



FAQ

for the Composting Requirements for Multi-Family Properties

When will the compostable collection requirements come into effect?

The new sorting requirements will come into effect **April 1, 2020**. The new Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) sorting requirements approved by the regional Board apply across the region, and across all sectors with the exception of agricultural and other special waste exempt in the FVRD Solid Waste Management Plan. The City's Solid Waste Collection Bylaw will be updated in the coming months to align with the requirements adopted by the FVRD.

Why is compostable collection being required at multi-family properties?

In 2013, the City began requiring single family homes to collect compostable waste separately from regular garbage. The new sorting requirements will include the remaining residential homes that were not previously included in those requirements. The sorting requirement is a regional initiative with everyone sharing the responsibility to sort waste separately. There is no "opt out" option.

Do other communities have similar compostable waste program requirements for multi-family properties?

Yes. The Metro Vancouver Regional District banned compostable waste in garbage in 2015 so most other major municipalities in the Lower Mainland already have sorting requirements in place. All residents in municipalities and electoral areas within the FVRD will be required to follow the same sorting requirements as those in the City of Abbotsford.

Why is it important to sort compostable waste separately from garbage?

When taken to a landfill, compostable waste is buried under layers of other material without access to oxygen. As a result, the waste cannot decompose and greenhouse gases are generated. Diverting this material from landfills conserves valuable landfill space and reduces greenhouse gas production. Composting converts this material into a nutrient resource for agriculture, gardening and landscaping.

Will the City collect compostable waste from multi-family property?

No. Multi-family properties will continue to be required to make their own arrangement with a private waste hauler for the collection and disposal of all waste streams, including compostable waste.

Who will set up our compostables collection program?

Your landlord, property manager or property management company will be responsible for setting up compostable collection services for your property.



When should we start compostable collection at our property?

The separate collection of compostable waste will be required by April 1, 2020. However, setting up sorting systems take time and may require staff or tenant training. We recommend you contact your waste hauler and start discussing what will work best for your property. Don't wait to #sortitout!

What is a kitchen catcher?

A kitchen catcher is a counter-top (or under-sink) container with a lid that you use in your kitchen that can be carried to and from the communal compostable waste bin.

Where can I get a kitchen catcher?

Check with your strata or landlord to see if one will be provided. If not, most local grocery stores and hardware stores sell them or you can make your own using a variety of items such as a lidded coffee tin, a large yogurt container, or an ice cream bucket. Using a container with a lid will help to manage odours.

Where can I purchase paper liner bags for my kitchen catcher?

Kitchen catcher paper liner bags are available for purchase at most local grocery stores and hardware stores.

How long does it take to fill a kitchen catcher with food waste?

The time to fill a kitchen catcher is dependent on the types of food consumed. Foods such as corn on the cob or watermelon produce larger amounts of compostable material and will quickly fill the container. On average, for a family of four, the kitchen catcher is typically filled every one to two days.

Can I just use my food grinder or garburator (and similar technology)?

The use of food grinders or garburators is not currently regulated and results in sending food waste to the sewer system, putting extra pressure on the City's wastewater treatment plant. Large amounts of drinking water are used to move food through pipes to the treatment plant, and the treatment process uses significant resources. By composting food waste instead, this material is turned into a valuable resource for landscaping and gardening, and there are fewer impacts on our water and wastewater infrastructure.



How can I find out whether an item should go in recycling, compostable waste or garbage?

- **Waste Wizard**

The Waste Wizard is a search engine that can be accessed through the City's website at abbotsford.ca/wastewizard. Search an item to find out whether it goes with curbside recycling, compostable waste or garbage, or whether it needs to be dropped off at a depot or other location for proper recycling or disposal.

- **Recycling Guide**

The Recycling Guide provides detailed information sorting and preparation instructions for common recyclables. This document is also available in Punjabi. For a copy visit abbotsford.ca/waste or call 604-864-5514.

- **Recycling Hotline**

Residents can also call the Recycling Council of BC Recycling Hotline at 1-800-667-4321 for additional information on waste sorting.

Won't a compostable waste bin attract rats? And smell in the summer?

Placing food waste in a compostable waste container is similar to placing it in the garbage – you are still generating the same amount of waste but would just be separating the material into two containers instead of one. Pests and odour can be kept to a minimum with regular emptying and cleaning of containers. Your landlord, property manager or property management company can discuss options with your waste hauler such as switching in clean bins after collection, using an approved bin liner (if available), having bins cleaned at time of collection, or increasing collection frequency during hot weather.

I haven't heard from my strata or landlord. What should I bring to their attention?

Talk to your strata or landlord about the new sorting requirements. They may already be working on planning this collection for your property. If not, suggest they visit the City's website (abbotsford.ca/waste) for information on the new requirements. For more information they can also call the City at 604-864-5514 or email compostablecollection@abbotsford.ca.

Are there posters, signage or other educational material available for me to use to assist with waste sorting at my property?

Yes! The City is currently developing resources to assist with waste sorting at multi-family properties. Additional resources will be added to the Compostables Consultation web page once available. The FVRD also has a number of resources available at bewastewise.com.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

City of Abbotsford; Go online at abbotsford.ca/waste or call 604-864-5514.

