



# Mandatory Waste Source Separation Guide

*It's time to **ReThink** how we  
deal with our waste!*

## Why?

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has a goal to reach **90% waste diversion** from the landfill. To help us reach this goal, the RDN adopted a bylaw where all residential (condos and apartments), commercial (businesses) and institutional (schools and government buildings) properties need to have garbage, recycling and food waste bins.

This means, that if you live, work or have a business in **Nanaimo, Lantzville, Parksville, Qualicum Beach** or an RDN **Electoral Area**, this bylaw applies to you.





# Food Waste

Did you know that **over 40%** of the waste sent to landfill from commercial sources can be **composted** – most of which is **food waste**. When food waste ends up in the landfill, it creates **methane**. Some of this methane is captured, but some is released into the environment and makes **climate change worse**. Instead, you can **send your food waste for composting** and turn it into soil to **help grow more food**.



## What's included

**Commercial composting** is different from backyard composting. With commercial composting, a food waste collection system includes **all food** – **fruits, vegetables, dairy, bread, pasta**, even **meat and bones!** **Napkins, paper towels** and other **paper products** that have been soiled with food can also be included – so if you're worried about the smell or the mess, just wrap your food scraps in napkins, paper towels, newspaper or other paper products.



## Signage

Your waste hauler can **provide signage** for their specific collection system. This is an example of what that may look like.

# FOOD WASTE

 <b>FRUITS &amp; VEGETABLES</b>	 <b>MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, SHELLFISH &amp; BONES</b>	 <b>BREAD, DOUGH, PASTA &amp; GRAINS</b>
 <b>EGGS &amp; DAIRY PRODUCTS</b>	 <b>FOOD SCRAPS</b>	 <b>FOOD SOILED PAPER &amp; CARDBOARD</b>
 <b>TEA BAGS, COFFEE GROUNDS &amp; FILTERS</b>	 <b>FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS</b>	 <b>PAPER TOWELS, NAPKINS &amp; PAPER PLATES</b>

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PROHIBITED:**

- LAWN CLIPPINGS or YARD TRIMMINGS
- Plastics including biodegradable bags
- Soil, sand or rocks
- Diapers and other personal hygiene items

**1** If you choose to line your cart, use newspaper or purchase compostable bags (must have certified compostable logo).

**2** Remove stickers and other metal or synthetic materials before composting.

Place your carts at the curb by 8 am on your collection day. Make sure your carts:

- open towards the street;
- are at least 1m (3ft) apart, 1m (3ft) away from obstacles such as cars and 3m (10ft) clearance above; and
- lids are closed.

## Waste Stations

### Kitchen catcher



**Do you have kitchen or break room in your office?** The easiest method for collecting food scraps and other food waste is with a countertop container, often called a **kitchen catcher**. It's a handy tool to keep **food fast stored, accessible, sealed** and **easily transferred** to a central collection point. Most large retailers and grocery stores carry different styles and some waste haulers may be able to provide to residents as part of their collection contract. Another option would be to **upcycle** an **old ice cream pail** or **coffee tin**.

### What about "compostable plastics"?

Most commercial composters **do not accept compostable, biodegradable or oxo-degradable products** because these items do not break down properly and can **contaminate the finished compost product**. If you are uncertain if you can put compostable products in your food waste bin, **ask your waste hauler**. You may also be able to negotiate with your hauler about using certain compostable plastic bags to line your bins or **you can use newspaper!**



## Indoor and outdoor waste sorting stations

There are a number of companies that offer waste sorting stations, depending on your needs, including **Grand and Toy, Canadian Tire, Busch Systems, Clean River, Clear Stream Recycling System, and Gladson.**



# Recycling

Recycling takes items that would have gone to the landfill and instead **turns them into something new**. By recycling we **reduce the need for extracting raw materials**.



## What's included

Recycling has changed a lot through the years. With better processing available, there are a lot **more things that can be recycled**. It's important to remember that just because something is recyclable, doesn't mean it can go into your recycling bin, some items have to be taken to a depot. Depending on who your waste hauler is, **different items will be accepted** in your recycling bin.

## Signage

To help you understand what can and can't be recycled, **talk to your hauler** about getting signs for your collection area and for residents' homes. This is an example of what that may look like.

## Take it to the depot

British Columbia has one of the most extensive depot recycling programs in Canada. **All of these items can be taken to a depot:**

	Glass jars and bottles		Lightbulbs
	Foam packaging		Motor oil and gasoline
	Plastic bags/film/overwrap		Paint
	Small appliances		Tires
	Electronics		Outdoor power equipment
	Power tools		Deposit beverage containers
	Batteries		Major appliances

When these depot items end up in the garbage or mixed into your recycling, they **can damage the environment, hurt collection staff** and **cause machine breakdowns** at processing facilities.

### And remember:

- **Keep items loose** – do NOT stack items inside one another.
- **Rinse, squish and flatten** before placing in bin. **Remove** any tape, string, ribbon or other contaminants.



If you're uncertain about what to do with an item, **download the RDN CURBSIDE app** to find out "What Goes Where", even if you aren't a curbside customer, or visit [rdn.bc.ca/what-goes-where](https://rdn.bc.ca/what-goes-where)



# Setting your office up for **success**

## Step 1 – Find the leaders that will help make the program successful

- **Share with the staff** the RDN's goal to reach **90% diversion of waste** and the **new bylaw** that requires all residential (condos and apartments), commercial (businesses) and institutional (schools and government buildings) properties to have garbage, recycling and food waste bins.
- **Learn how they currently use the collection service** and **what changes are needed** to make it more effective. What **efficiency** can be made? Should garbage bins be removed from offices and instead relocated to central waste stations?

## Step 2 – Talk to your hauler and cleaning service to set up the collection service

- **Work with the hauler** and cleaning service to figure out how to best provide the collection service for your building.
  - ◆ Which garbage bins get used the most?
  - ◆ 1 large bin vs many small ones throughout the building (we recommend that a food waste bin and recycling bin be placed in each location there is a garbage bin).
  - ◆ Bins should be easy to access with appropriate signage.
  - ◆ Does the hauler offer a service to assess your waste to find areas for improvements?
- **Costs will vary** depending on what service you choose, multiple collection days will cost more. Garbage is made up of mostly recyclables and food waste so you may be able to switch over to a smaller garbage bin or less frequent garbage collection as staff get used to using the new bins.



*Is your office too small to produce enough waste to hire a hauler? To meet the requirement under the bylaw you can haul your own waste, as needed, as long you provide a three bin service of garbage, recycling and food waste.*

## Step 3 – Get everyone participating



- **Host a staff meeting** to provide as much notice as possible about the new collection service, invite the hauler and cleaning service to this meeting to help answer any questions and to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- **Ensure staff know** where the different collection areas are in the building.
- Have the waste hauler **provide communications material** for all bins to reduce contamination.
- **Store information** about the collection service where staff can easily find it.

## Step 4 – Monitoring

- Continue to **monitor** to determine if you need more or less collection bins or if you have contamination in your bins.
- Ensure the **signage** is clean and visible.
- Have periodic **workshops** with your staff about using the collection service. Include your hauler.
- **Continue educating** existing and new staff.



### What other streams of waste do you have that could be diverted?

Visit [www.rcbc.ca/recycling-programs/epr](http://www.rcbc.ca/recycling-programs/epr) to learn about other collection programs in British Columbia. Although these programs normally operate through a depot system, some, like Call 2 Recycle (battery recycling) and TerraCycle (pen recycling) offer bulk collection service for large volume producers.