

**Headline: Planning for Metro Vancouver's Organics Disposal Ban: new Rules coming 2015**

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A new rule is coming in 2015 to encourage food scraps recycling. Food scraps will be banned from disposal at the region's landfills and waste-to-energy facility as are paper, cardboard, mixed containers, and other items for which there are accessible recycling programs across the region.

As you already do with other recyclables, everyone in Metro Vancouver including people who live in condominiums, will need to start separating food scraps from their regular garbage. Current measurements show that 40% of an average household's garbage is food scraps. Food scraps include all food. For examples; meat, dairy, bones, fruit, vegetables, and even coffee grounds.

**What's wrong with throwing away food scraps?**

In the landfill, buried under layers of waste and without access to oxygen, food can't decompose properly. It creates methane, a powerful greenhouse gas that adds to global warming. Businesses and residents together threw away over 250,000 tonnes of food scraps last year. All this food also uses up a lot of precious landfill space. Space is limited, and creating more landfills is undesirable. Throwing food away waste all the resources (energy, water, transport and time) that went into producing it. Instead it can be collected for compost or a green fuel source.

**Phased implementation**

We recognize this is a significant change for many condominium buildings as well as for businesses. Metro Vancouver will apply a phased implementation strategy that includes a six-month education period from January 1 to June 2015. This will provide strata corporations, building managers, condominium owners and residents the time required to prepare a plan for separating their food scraps.

In July 2015 a surcharge will be applied to loads of garbage if the volume of food scraps exceeds 25% of the load. Typically only loads from large generators such as grocery stores and food processors without effective organics recycling programs would exceed 25% organics. The threshold will be reduced over 2016 and 2017 from 25% to 10% and then 5% to provide residents and businesses the opportunity to put organics recycling systems in place.

**Solutions**

Many people in Metro Vancouver have already begun organics recycling in their building and have provided their feedback on best practices for separating their food scraps from garbage.

Condominium owners and dwellers typically allocate a separate container (a *kitchen catcher*) on or under their counter, which they line with newspapers or paper towel before adding in their food scraps. Separating food scraps from regular garbage can be an eye opening experience, and helps many residents start to think about how they can waste less food.

Building managers and strata corporations are placing communal bins for food scraps in centrally accessible locations, typically beside the communal garbage bins. They are also monitoring the communal garbage and recycling bins to right-size bins numbers, size and collection frequency for their building.

As with all garbage receptacles, pests and odour can be kept to a minimum with regular emptying and cleaning of food waste containers; both kitchen catchers and communal bins for food scraps. Wrapping fish and meat bones in newspapers also helps keep bins clean.

Talk to your waste hauler about adjusting your waste and recycling collection services. Additional information and tools for residents and businesses is available on Metro Vancouver's website at [metrovancover.org/foodscraps](http://metrovancover.org/foodscraps). The Recycling Council of BC operates a Recycling Hotline at 604-REC-YCLE (732-9253). Staff can answer questions and recommend service providers.