



FAIRFAX

RECYCLES



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Spring 2024

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As the vibrant hues of spring paint the world with its breathtaking beauty, there's no better moment to invigorate our dedication to minimizing waste. In this special spring

edition of the Fairfax Recycler newsletter, we're thrilled to offer a bouquet of tips, updates, and resources tailored to inspire your journey toward waste reduction and eco-friendly living. Take advantage of the abundance of resources on the County website, including a [recycling flow chart](#) and a guide detailing items [suitable for curbside recycling](#). Dive deeper into waste management with the comprehensive guide [“Recycle or Trash – What goes where?”](#) and challenge yourself with the interactive waste sorting game [“Sort it out!”](#)

As part of our ongoing efforts to connect, stay in the loop with us on [Facebook](#) and [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) @ffxpublicworks for the latest regulatory updates and invaluable tips on effective waste management.

Let's welcome the season of renewal by embracing sustainable habits and working together towards a cleaner, greener future for Fairfax County and valuable tips on effective waste management.

Waste Wizard

Stay calm about recycling! Search Waste Wizard learn how & to dispose of everyday items Curious about



our and where instead. what

people most often search for on our Waste Wizard? Our top five items are scrap metal, furniture, mattresses, microwaves, and televisions! See for yourself what to do with these items and more. [Click here](#)



Spring Cleaning

Amidst the vibrant tapestry of spring's arrival, let's harmonize our actions with the rhythm of renewal. Whether we're parting ways with treasures of yesteryear during a spring cleanse, orchestrating the dance of relocation, or simply refreshing our wardrobes, let's ensure our choices echo with mindful intent.

- Donate with grace, offering new life to items that once held significance in our lives. Through the alchemy of generosity, our belongings find new purpose, sparking joy in the hearts of others.
- Repurpose with ingenuity, transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. Embrace the artistry of creativity as you breathe new life into forgotten treasures, infusing them with renewed vitality and purpose.
- Dispose properly with reverence, acknowledging the interconnectedness of all things. By honoring the cycle of sustainability, we safeguard the delicate balance of our precious ecosystem, ensuring a legacy of stewardship for generations to come.

As we dance through the seasons, let's move intentionally, mindful of the footsteps we leave behind. Let's weave a tapestry of sustainability, where every action is a brushstroke of beauty upon the canvas of our shared world.



What does a Proper Set-Out Look like?

The average household has two or three containers to set out weekly for the trash and recycling collection crews. Some of our waste and recyclables are collected by an automated truck, and some are collected by people who tip your cart or throw their bags into the truck. As you prepare for the weekly collection, here are some points to consider.

1. Set out bins the night before to accommodate early morning crews.
2. Leave it out. If trash/recycling/yard waste is not collected on your street, it will be collected as soon as possible. If **just your waste** was missed, it may have been left behind for a reason. There should be a note explaining what you need to do. Contact your service provider.
3. Close the lid to prevent wildlife intrusion, littering, and rain damage; consider drainage for your yard waste bins.
4. Give it some space. Try not to set your carts too close to cars, mailboxes, or utility lines.
5. Know the limits – bags or carts should weigh less than 50 pounds each.
6. Flatten and/or cut cardboard so it fits loosely inside your cart.
7. Don't put recyclables in plastic bags. The bags get tangled in machinery and create safety concerns at the recycling processing center.

To Recycle or Not



Not all materials are recyclable in a curbside collection program. Some recyclables can even end up in the trash due to contamination or the lack of feasible markets in which the materials are sold. The best way to ensure

optimum sustainability and efficiency is for customers to know the limitations of their curbside program. We would like to remind you to “recycle right” and follow five simple rules to ensure everything you put in the recycling bin is recycled.

1. **No plastic bags!** They get caught in the sorting machinery.
2. **Don't recycle anything smaller than your hand!** Stick closely to the recycling guidelines, which focus on paper, rigid plastic containers, and metal food and beverage containers to avoid machinery jams.
3. **No Multi-material Items.** Even simple items made from more than one base material should go in the trash, such as bubble wrap envelopes or plastic-coated coffee cups
4. **Avoid Wishful Recycling!** Wishful recycling or “wishcycling” is when an item is placed in the curbside recycling bin without knowing if it is recyclable but hopes that it is.
5. **Educate Yourself.** Batteries, electronics, paint cans, toys, clothes, and wood cannot be recycled in our curbside recycling program. There are alternative drop-off centers or programs where these items can be recycled.