Keeping residents informed about our waste management programs and services

How to be set-out savvy

The way to sort, prepare and set-out items for collection impacts safety, litter, collection time, diversion rates, and so many other things.

In this edition, we’re going back to basics and drilling down to the details to help explain the "hows" and "whys", so that you are prepared when it's collection day

The new, local Waste Whiz app is here!

Set collection reminders and look up what goes where in Waterloo Region.

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/waste
Below are issues we have found at the curb lately, and how to fix (and avoid) them.

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<th>The issue</th>
<th>Collection details</th>
<th>The fixes</th>
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| Late set out (people forget, sleep in, or think they know when the truck arrives) | • Collection crews start at 7 a.m.  
• Different trucks pick up different types of waste.  
• Each truck has GPS to confirm timing and route completion.  
• The time crews pick up varies week-to-week depending on road and weather conditions, and other factors. | • Set reminders using our [Waste app](#) (see ad above).  
• Set out after 5 p.m. the night before collection. (In winter, please remove snow from your items by 7 a.m. Loosen liner bags in green bins, in case they are frozen to the bin.) |
| Incorrect containers (broken, too big, not strong enough, difficult to empty) | • All items you set to the curb for collection are lifted manually by collection crews.  
• Correct containers, such as garbage cans with two handles and fully-detachable lids, help collectors pick up and fully empty contents.  
• Blue box materials get sorted into two compartments of the truck. Incorrect recycling containers (such as laundry hampers and storage totes) don't hang on the truck for proper sorting. (The Region audits loads every week to make sure collection crews are sorting, too!)  
• Containers have to be strong enough to hold their contents when lifted. For instance, a cardboard box is not allowed as a "blue box" since it may get wet and rip when lifted.  
• Containers that are overfilled create litter/spills or can be unsafe (too heavy) to lift. | • Use the correct type of garbage can or bag,  
• Replace your broken blue box and green bin  
• Use these tips to reduce your garbage, and fit more into your blue box  
• Purchase enough garbage bags/cans and blue boxes to handle your average set-out |
| Incorrect preparation (overweight, not sorted or separated, unbundled, not clean) also see Dangerous Conditions below. | • Cardboard has to be sized correctly to fit into the side-lifting compartment of the truck.  
• Glass, metal and plastic containers have to be loose in the blue box so they can be separated at our sorting facility. We do not have the equipment to remove bags.  
• Unbundled items can create litter, and can cause you to be over the bulky item or garbage limit.  
• When items are not prepared correctly, it takes extra time to collect (inefficiencies). For instance, staff collecting blue boxes have to sort out and sticker food and beverage containers that are not empty, and items that are not accepted (such as Styrofoam). | It's easy to find out how to prepare waste:  
• Waste Whiz  
• Sorting guide  
• 519-575-4400 |

*Bagged metal cans, and glass and plastic bottles is an example of incorrect preparation.*
Placement (on top of or behind snowbanks, buried in snow, blocked by parked car, on porches) • Crews need to be able to see the items. Please don’t place items behind snowbanks, hydro poles, plantings and parked cars. • Items have to be safe to access (and should not pose an issue for pedestrians and vehicles). • If the snowplow has buried or tipped over the items you’ve set out, your items can’t be collected. • Crews can better spot items that are set as close to the road as possible, placed at the end of your driveway on the left hand side (as you are looking at your home from the street).

Dangerous conditions (broken glass, knives needles, unleashed dogs, traffic) • Dangerous collection conditions result when items have not been sorted and prepared properly. Recently, collection crews found knives in a blue box in Breslau, and needles in blue boxes in Kitchener and Maryhill. These can result in collectors being injured, collection delays, and extra resources in investigation and education/prevention. • Collection staffs workplace is, of course, on the streets. Other drivers are asked to please slow down and take your time when passing crews completing collections. • Unleashed dogs are an issue and prevent collection. A collector was nearly bit by a dog in Elmira recently. That homeowner didn’t receive collection that week.

Remove snow • Place at ground level at the end of your driveway • Do not use white garbage bags in the winter

Make a shelf by shovelling out a shelf on the road-side at the end of your driveway.

Wrap broken glass and knives in several layers of newspaper, tape shut and place in the garbage

Use these instructions to dispose of needles

Keep your dog leashed
Did you receive the new collection calendar?

Calendars were mailed last month. If you didn't receive your copy,

- pick up a copy at a local garbage tag vendor
- use our online shortened version download the full version
- download the new waste app

Using any one of these references will help you set out the right items in the right way at the right time.

Do you have a medical condition that creates unavoidable garbage?

If so, you may be eligible for a medical exemption. We are now accepting applications for the 2020 Medical Exemptions program. To learn more, go to our website.

There are no changes to collection on Monday, February 17. However, our offices and drop-off facilities are closed to residents.

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