

City of Columbia Heights Solid Waste Operating Policies*

* As Authorized by the 2018 Amendments to the
City Solid Waste Management Ordinances
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Introduction

The City of Columbia Heights has developed these standards as specific requirements for the storage, collection and transportation of residential solid waste. The goals of these standards are to:

- ◆ Establish a system for the orderly and regular collection of garbage, recyclables, problem materials, organics, and yard wastes in the city;
- ◆ Ensure that the disposal of the materials shall be accomplished in a sanitary manner;
- ◆ Ensure the protection of public health and safety and promote city cleanliness and livability;
- ◆ Minimize vehicle wear and tear on streets and alleys due to large truck traffic;
- ◆ Provide high quality solid waste and recycling services in the most cost-effective manner possible;
- ◆ Be consistent with the requirements of the state statutes, state rules and Anoka County ordinances, and with state and Anoka County solid waste plans; and,
- ◆ Implement the City’s Garbage and Recycling Services Ordinance, Chapter 4 of the City’s code of ordinances through detailed instructions.

To accomplish the above goals, it is important for the city to have specific and consistent instructions for residents to follow as part of the waste and recyclables collection system. These standards do not replace or supersede city ordinances. The City Manager’s authority for adopting or amending these standards comes from Chapter 4: Municipal Services, Article VII: Refuse and Recycling Services.

These standards address:

- ◆ Garbage, problem material, recyclables, yard waste and other waste collection and disposal requirements;
- ◆ Recycling programs; and,
- ◆ Other collection system details that are part of the city’s garbage collection system.

Section 1 Definitions

All terms used within these standards shall have the same definition as the Garbage and Recycling Services Ordinance 1646. For convenience, frequently used terms are listed and defined below:

- 1.1 **Appliances** include washers, dryers, refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, humidifiers, microwaves, stoves, ranges, hot water heaters, water softeners and other, similar large household items that require electricity and/or special processing under Minnesota laws, but do not include “electronic waste.”
- 1.2 **Construction debris** means building materials, packaging, and rubble resulting from construction, remodeling, repair, and demolition of buildings.
- 1.3 **Electronic waste (electronic items)** has the meaning set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 115A.1310, subdivision 7 as a “covered electronic device” and includes items such as television and computer monitors, computers, computer peripheral devices, fax machines, DVD players, video cassette recorders, other video display devices, cell phones and other small appliances with an electric cord.
- 1.4 **Food waste** means residential food waste and includes meal preparation and left over food scraps from households intentionally separated at the source by residents for the purpose of backyard composting or separate collection.
- 1.5 **Garbage/Trash** has the meaning set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 115A.03, subdivision 21, mixed municipal solid waste, and means solid waste from residential, commercial, industrial, and community activities that the generator of the waste aggregates for collection, but does not include auto hulks, street sweepings, ash, construction debris, mining waste, sludge, tree and agricultural waste, tires, lead acid batteries, motor and vehicle fluids and filters, and other materials collected, processed, and disposed of as separate waste streams.
- 1.6 **Household hazardous waste** has the meaning set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 115A.96, subdivision 1, paragraph (b), and/or Minnesota Pollution Control Agency regulations and means waste generated from household activities that exhibits the characteristics of or that is listed as hazardous waste under agency rules, but does not include waste from commercial activities that is generated, stored, or present in a household and includes items such as paint, fluorescent light bulbs, mercury thermometers, cleaning fluids, herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers and other waste as defined in Minnesota statutes or regulations in that paragraph.

- 1.7 **Premise, Premises** shall mean any dwelling unit, building and every other place where any person resides within the City, including properties with more than one dwelling unit and properties with premises attached to retail or commercial structures.
- 1.8 **Problem materials** means all large, bulky household materials which are too large for one person to pick up and/or do not fit within the garbage cart and include (but are not limited to) carpeting and padding, mattresses, chairs, couches, tables, appliances, and household electronic waste.
- 1.9 **Residential dwelling unit (dwelling unit)** is a separate dwelling place with a kitchen.
- 1.10 **Solid waste(s)** has the meaning set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 116.06, subdivision 22(1)(9) but is further defined for purposes of this ordinance to include garbage, recyclables, appliances, problem materials, organics, yard waste, and household hazardous waste items.

Section 2 Goals and Plans

- 2.1 Background: The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is mandated by the state legislature to recycle 75% of solid waste by 2030. The MPCA approved the latest version of the Metro Solid Waste Policy April 2017. In the document they specify numerous RBMPs (Recycling Best Management Practices) including organics recycling and bulk recycling. They are expecting and have been encouraging counties and cities in the metro area to begin implementing some of these RBMPs. The MPCA manages the SCORE (Select Committee On Recycling and the Environment) funds and distributes it to the counties.
- 2.2 Organized Collection:
- 2.2.1 It is the intent of the City Council to continue an organized collection system for the orderly and regular collection of garbage, recyclables, problem materials, source separated organic materials, yard waste, and other wastes in the city; to insure that the disposal of the materials shall be accomplished in a sanitary manner; to ensure the protection of public health and safety and promote city cleanliness and livability; to minimize vehicle wear and tear on streets and alleys due to large truck traffic; to provide high quality solid waste and recycling services in the most cost-effective manner possible; and, to be consistent with the requirements of the state statutes, state rules and Anoka County ordinances, and with state and Anoka County solid waste plans.
- 2.2.2 It is the intent of the City Council to utilize local owned and operated vendors for collection and processing of solid waste as much as is feasible.
- 2.3 Goals: The main goal of Columbia Heights Solid Waste Management is to reduce trash disposal, especially since the City pays separately by the ton for disposal. The more the city recycles the fewer trash tons and lower costs. By implementing the RBMPs the City expects to meet the MN State Legislators' goal of diverting 75% of solid waste from the trash stream.
- 2.4 Solid Waste Management Plan:
- 2.4.1 Request for Proposals/Contracting: The City will create a separate hauling contract for each curbside refuse service, i.e., regular household trash, single-sort recycling, compost (yard waste/organics), and problem materials collection. The contract timelines will be staggered so contracts will not be renewed at the same time. Distinct contracts for each service are better to manage and enforce service standards and separating by time make transitions to new haulers smoother so all services are not changing at once.
- 2.4.2 Trash: The City will follow county and state waste management plans and policies for disposal of solid wastes. Therefore, most of the trash collected by the City's organized system will be incinerated at a Refuse to Fuel facility to generate electricity or other alternate means to landfilling, credit swaps do not count toward this endeavor.
- 2.4.3 Curbside Recycling: The City of Columbia Heights will provide full-service recycling programs with various city-run curbside collections including: Weekly unlimited single-sort recycling, citywide Organics and yard waste curbside collection, Bulk (furniture, mattresses, carpet) reuse/recycling, Electronics recycling, Appliance recycling, Christmas tree recycling, multi-dwellings included, plus City buildings and events recycling.

- 2.4.4 Recycling Center: The City, in partnership with a local volunteer service organization, will operate a weekly drop-off center which is very convenient for Southern Anoka County residents to keep hazardous materials out of the waste and for recycling of special items that are not acceptable in the single-sort system. The City will continue to expand materials collected at the center to include plastics beyond the single-sort cart, cell phones, and small appliances as it becomes feasible to do so. A local volunteer service organization will also conduct the MN Composting Council's "Plate to Garden Compost" fundraiser at the recycling center to promote organics recycling and to return fresh compost for participating households.
- 2.4.5 Reuse: The City will separate problem material (bulk, DIY demo) collection to its own hauling contract and require these items to be reused and/or recycled to the extent possible. The City will subsidize recycling costs, but require properties to pay for trash disposal of bulky material as they throw. The City will also assist with organizing reuse events such as the Fix-it Clinic and Citywide Garage Sale program. The City will assist multi-family buildings with reuse of materials such as household goods and clothing.
- 2.4.6 Promotions/Education:
- 2.4.6.1 The City will conduct extensive promotions including two citywide flyers and direct outreach to multifamily and other rental properties (including tenant recycling kits). In addition, the City will produce localized publications for spring/fall cleaning and garage sale reuse and recycling information. The City will promote recycling through its own communication means monthly.
- 2.4.6.2 The City will translate recycling information for the top three languages in the city.
- 2.4.6.3 The City is offering a 30 gallon every-other-week trash service option in conjunction with organics recycling, plus there will be an educational requirement as well so the City may also help coordinate an Anoka County Master Recycler Course.
- 2.4.6.4 The City may also require residential rental properties to add tenant recycling expectations to the lease agreement. The City may incentivize multifamily properties when they complete a recycling program.
- 2.4.6.5 The City will recognize those Recycling Champions whose properties increase recycling and/or utilize the organics recycling service.

Section 3 General Operations

- 3.1 Services Required: Every Residential Premise shall use the collection service provided by the City as directed in City Code CHAPTER 4: MUNICIPAL SERVICES. Multi-dwellings are considered residential properties for the purpose of refuse operations, but other split use properties with both dwelling units and commercial units can opt out of the City provided refuse services. City organized bulk services are not required for properties.
- 3.2 Policy Changes: The City Manager has the authority to change portions of this policy for those operational changes that will meet the council's goals and plans. The Council can review and update at their discretion or for financial changes above the City Manager spending limit. The City will solicit bids for contracted services at the end of each agreement period.

- 3.3 **Schedule Notification:** Collection shall occur on days and in areas designated by the City. Schedule changes may be made for major holidays or for adverse weather conditions. The City will post a news flash on its website and social media for unscheduled service delays. Collection days may only be permanently modified after consulting with all refuse contractors and must gain the approval of the City Manager. Each premise will be notified of any change in collection day four (4) weeks before the change and again one (1) week before the change.
- 3.4 **Collection Points:** Directed per City Code CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY, except as otherwise described in this policy. Properties must have their containers set out for collection prior to 6:00 a.m. on the collection day for service. Property owners shall ensure obstructions are removed and hazards (such as accumulation of snow and ice) are mitigated before collection. Where these conditions exist refuse may not be collected until resolved.
- 3.5 **Containers:** The City shall provide each residential dwelling property with a garbage cart (30, 60, 90 gallon) or dumpster (2, 4, 6, 8 yards) and a clearly distinguished single-sort recycling container. All containers shall be handled in accordance with City Code CHAPTER 4: MUNICIPAL SERVICES. Any markings that appear on the outside of the carts or dumpsters that are not placed there by the hauler or the City shall be promptly removed by the customer. The City shall own the carts; residents are granted exclusive use of the carts at their address only. If a resident moves, the carts shall remain at the assigned premise.
- 3.6 **Service Changes:** Official changes will be made through the City and the hauler will be notified. If temporary discontinuation of collection is desired by the premise due to vacancy of the property, the request shall be made to the City. Approval or denial of the request shall be at the sole discretion of the City.
- 3.7 **Customer Service:** The contract hauler and other refuse vendors will perform customer service operations as dictated in contracts and agreements as supervised by the City.

Section 4 Garbage Operations

- 4.1 **Organized Collection:** The City organizes collection of Solid Waste for all residential properties as directed by City Code CHAPTER 4: MUNICIPAL SERVICES. The City reserves the discretion to add other service locations (non-municipal) as agreed to by Council resolution.
- 4.2 **Vendors:** Contracted haulers and other refuse vendors will follow the duties and performance standards for garbage/trash operations as dictated in contracts and agreements as supervised by the City.

- 4.3 **Trash Requirements:** Each residence shall have its garbage and all other permissible disposable items collected a minimum of once each week, per City Code 8.301 STORAGE CONTAINERS, except as otherwise noted in this policy. Only household garbage shall be placed in the garbage containers. Items prohibited from disposal with garbage in the carts include, but may not be limited to: problem materials, tree and shrub waste, other yard waste, automotive parts or fluids, electronic waste, or hazardous waste. Garbage must be handled according to CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY. If the hauler determines a trash container is too contaminated with non-disposable materials, service will not be provided, nor will a refund be authorized. Collection of materials can be provided by the contracted hauler when issues are resolved.
- 4.4 **Service Levels:** There are also two classifications of household trash services which are “Full Service” and “Limited Service”. Households are considered triplex and below dwelling unit properties. Multi-dwellings are those properties with four or more dwelling units. City utility charges for trash service will be volume based following MN Statute CHAPTER 115A. WASTE MANAGEMENT.
- 4.4.1 **Full Service:** Full-service households are those who pay for the 90 gallon trash cart service, plus senior service properties with any size cart. They are allowed up to three extra trash bags of household trash.
- 4.5 **Limited Service:** Limited-service properties are not allowed extra material outside of the 60 or 30 gallon cart.
- 4.6 **Multiple Dwelling:** The contracted hauler shall provide each multiple dwelling (four and more units) premise with at least one standard dumpster (if not serviced by carts) and provide collection at a minimum of once/week. Multiple dwelling premises may not have extra garbage or waste outside of the provided cart or dumpster, except for problem materials.

Section 5 General Recycling Operations

- 5.1 **Vendors:** Contracted haulers and other refuse vendors will follow the duties and performance standards for recycling operations as dictated in contracts and agreements as supervised by the City.
- 5.2 **Requirement to Recycle:** The City is required to provide all residents the ability to recycle a basic set of materials as set out in MN Statute 115A.552 OPPORTUNITY TO RECYCLE; therefore, the City’s basic refuse service package includes single-sort recycling. Single sort recyclable materials generated from premises will be collected a minimum of once every-other-week, except for multi-dwellings which will have weekly collection. All properties can order larger or additional containers, plus households can place additional recyclable materials outside of the cart when bagged (paper bags only NO plastic bags) or boxed in a manner that meets the contracted hauler specified procedures. The general recycling utility rate will be flat based on living quarter units and not charged on volume or weight.

- 5.2.1 Recycling Standards: Recyclable materials included as part of the city's single-sort recycling system will be consistent with the designated MRF i.e., sorting plant requirements, except items by agreement with the City and the MRF to study methods for increasing the materials allowed. Recyclable materials are to be clean and kept as dry as practicable. If the hauler determines a recycling cart is too contaminated with non-recyclable materials, service will not be provided, nor will a refund be authorized. Collection of recycling materials can be provided by the contracted hauler when issues are resolved.
- 5.3 Rental Properties: The City will require residential rental properties to add tenant recycling expectations to the lease agreement. The City will provide rental properties with tenant recycling kits and advise upon request.
- 5.4 Training/Recognition: The city will coordinate recycle classes/tours at least once a year for residents. The city will assist multifamily buildings with completing recycling education and technical assistance. The City will recognize those Recycling Champions whose properties increase recycling and/or utilize the organics recycling service on an annual basis.
- 5.5 ***City of Columbia Heights Recycling Center.***
 - 5.5.1 Operations: The Recycling Center will operate according to City Code CHAPTER 4: MUNICIPAL SERVICES. The center will be open on Saturdays except for major holiday weekends.
 - 5.5.2 Materials: The City's recycling drop-off center will be used to provide convenience for disposal of certain hazardous wastes, but also recyclable items not accepted in the single-sort system. All items collected curbside will also be collected at the Recycling Center with the addition of scrap metal, used oil, oil filters, fluorescent bulbs, string lights, household batteries, and rimless tires.
 - 5.5.3 Illegal Activities: Residents must leave only acceptable items or will be considered illegal dumping subject to penalties described in city ordinances and laws. No one may remove items dropped off for the Recycling Center as it becomes the property of the City, unless authorized by City staff. If persons do not leave the Recycling Center, when asked by the monitor, they will be reported for trespassing on City property.
 - 5.5.4 Volunteers: The City will work with a non-profit service organization to monitor the Recycling Center and provide assistance to residents at the center. The organization shall be paid \$3,000/year plus rebates for material value collected at the Recycling Center. The non-profit organization must provide their own insurance for members performing this activity and indemnify the City of their operations.
 - 5.5.5 Other Activities: The Recycling Center will also be used by a local service organization to package and distribute fresh compost to the community, plus to promote organics recycling. The non-profit organization must provide their own insurance for members performing this activity and indemnify the City of their operations.

Section 6 Problem Materials (Bulk), Appliances, and Electronic Waste Services.

- 6.1 Vendors: Contracted haulers and other refuse vendors will follow the duties and performance standards for special material handling as dictated in contracts and agreements as supervised by the City. This service is intended for DIY cleaning or remodeling projects only.
- 6.2 Bulk (furniture, mattresses, carpet): The City will provide a curbside collection to properly dispose of problem materials (bulk). Premises will not place material outside until just prior to scheduled day. Where practicable, such items will be bagged, boxed, or bundled. The designated vendor must collect the items within four business days. Problem materials will be collected on the curb. All items must have come from the property where collected, i.e., no items from other premises. Properties will pay for items that cannot be reused or recycled and must be trashed.
- 6.3 Recycling: The City will arrange for reuse or recycling of items before disposing with the trash. Premises must keep problem materials inside, or otherwise protected from rain/snow until collection. In addition, furniture, mattresses, and bed springs that are known to be contaminated by bedbugs or other vermin must be securely bagged or wrapped to prevent infestation of other persons or property. If materials are wet or infested items are not sealed, the property will pay for disposal of the items. The City will subsidize items that can be reused or recycled.
- 6.4 Appliances: The City will provide a curbside collection to properly recycle appliances. Premises must call the designated vendor to schedule the special service and follow City Code 5A.205 to limit hazards to children. All items must have come from the property where collected, i.e., no items from other premises.
- 6.5 Electronics: The City will provide a convenient curbside collection to properly recycle electronic waste. Premises must call the designated vendor to schedule the special service. All items must have come from the property where collected, i.e., no items from other premises.
- 6.6 Other Reuse: Reduction of trash through reuse operations and events: The City will sponsor or partner with local service organizations for reuse events such as the Fix-It Clinic and Citywide Garage Sale Day. The City will also produce packets of local reuse vendors and options for residents to utilize when conducting spring and fall cleaning to reuse or recycle household goods and clothing. The non-profit organizations must provide their own insurance for members performing this activity and indemnify the City of their operations.

Section 7 Collection of Yard and Shrub Waste.

- 7.1 Vendors: Contracted haulers and other refuse vendors will follow the duties and performance standards for yard waste handling as dictated in contracts and agreements as supervised by the City.

- 7.2 Requirement to Collect: The City will provide a convenient curbside collection to properly recycle yard waste to assist property lawn care, plus to keep yard waste off the street and out of the storm drain which causes problems with street flooding and pollution of lakes and rivers. Therefore, the City's basic refuse service package includes yard waste collection.
- 7.3 Container Standards: Must follow City Code CHAPTER 4: MUNICIPAL SERVICES. Those who choose to use the city-provided cart will not need to bag or bundle the yard waste. Household owned reusable containers will not be used to contain yard waste for collection by the designated hauler due to worker safety concerns and liability of handling private containers.
- 7.4 Compostability: Yard waste materials included as part of the City's yard waste program will be consistent with the designated Yard Waste/Organics Recycling Facility i.e., the composter requirements. Brush must be bundled in manageable 3-foot lengths not to exceed an 18" roll. Woody yard waste not collected by the hauler, i.e., tree limbs, stumps, and roots greater than four (4) inches in diameter must be transported to a properly permitted and licensed tree waste transfer or handling facility, such as the Anoka County Bunker Hills site, by the property owner. Christmas trees will be collected when the property schedules it after the holiday season. If the hauler determines yard waste is too contaminated with non-compostable materials, service will not be provided, nor will a refund be authorized. Collection of yard waste can be provided by the contracted hauler after issues are resolved.

Section 8 Collection of Source Separated Organics, Every Other Week Garbage Collection.

- 8.1 Vendors: Contracted haulers and other refuse vendors will follow the duties and performance standards for organics handling and composting as dictated in contracts and agreements as supervised by the City.
- 8.2 Organics Collection: The City will provide a convenient curbside collection to properly recycle organics by utilizing a sufficiently sized pail for organics (food scraps and food soiled paper). Premises can request the cart plus will receive a free kitchen starter kit and the required bags for disposal from the City. Apartment tenants and condos can order also, plus townhomes will be offered organic pails as well. An organics service fee will be charged. Collection will occur weekly on a city approved schedule. organics pails will be collected off the street curb for curbside refuse service.
- 8.3 Organics Standards: All food waste must be securely contained in a BPI-Certified compostable bag and disposed of in the city-provided pails only. Organics materials included as part of the City's organics recycling program will be consistent with the designated Organics Recycling Facility i.e., the composter requirements. Paper plates, bowls, cups, dinnerware must have the BPI-Certificate on the packaging in order to compost it. If the hauler determines organic materials are too contaminated with non-compostable materials, service will not be provided, nor will a refund be authorized. Collection of organic materials can be provided by the contracted hauler when issues are resolved.

- 8.4 Low Volume Trash: The City will authorize 30-gallon limited-service garbage carts with every-other-week (EOW) garbage service; 30-gallon EOW garbage collection must be combined with organics collection. In addition, households must attend a city-approved recycling class for information on how to reduce trash and maximize recycling. Approval or denial of the request shall be at the sole discretion of the City.

Section 9 Fees and Charges other than Utility Rates.

- 9.1 Bulk Collection and Disposal: Bulk that must be trashed will be paid by properties as they throw per contract rates. The City will pay the service fee at the contracted rate.
- 9.2 City Bulk Recycling Subsidy: Properties will receive one free appliance recycling charge per year and pay for additional appliances, based on the designated hauler rates. All properties will pay a flat \$20 electronics (recycling) fee when service is scheduled, the City will pay the remaining hazardous waste and recycling expenses. The City will subsidize the full recycling cost for mattresses/box springs and scrap metal. Other household goods and DIY materials that can be recycled or reused (as determined by the City) will be paid by the City as well.
- 9.3 The City will incentivize multifamily buildings to complete recycling programs by offering one month of free recycling.
- 9.4 Yard Waste Cart Charges: Properties will pay for the optional yard cart at cost, plus delivery and removal fees at contracted rates (if properties do not hold on to the cart year-round). Supersedes Resolution 2023-14 City Service Rates.
- 9.5 Organics curbside collection charge: The city will charge \$4/month to those properties that request the service and annually increase the rate at the same percentage as the service cost.

Section 10 Resolution of Disputes.

- 10.1 Contractor: If there is a dispute between the customer and the Contractor regarding expenses related to poor service or damages caused by the Contractor's actions, resident and/or property owner shall file a claim with the Contractor as the City is indemnified by contract from their operations.
- 10.2 City: If there is a dispute between the customer and the City regarding poor service and the City's utility charge for refuse the customer may file a claim including any and all evidence related to the dispute (photographs, neighbor's statements, etc.). The City may only deduct from the next utility bill the affected time period of the poor service. The Refuse Coordinator has authority to rebate up to 3 months of credit, the Public Works Director can authorize up to a year. The City Manager must approve any rebate timelines beyond one year.
- 10.3 Fines: Administrative fines imposed by the City can be appealed to the City Council and further in District Court if the property owner and/or resident seek additional remedy.