

Curbside Journal

Easy Cart Collection Program Turns 10

The City began studying a new system for collecting refuse in the mid-1990's called "Automated Refuse Collection." This system utilized a collection vehicle with a mechanical arm to collect refuse as opposed to the labor-intensive method of physical collection by City employees.

In the late 90's, a pilot program with 400 residents began in several East Lansing neighborhoods. The pilot program studied the effectiveness and efficiency of collecting refuse by

automated equipment and sought input from residents on their experiences with the program. Following the completion of the pilot, which had garnered significant public support, the City chose to replace its aging collection equipment and implement the new automated program in 2002.

Ten years later, the City's Easy Cart program has proven to be popular with residents and has succeeded in making City operations more efficient and cost effective. The program annually saves thousands in taxpayer money by reducing the number of vehicles and staff necessary to collect refuse. The program is also safer for City employees as it eliminates much of the repetitive lifting of refuse which was previously required.

The City would like to thank its residents for being open to change and supporting the Easy Cart program. The work of City staff, Boards and Commissions and City Council, coupled with resident support, has allowed this program to succeed.



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City Offers Important Tips about Plastics Recycling

In September, the City began collecting plastic bottles/cups, tubs, pots and trays labeled #1-7. The response to this expansion has been tremendous, with a more than 20 percent increase in the amount of plastics recycled.

In order to continue to make plastics recycling successful, the City asks that residents be mindful of a few important issues. One issue is that the City cannot accept all plastics. Items not accepted include plastic bags, foam products, five-gallon buckets, VHS tapes, hangers, toys, lawn furniture and more. Also, the City asks that acceptable items larger than a detergent bottle be recycled at one of the City's drop-off sites, as they don't fit in the compactors on the City trucks. Second, the City asks that screw-on lids be removed from plastic bottles and placed in a small container within curbside bins. Loose lids get co-mingled with other items and are difficult to sort. Bottles with lids can also burst during the compaction process and be hazardous to City staff.

Recycle Rama Hosted April 14

Recycle Rama will take place Saturday, April 14 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Ingham County Health Department, 5303 S. Cedar St. in Lansing.

The event is open to Ingham County residents and items such as books, bicycles, scrap metal, medicines and electronics will be collected. Visit www.cityofeastlansing.com for a complete list. This event relies on the help of more than 250 volunteers. Contact Dave Smith at (517) 337-9459 to volunteer!

Recycle Guide

Drop-off sites are located at 1800 E. State Road and 841 Timberlane St.

Brown Paper Bags

Can be recycled at both drop-off sites. No curbside. Do not bundle. Place with corrugated cardboard.

Boxboard

Can be recycled at both drop-off sites. No curbside. Break down boxes. Dry only. No refrigerator/freezer items (cartons, soda cases).

Corrugated Cardboard

Can be recycled at both drop-off sites. No curbside. Break down boxes. Dry only.

Newspapers

Can be recycled curbside and at both drop-off sites. Keep clean /dry. Inserts accepted.

Mixed Paper & Phone Books

Can be recycled curbside and at both drop-off sites. Keep dry. Includes copier paper, stationery, colored paper and envelopes. No carbon, wrapping, tissue paper, manila envelopes, labels, tape or self-stick flaps. Bundle/bag separately.

Magazines

Can be recycled curbside and at both drop-off sites. Shiny/glossy only. Bundle with string/twine.

Tin, Steel, Aluminum Cans, Foil

Can be recycled curbside and at the State Road drop-off site. Rinse clean. Must be empty.

Glass Bottles (Clear, Brown)

Can be recycled curbside and at the State Road drop-off site. Rinse clean and remove lids. Do not break. Food and beverage bottles only. No ceramic, Pyrex™ or window glass. Please separate by color. No green, blue or yellow glass.

Plastic Bottles/Containers

Plastic bottles, cups, tubs, pots and trays labeled #1 - #7 can be recycled curbside and at both drop-off sites. Rinse clean and remove caps from bottles. Place bottle caps in small container in curbside bin. No plastic bags, strapping or Styrofoam. No bottles with oil, antifreeze or other household hazardous waste or residue.

Visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/recycleguide for information on other recyclable items.

Too Much Trash is Wasted Cash

Last year the City received more than \$96,000 in gross sales from recyclable materials. In contrast, it cost the City more than \$140,000 to dispose of refuse collected from households. Much of the refuse disposed was recyclable. Want to have a positive impact on the local community? Recycle more!

Seasonal Site

Residents will have through mid-April to drop off boxboard and corrugated cardboard at the seasonal recycling drop-off site located at Patriarche Park, at the corner of Saginaw Street and Alton Road. The site will remain open until park use picks up in the spring. The site will re-open in October.

Document Destruction Day

The Old Town Commercial Association and Friedland Industries will host a Document Destruction Day on Saturday, April 21. This free event will take place at the corner of Center and Maple streets in Lansing. Learn more at www.friedlandindustries.com.



Yard Waste Program

Yard waste includes leaves, plant materials, grass clippings and brush/limbs.

Containing Yard Waste

There are three options to contain yard waste (this guideline does not apply to no-fee days):

- City paper yard waste bags
- Rigid plastic container or paper bag with City yard waste sticker (do not use Easy Carts or plastic bags to dispose of yard waste)
- Bundled (with string or twine) with a City yard waste sticker

Bags and stickers can be bought at locations throughout East Lansing. Call (517) 337-9459 or visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/yardwaste for details.

Yard waste may be placed at the curb after 8 p.m. the day before collection. Before collection, yard waste contained in paper yard waste bags should be stored in a dry location.

Disposing of Yard Waste

Curbside Yard Waste Collection (April 2 - Nov. 26)

Curbside yard waste collection will take place on Mondays (excluding holidays) from April 2 - Nov. 26. Bags must weigh no more than 40 pounds. Bundles may be no more than 4 feet long and 1 foot in diameter and weigh no more than 40 pounds. Individual limbs must be 4 inches or less.

Advance request is required. The preferred way to submit a request is via a form at www.cityofeastlansing.com/collectionrequest. Requests can also be made by calling the 24-hour number at (517) 351-4999 or DPW at (517) 337-9459.

No-Fee Curbside Yard Waste Collection (April 16 and April 30)

Dispose of yard waste for free on Monday, April 16 and Monday, April 30. Yard waste must be placed in a paper yard waste bag, placed in a rigid plastic container or bundled and placed at the curb by 7:30 a.m. Advanced requests and City bags/stickers are not required. All other yard waste guidelines apply.

For additional details visit
www.cityofeastlansing.com/yardwaste

MSU Student Recycling Event Moves to August

For the past three years, the City has been providing a convenient way for off-campus students to donate their unwanted household items for recycling or reuse during spring move-out through the Pack Up, Pitch In program. However, input from students, landlords and other groups have identified an even greater need for this program at the end of summer when the majority of leases expire and students are moving in and out of rentals. Therefore, this year the popular off-campus program will move to August!

Planning is underway for this change and event details will be shared in the coming months. For students moving out this spring, items can be donated to the MSU Surplus Store & Recycling Center, located south of the Service Road-Farm Lane intersection. Visit www.msusurplusstore.com or call (517) 355-1723 for details.



Keep Ditches Clear of Debris

There is a system of open drains in the City that channel water away from residential areas. These open drains or “ditches” deposit water into streams, rivers and lakes in the City’s watershed and keep neighborhoods from flooding.

Residents with properties adjacent to these ditches are sometimes tempted to throw yard waste into them, which pollutes the water, causes localized flooding and is an added expense to taxpayers when City crews have to come clear the drains. Residents are asked to dispose of yard waste through the City’s collection program or compost it in their back yard.

Recycling Benefits

In 2011 residents recycled 1,312 tons of recyclables through the City’s curbside and drop-off program; and recycled or donated for reuse about 55 tons of material through special collections such as Project Pride. In total, nearly 2.75 million pounds of material was recycled. Residents recycling efforts have numerous environmental benefits that can be quantified. Recycling this material has:

- Prevented 163 refuse truck loads of material from being deposited in the landfill.
- Reduced total air emissions by 1,628 tons.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 901 tons.
- Reduced waterborne waste by six tons.
- Conserved 13,004 million btu’s of energy.
- Saved 11,112 trees.

A special thanks goes out to the residents who participated in the City’s recycling program in 2011. Their efforts made a difference!

Still not sure if it’s recyclable? Call DPW at (517) 337-9459 or visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/recycleguide to find out!

Easy Cart Warranty Set to Expire

Along with the City's Easy Cart program turning 10, so are many of the carts first purchased by residents through the program. These carts have a 10-year warranty.

They've held up well to the tough job of collecting refuse and when lids or wheels have needed repair, the manufacturer has supplied parts and the City has fixed them at no cost to homeowners.

If a resident's Easy Cart is in need of repair, they can contact the Department of Public Works (DPW) at (517) 337-9459. By providing the cart serial number, DPW staff can find out if a cart is under warranty. If the cart has exceeded the warranty and is in need of repair, the City will continue to service the cart, but will charge for the cost of replacement parts. Residents can also purchase a new cart by contacting DPW.

Project Pride to Take Place June 2

Project Pride, East Lansing's annual spring cleanup and recycling event, will take place on Saturday, June 2. Numerous household items will be accepted this year for refuse, recycling and proper disposal. Small appliances, tires, bicycles, scrap metal, electronics, clothing and more can be dropped off by East Lansing residents during the event. Last year's event garnered more than 44 tons of materials for reuse/recycling.

A special bin tag will be placed in residents' recycling bins in early May with more event details. Information will also be posted at www.cityofeastlansing.com and www.facebook.com/RecycleEL. Interested in volunteering? Contact Susan Schmidt at (517) 333-3587.



Calendar

April

- 2 Curbside Yard Waste Collection Begins
- 14 Recycle Rama
- 16 No-Fee Yard Waste Collection
- 21 Document Destruction Day
- 22 Earth Day
- 27 Arbor Day
- 30 No-Fee Yard Waste Collection

May

- 28 Memorial Day - No Yard Waste or Bulk Item Collection

June

- 2 Project Pride

July

- 4 Independence Day - No Refuse or Recycling Collection
- 5 Wednesday and Thursday Refuse and Recycling Collected Today

September

- 3 Labor Day - No Yard Waste or Bulk Item Collection

Have household hazardous waste items?
Dispose of them through the
Ingham County Health Department
on Thursdays, May 3-Sept. 27.

Learn more at
<http://hd.ingham.org>.

Refuse & Recycling Basics for New Residents

New East Lansing residents are encouraged to participate in the City's refuse and recycling collection programs.

The City provides refuse collection for single-family households as well as duplexes and rental properties with one to four units. Refuse can be disposed of in an Easy Cart or in yellow City-issued trash bags.

Residents have the option of purchasing a 32-, 64- or 96-gallon Easy Cart:

- The 32-gallon Easy Cart has a one-time purchase price of \$55 with no annual collection fee.
- The 64-gallon Easy Cart has a one-time purchase price of \$60 with no annual collection fee.
- The 96-gallon Easy Cart has a purchase price of \$70 with a \$75 annual collection fee.

Yellow City-issued trash bags can be bought in packages of five for \$7.50 at locations throughout the City, including (but not limited to):

- City Hall, 410 Abbot Road
- E.L. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road
- Department of Public Works (DPW), 1800 E. State Road

Find a complete list of places to purchase City-issued trash bags at www.cityofeastlansing.com.

The City collects recyclables curbside from single-family homes; duplexes; and small, multi-family homes with up to 20 units. There is no fee to recycle. However, recyclables must be placed in a blue City-issued recycling bin, which can be purchased for a one-time fee of \$6.50.

Recycle bins and Easy Carts are available for purchase at DPW, 1800 E. State Road, or by placing an order over the phone at (517) 337-9459. Recyclables are collected weekly on the same day as refuse collection and should be placed at the curb by 7:30 a.m. A map of refuse and recycling routes—color-coded by day—is available online at www.cityofeastlansing.com. In addition to curbside recycling, there are two year-round drop-off recycling sites. Take a look at the Recycle Guide on page 2 or visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/recycleguide to learn what can be recycled.

Photos at right, top to bottom:

DPW employees Cliff Herold, Dan Guerrero and Ken Johnson

Out & About with DPW



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