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Mayor, City of Omaha



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Public Works Director

Fall yardwaste collection October 18 to November 27, 2021

WASTE

YARDWASTE

RECYCLING

GLASS

# Repurposing your Yardwaste

YARDWASTE

## What do Vala’s Pumpkin Patch, Mulhall’s Nursery, and the City Parks Department have in common?

Their fields and flowers are powered by OmaGro compost, which is made from your yardwaste. OmaGro receives and processes the grass clippings, leaves, hedge, and small tree trimmings that are put out for collection in yardwaste bags during the six-weeks of collection in spring and fall. At OmaGro’s compost facility the yardwaste is chopped up, and mixed with air, and water to create the right environment for the microbes responsible for natural composting. This creates a high quality, humus rich, soil amendment we generally call compost. OmaGro has a mixture of carbon and nitrogen that is ideal to make flower beds that burst with color and produce a bountiful garden full of nutritious produce.



### It’s like baking a cake.

Don Hembry, Biosolids Coordinator for the City of Omaha Public Works Department and Compost Operations Manager, likens what he does at OmaGro to baking a cake.

“When you bake a cake, you select the kind of sugar, flour, and liquid, in the right amounts, to get a specific density and flavor. Making compost at OmaGro is similar. We blend the right combination of green and brown plant matter to get a carbon to nitrogen ratio of 10.4 to 1 in the finished compost, which is ideal for fueling incredibly healthy plant growth in fields and gardens, since nitrogen is what makes plants grow.”

The standard compost ratio is 30 parts carbon to 1 part nitrogen when starting the composting process, but OmaGro’s product is manufactured differently and done so effectively that Scotts has asked to purchase OmaGro to include it in their products. Priority, however, goes to Omaha residents and vendors who resell it throughout the region

### The Proof is in the Pudding

After mixing the “batter,” the compost mixture is formed into windrows, where it is tested and turned at specific times,

temperatures, and moisture bases. Hembry says the tests reveal what types of material needs to be added to the mix to achieve that ideal makeup.

“We can change the makeup of the windrows to achieve the desired end product. No manure is added. Only grass, leaves and sticks. Like adding a little flour or oil to a cake, we can add a little leaves or grass or sticks to keep our ratio where we want it to be.” That process is so effective that the National Composting Council included a trip to OmaGro as a tour site during compost operations regional training to help educate others. From start to finish, the process takes about 10 months.

OmaGro is so popular that it sold out in August of this year. A disappointment for many, but rest-assured OmaGro will be back in stores and sold direct to the public beginning in early 2022. OmaGro is a registered trademark of the City of Omaha. For a list of retail locations that will be restocked in 2022, visit [omagro.com](http://omagro.com).

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PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 1086  
OMAHA, NE

WASTELINE | OMAHA PUBLIC WORKS  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION  
5600 SOUTH 10TH STREET  
OMAHA, NE 68107-3501

Legal Notice: Placement of solid waste (garbage, recyclable materials, and yardwaste) by a resident along a privately owned street or road implies permission for the City’s solid waste collection contractor to drive onto that street or road to perform contract work. Accordingly, such residents and owners of private streets and roads shall assume the risk of incidental damages incurred in the course of performing work while driving on the surface of these private streets and roads. Incidental damages may include cracks in the surface of the roadway or cave-ins due to collapsed sewers or poor street surface substrate. The City’s contractor is not exempt from causal damages to personal property or premises adjoining private streets and roads. Please call the Solid Waste Hotline 402-444-5238 for questions or concerns about collection on private streets and roads.



# Recycle Right, Home and Away

The City of Omaha is excited to be able to offer residents six full-service recycling drop-off sites and two additional glass-only sites across the city. There will be large green containers to recycle aluminum and steel cans, paper, plastic bottles and jugs, cardboard and cartons. Along side the green containers will be purple containers to recycle glass bottles and jars. These sites are an excellent option if your cart is full, and drop-off sites are the only way to recycle glass which is not collected in the cart.

However, to protect recycling center equipment and workers, and keep the recyclable material clean, a few rules must be followed:

- Don't leave anything on the ground
- No furniture, tires, construction debris, or trash
- No twine, hose or rope (these are not recyclable and are very destructive when they get tangled in the machines that process recyclables!)

- No yardwaste, grass, leaves, or brush
- No food or liquid
- No plastic bags! Just drop loose recyclables in your cart or drop-off site container (obviously if you participate in Hefty Energy Bag use that orange bag appropriately)

Not following these rules at drop-off sites is illegal dumping punishable by a fine up to \$500, loss of driver's license for 6 months and all clean-up costs.

Thanks to a litter reduction and recycling grant from the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE), the City has been able to purchase a pole-mounted, solar-powered trailer security camera unit to monitor recycling locations and deter the illegal dumping activity that has been occurring. Omaha Police Department will issue citations to people violating the municipal code.

Our hope is that NO citations will need to be issued, but when you see those blue



flashing lights at the recycling sites, let it be a friendly reminder to put only recyclable materials inside the bins and leave nothing on the ground. Doing so protects all of us and helps achieve our overall goal of giving second life to many of the materials we use.

## YARDWASTE



Backhus A60

# What's New at OmaGro?

OmaGro has had 10 years of bad luck. The floods of 2011 prevented most operations and blocked incoming yardwaste from reaching OmaGro. That impacted operations for a couple of years. Things finally got rolling along when in 2017 a June tornado destroyed all OmaGro's indoor facilities and equipment. Then 2019 brought another round of floods to the facility causing damage to some of the newly replaced facilities.

But things have turned around now and are ready to take off. With the OmaGro operation a blank slate created by the tornado, it was rebuilt with efficiency in mind. A new 5,400 square foot building with a proper sales office replaced a dilapidated pole shed. The new building houses new bagging equipment that was configured using years of experience.

OmaGro's outdoor operation was reconfigured and upgraded too. A new truck scale and weigh system with card readers instead of a key pad. Bays for finished product and incoming material are now oriented so they may be observed from the office.

And let's not forget the little things—OmaGro has stepped up to the modern age and now accepts credit and debit cards!

### New Machine Adds Efficiency to Composting Operations

Having the facilities rebuilt put OmaGro in an excellent position to apply for a grant to fund the operation's most important piece of equipment, a compost turner. In 2019 the City applied for a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to fund a Backhus A60 compost turner. The grant was just shy of a



half million dollars and was approved in June of 2020. The equipment arrived February 1, 2021.

OmaGro staff couldn't be happier. The Backhus forms, mixes, and turns the windrows so efficiently that just two people manage operations. The OmaGro operation is able to easily produce 50,000 1-cubic foot bags of compost each year. Those bags are sold direct to the public from OmaGro's facility and through retailers in the region. Unfortunately, OmaGro has run out of product to sell this year but will be back in early 2022.

OmaGro had not had a proper or functioning compost turner for about ten years. What they did have had very high ongoing maintenance costs just to keep it running. The new Backhus equipment produces compost much more quickly than any time previous at OmaGro.

### Destination OmaGro

OmaGro receives incoming yardwaste three ways—yardwaste in the paper yardwaste bags collected during the 6 weeks of spring and 6 weeks of fall collection; yardwaste collection at spring and fall cleanup; and yardwaste that is self-hauled to OmaGro. OmaGro does not charge to receive this self-hauled yardwaste and is open to receive it Monday through Friday 7am to 6pm. You must check in at the office before unloading.

OmaGro is located at 15705 Harlan Lewis Road, South of Bellevue





## LARGE HOUSEHOLDS

# Big Family? No Problem!

If you have a big family and generate too much garbage or recyclables to fit into the pair of 96-gallon carts, don't worry! **If your family has 5 or more members, you can get an additional cart free of charge!** You can choose an extra waste cart or a recycling cart. Just complete the registration form which is available at [wasteline.org](http://wasteline.org) or call **402-444-5238** to have the form mailed to you.



For all other situations, FCC Environmental will lease an additional cart for a fee. The annual cost of an additional waste cart is \$91, and the annual cost of an additional recycling cart is \$45.50. You must pay in advance, and the fee includes delivery. The information for leasing a cart is available at **wasteline.org** or by calling **402-444-5238**.

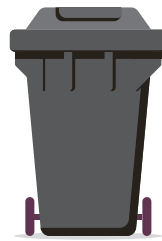


## WASTE



### Set out by 6am

Carts must be removed from the curb by 10am the day after collection.



- Keep carts separate from each other and other things (mailboxes, light poles, etc).
- Only material in your cart will be collected.
- Lids closed during storage and collection
- Maximum 355 pounds
- Excess yardwaste must be in paper yardwaste bags with a sticker

## RECYCLING



## GLASS



The full service sites accept all of the recyclables that are collected from Omaha's curbside program. Plus, there is a purple container for glass bottles.



Illegal dumping at drop-off sites is punishable by a fine of up to \$500, loss of drivers license for 6 months and all clean up costs. [Omaha Municipal Code, Chapter 34, ARTICLE I, Section 4.]

## Full Service Drop-off Sites



### WEST DROP-OFF SITE

Parking Lot  
20801 Elkhorn Drive  
The site is open: Daily: 7AM – 7PM



### CENTRAL DROP-OFF SITE

Parking Lot of West Lanes Bowling  
151 North 72nd Street  
The site is open: Daily: 7AM – 7PM



### NORTHWEST DROP-OFF SITE

Mulhall's  
3615 North 120th Street (120th & Maple)  
**NOTE:** The containers have been moved to a parking lot south of Mulhalls parking area, over the bridge (formerly a carwash)  
The site is open: 7AM – 7PM



### SOUTHEAST DROP-OFF SITE

River City Recycling  
6404 S 60th Street  
(between Q and Harrison)  
**NOTE:** This site accepts recyclables free and is a dump location for bulky items. There is a fee for all materials except recyclables.  
The site is open:  
Monday through Friday: 8AM – 4:30PM  
Saturday: 8AM – 4:30PM  
Winter Saturday Hours: 8AM – NOON



### NORTHEAST DROP-OFF SITE

North 17th and Burt Streets  
**NOTE:** Fenced area, Southwest corner of intersection. Current construction may require going around road closed signs.  
The site is open:  
Daily: 7:30AM – 6:00PM – (September – March)  
Daily: 7:30AM – 8:00PM – (April – August)



### SOUTHWEST DROP-OFF SITE

Firstar Fiber  
10330 'I' Street  
Use the East driveway to Firstar.  
The site is open: Daily: 7AM – 7PM

## Glass Only Drop-off Sites



### FAR WEST CENTRAL

HyVee  
1000 S 178th Street (180th & Pacific)  
The site is open: 7AM – 7PM



### WEST CENTRAL Westwood Plaza

12075 West Center Road (Near Taco Bell)  
The site is open: 7AM – 7PM



## WASTE



## Special Assistance

Special collection for garbage, yardwaste and recyclables is available. Households where all occupants of the home have a medical disability, or are at least age 70, qualify for the service.

It can take several weeks to get the service set up. To apply, call **402-444-5238** from 8am to 8pm weekdays.



Properly dispose of unwanted household, lawn, garden and automotive chemicals at  
**UnderTheSink.**

**Residential Waste Only**  
**There is no charge!**

### Hours:

Wednesday	9:00am - 4:45pm
Thursday	9:00am - 6:15pm
Friday	9:00am - 4:45pm
Saturday	Call for an Appointment

**402-444-sink [7465]**  
**[www.underthesink.org](http://www.underthesink.org)**

# Every Other Week Recycling



**Paper**  
(clean and dry)



**Cardboard**  
(dry and flatten)



**Cartons**  
(empty and clean)



**Metal Cans**  
(empty and clean)




**Plastic bottles, jugs, and tubs**  
(empty and clean)

**Solid Waste Holidays are shown in RED**  
Days following the holiday where collection is shifted are shown with a red underline.

KEY: **Group A** recycling is shown In **Yellow**

**Group B** recycling is shown In **Blue**

 **Holiday — No Collection**

**Holiday Shift Days**

NOVEMBER / 2021							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
A	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
B	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
B	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
A	28	29	30	1	2	3	4

DECEMBER / 2021							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
A	28	29	30	1	2	3	4
B	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
B	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
A	26	27	28	29	30	31	1

JANUARY / 2022							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
B	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
B	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
A	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
B	30	31	1	2	3	4	5

FEBRUARY / 2022							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
B	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
A	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
B	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
A	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
B	27	28	1	2	3	4	5

MARCH / 2022							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
B	27	28	1	2	3	4	5
A	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
B	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
A	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
B	27	28	29	30	31	1	2

APRIL / 2022							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
B	27	28	29	31	31	1	2
A	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
B	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
A	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
B	24	25	26	27	28	29	30



**NO Yardwaste**  
(goes in your black lid cart)



**NO Glass**  
(take to drop-off location)



**NO Plastic Bags or Wrap**  
(return to retailer or place in Energy Bag)



**Do not Bag Recyclables**  
(recyclables must be loose in cart)



**No Tangles**  
(no hoses, wires, chains, or electronics)



**No Food or Liquid**  
(empty and rinse all containers)

Sign up for holiday e-mail reminders at [join.wasteline.org](https://join.wasteline.org)

## Cardboard is Hot Again!

*Do you know what happens to the items you recycle after they're hauled away?*

For most people, the understanding of recycling ends when the cart is rolled to the curb every other week. But recycling is a market driven big business with an international impact.

After trucks collect recyclables, they carry them to facilities that sort materials and ship them off to give them a second life as something useful. Facilities don't receive recyclables for free - we must pay to have materials sorted, but end markets pay for recycled material as their "raw" material. Recycling is an international business. Recyclables are consumed by manufactures near (Nucore Steel Mill in Norfolk Nebraska for example) and far (paper mills in China and the pacific rim). A few years ago, the Chinese government enacted a policy

halting all incoming shipments of recycled material. This crushed the recycling markets globally. For example corrugated cardboard went from \$150 per ton down to \$25 per ton for Midwest shipments. That change resulted in more recyclables than could be used. "Eventually, it reached a point where it cost the City more to recycle items than to take them to the landfill," says James Kee, Environmental Quality Control Manager for the City of Omaha. Thankfully, those numbers rebounded during the pandemic to the point where today, the average value for a ton of Omaha's recyclables is about \$225.

"It's much more valuable, and so it's easier for recycling centers to find people willing to pay for it," Kee says. Omaha's mix of recyclables is about 60% cardboard and paper, which are some of the best items to recycle, along with aluminum and tin, because of their resale value. "Metals retain

their value very well, but only make up about 5% of our recycling stream," Kee says. "Plastics are more challenging." Plastics lose some integrity each time they are recycled, limiting the purposes for which they can be used. Kee hopes residents will be encouraged by the rebounding numbers and continue to recycle as many items as they can, particularly cardboard, paper, aluminum and tin.

For people who love recycling as much as he does, Kee encourages a 'second life purchasing mindset.' "The City of Omaha has a policy to purchase items made with recycled materials first before buying products made entirely of virgin materials," Kee says. "Businesses can implement a similar policy and even individuals can strive to extend the life of everything they own, which is in itself a form of recycling."