automatic contract renewal statement.





Tips – Hiring a collection company

Collection companies can be good resources for setting up your diversion programs. A directory of collection companies that provide recycling and food and yard waste service can be found at calgary.ca/haulerdirectory.

The City is here to help – if you have questions, please contact 311.

Questions to ask

Here are some questions to consider when talking to a prospective collection company:

ABOUT THE CONTRACT

- Do you have a standard contract?
- What will the service cost?
 - » Are there any extra fees I should know about?
 - » If your rates change during the contract, what is the process for notifying your customers?
- How long are your contracts?
- Can I leave the contract if I am unsatisfied with your service? Are there penalties to do so?
- How will I be invoiced?
 - » Is the invoice itemized so I can see what is being paid for?
- Will you help determine if there are the right number and sizes of recycling and food and yard waste containers?
- Will you adjust the sizes or number of containers if needed? Are there costs associated with these changes?

ABOUT THE COLLECTION SERVICE

- Do you collect all of the materials that the bylaw requires? (See pages 4 and 5 for the full list)
- Do you collect other items? What types of containers are available? What sizes are available?
- What kind of container options do you service? Are you able to be flexible about storage locations and container types?
- Do you provide recycling and food and yard waste containers such as kitchen compost pails for each unit?
- How will the material be picked up? And how often?
- Where do you take your material after you pick it up?

FOR FOOD AND YARD WASTE

- Do you require liners in the containers or tenants to use compostable bags?
- Do you offer a container cleaning service?

FOR RECYCLABLES

- Do recyclables need to be sorted by material type or can all recyclables go in one container together?
- Are there any special preparation instructions (ie. recyclables loose in dumpsters or bundling plastic bags)

ABOUT ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- Will you provide signs, flyers or other support to help my residents learn how to use the service?
 - » Note, most collection companies will do this. If not, you can find templates and other resources to help you at calgary.ca/multifamily.

2. Make sure you accept the right material

Your **recycling program** must accept:

<p>Newspaper, catalogues and magazines</p> 	<p>Mixed paper (like flyers, envelopes and office paper)</p> 
<p>Boxboard and corrugated cardboard</p> 	<p>Shredded paper</p> 
<p>Refundable beverage containers</p> 	<p>Juice and soup boxes (such as Tetra Paks™)</p> 
<p>Glass jars and bottles</p> 	<p>Plastic containers</p> 
<p>Tin cans and foil</p> 	<p>Plastic bags (should be bundled in a tied plastic bag)</p> 

Your **food and yard waste program** must accept:

All food (raw and cooked)	
<p>Plate scrapings</p> 	<p>Eggshells and dairy products</p> 
<p>Meat, fish, shellfish and bones</p> 	<p>Jams, sauces and salad dressings</p> 
<p>Fruits and vegetables</p> 	<p>Pastries, cookies, cakes and muffins</p> 
<p>Bread, noodles, rice, beans and grains</p> 	<p>Nuts, seeds, chips, popcorn and candy</p> 
Food soiled paper	
<p>Paper plates and napkins</p> 	<p>Coffee filters and tea bags</p> 
Yard waste	
<p>Leaves</p> 	<p>Plants and weeds</p> 
<p>Branches and prunings</p> 	<p>Grass clippings and sod</p> 

3. Decide where to store your material

Find an on-site location that works for your residents and service providers. If the location is convenient, your residents are more likely to use it.

Make sure your waste storage area is easy for residents to use

- Place bins in convenient areas for your residents. Food and yard waste and recycling containers should be as convenient as garbage containers. Work with your collection company to find an area that is close to common areas where residents frequently travel.
- Make the waste storage area prominent and visible.
- Ensure the area is well lit and tidy.
- If your recycling and/or food and yard waste containers are in a different area than your main garbage containers, consider placing a smaller garbage container alongside them. This helps reduce contamination by making it easier for your residents to sort their waste into the right places.

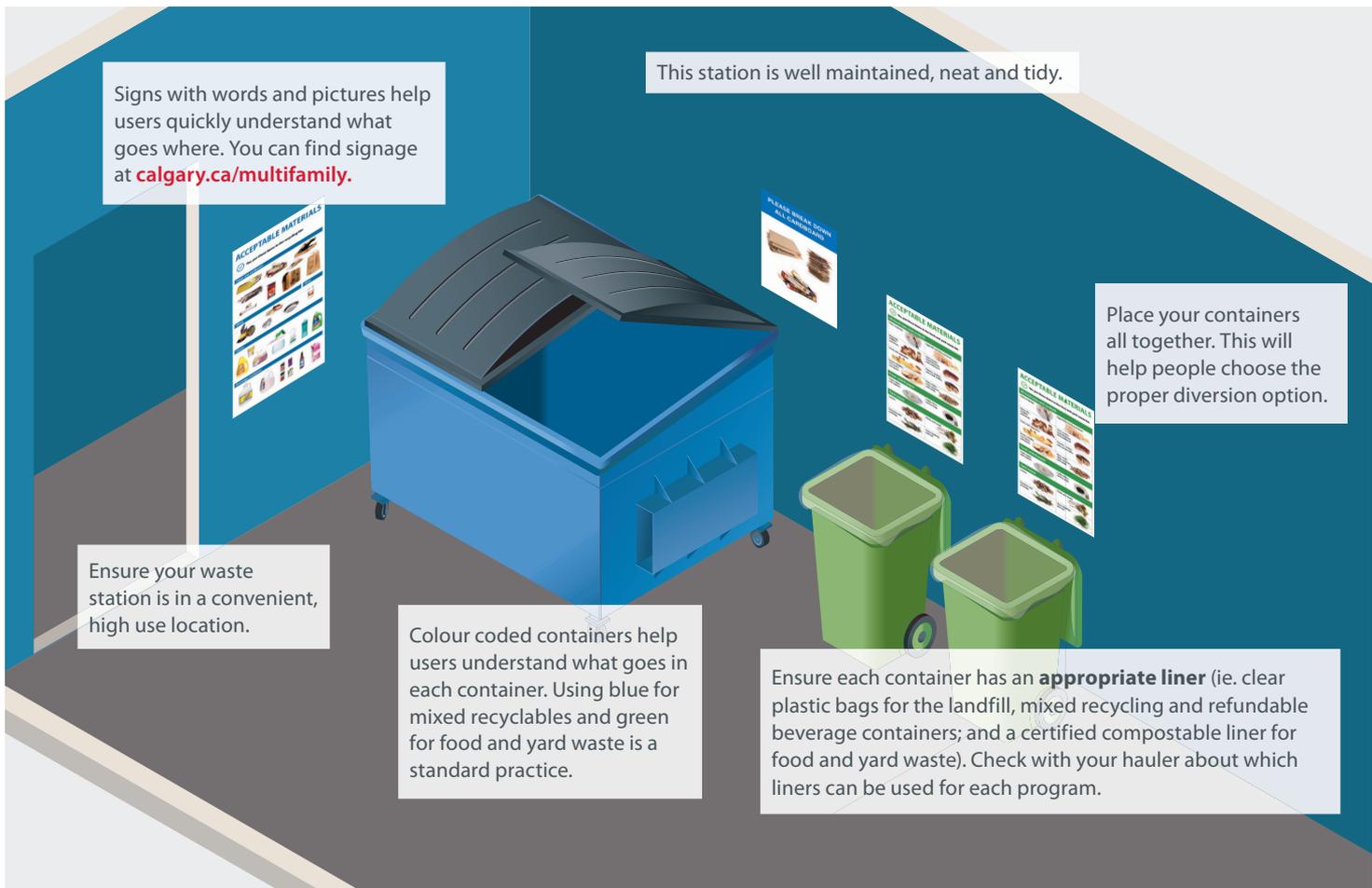
The bylaw requires you to have sufficient numbers and locations of containers for your complex. As long as your containers are kept in good condition and there are enough that they are not overflowing between collection days, you are meeting this requirement.

With recycling and food and yard waste containers in place, you should be able to switch to a smaller garbage container.

Accessibility for residents

Consider placing containers inside or near the building for residents with limited mobility to make it easier to access diversion programs. Consider containers of a height that can be used by all residents and lids that can be easily lifted.

An example of an indoor waste station:



Development permits

Most complexes should be able to find storage solutions that don't require renovations or permits, such as changing the way the garbage is stored within existing waste storage areas.

If any changes are made to the building, landscaping or parking, a new or revised Development Permit is required. If you have any questions, contact 311.

Fire code

When deciding where and how to set up your storage area, there are a few fire code considerations you need to follow:

Indoors

- Waste containers should not block hallways, stairwells, doorways or any other area needed for a safe exit route from the building.
- Material should not accumulate to the point where it creates a fire hazard.
- Service rooms (furnace, maintenance, sprinkler control, utility rooms) cannot be used to store recycling, food and yard waste, or other waste materials.

Outdoors

- Take measures to ensure that buildings are protected from fires in outdoor waste containers. For example:
 - » Place your containers in a secure area.
 - » Do not position containers under eaves, carports or building overhangs.
 - » Schedule regular pick up and/or call for immediate pick up if the containers is full.

If you have questions about whether your storage plans adhere to the Alberta Fire Code, contact 311 and ask for a general fire inquiry.

Accessibility for collectors

Ensure the placement of your new recycling and food and yard waste bins doesn't prevent collection of your garbage containers. As well, your storage should not pose a safety hazard or impede the flow of traffic in or around your parking area.

Preventing odours and pests in your Food and Yard waste Containers

If you are concerned with odours and pests here are a few tips that can help:

- Use a sturdy food and yard waste container with a lid that keeps pests out.
- Keep the lids closed. Put up a sign near the container reminding residents to close the lid after use.
- Consider whether to line your container with newspaper, craft paper bags, compostable plastic bags or not use a liner at all. Talk to your service provider about the liner options they offer or require.
- Arrange to have more frequent collection during periods of peak odour and peak use, such as the summer.
- Sprinkle a small amount of baking soda in your food and yard waste container to minimize odour.
- Encourage residents to use certified compostable bags if accepted by your collection company.

Cleaning food and yard waste containers

When rinsing your containers, pour the dirty water onto the grass or gravel, not down the storm drain.

Some service providers will clean your food and yard waste containers, or swap out the containers on collection days.

Reduce illegal dumping

To reduce the likelihood of illegal dumping, consider:

- Storing your containers inside the building or an enclosure.
- Locking containers stored outside between collections.
- Storing containers in well-lit areas close to your building.

Talk to your service provider about additional options they may have.

4. Inform your residents about your program

The bylaw requires you to inform your residents about your waste diversion program when a new resident moves in, and again at least annually. Making sure your residents understand how to use your program is key to making it successful and preventing issues. Here are some suggestions that can help:

Tell your residents about the program

You will need to regularly inform your residents about the accepted collected materials and the proper method for preparing and sorting them for collection.

Provide each unit with an information package that explains the following:

- What materials can and cannot be put in the recycling and food and yard waste containers.
- Why it is important to use the recycling and food and yard waste services.
- How material should be prepared and sorted.
- Where the containers are located.
- Information on recycling and garbage collection and what to do with common items not accepted in your regular collection (e.g. furniture, electronics, motor oil or household chemicals).

Educational resources are available at calgary.ca/multifamily. We recommend that you provide information to residents periodically throughout the year as a reminder.

Use signs, labels and posters

You must ensure that there is clear signage on the containers that indicates which materials are accepted.

- Post labels about what goes in each container at eye level or on the front of the collection container, so residents will immediately see where to put their material.
- Put up signs in your building's common areas (e.g. lobby, mailbox room, elevators, laundry and waste storage area). There are signs available on calgary.ca/multifamily.
- Put up posters using pictures to explain what can and cannot be put in the containers. Pictures are easier to recognize and help residents who may speak different languages. Visual posters are available on calgary.ca/multifamily.
- Consider laminating signs and posters or covering with plexiglass to keep them clean.
- Replace signage/labels that are faded or ripped.

How do I get more information?

Visit calgary.ca/multifamily for tools, resources and the most up-to-date information. If you have a question that hasn't been answered here, contact 311.

Encourage new residents to participate

Provide new residents with an information package and offer a move-in waste tour to show where waste containers are and how your collection system works.

Consider giving residents a kitchen compost pail and recycling container for their convenience.

Train your on-site staff about your program

If you have on-site maintenance staff or a property manager, ensure they are aware of the recycling and food and yard waste programs so they can help answer questions from residents and identify any issues.

Give them key information such as:

- Where the food and yard waste and recycling containers are located.
- What can and cannot be put in the containers.
- How residents should prepare their waste.
- How to resolve common problems.
- Contact details for your collection company.
- Where to get more information. Provide an easy way for residents and on-site staff to ask questions regarding the service.

Monitor your program

Regularly visit the waste storage area in your complex to identify any issues that need to be addressed.

- Look for contamination inside the containers and identify common items that are unacceptable. Educate residents about these common mistakes with signage in the area.
- Check that the area is clean and tidy – this will help deter pests. Clear out any obstacles that make it difficult to access the containers.