

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Pilot Cart Program: Fully Automated Garbage/Yardwaste and Recycling Collection.**

The City of Omaha and Waste Management are initiating a pilot program to evaluate a modernized system of solid waste collection service. Utilizing automated collection trucks and providing residents with wheeled carts for waste and recycling is one step in the evaluation process. The City has selected areas in Omaha between 78th and 120th streets and between Harrison and Mary Streets. All residents in the pilot program will be notified by mail and two carts will be delivered to their homes. The program will begin on November 7 and run through the end of April 2017, providing modernized collection to approximately 2,500 residents. Another step in the evaluation process will be to survey the participants in the pilot prior to and after the conclusion of the program and assess the responses to help formulate a plan for the future. For those of you in the pilot program, the City and Waste Management thank you for your participation. A map of the neighborhoods participating in the pilot is available at <http://pilot.wasteline.org>

#### **1. What is automated residential collection service?**

Automated residential collection service is a combination of two items: First, it includes a specially designed heavy duty cart with wheels and an attached lid. Second is a collection vehicle designed to be operated by just one person, the driver, who empties the cart by operating a mechanical arm from inside the truck. Each household in the pilot area will receive two carts: one with a green lid for combined garbage/yardwaste collection and another with a yellow lid for recyclables collection.

#### **2. Why is Omaha testing automated collection?**

Using carts and automated collection trucks provide service that is more efficient, cost effective, and sustainable. Collection is safer for workers, wheeled carts are easier for residents to use and transport to the curb, and carts with lids keep materials contained which means cleaner neighborhoods when compared to manual collection.

Omaha is evaluating the automated collection method because the existing contract will expire at the end of 2020. The City will have to solicit bids for waste collection services by November 2018 (at the latest) and this pilot program will help determine the degree to which carts and automated collection will play a part in Omaha's future.

#### **3. When will carts be delivered to the pilot neighborhoods?**

Carts will be delivered beginning on **October 31, 2016**. You will have your cart for combined garbage/yard waste (green lid) a full one week in advance of when collection begins. Garbage/yardwaste collection will begin the week of **November 7, 2016**. Your recycling cart (yellow lid) will also be delivered the week of **October 31, 2016**. This is two weeks before the first recycling collection. Recycling collection begins the week of **November 14, 2016** and will occur every-other-week for the duration of the pilot.

**4. Will my garbage/yardwaste and recycling collection day change?**

Your collection day will not change. Garbage/yardwaste will continue to be picked up once-per-week on the same day of the week as it is collected now. Recycling collection will change to an every-other-week collection schedule. Recycling will be collected on the same day of the week as it currently is. A collection calendar for recycling will be distributed to you with the cart, or you can view one now at <http://pilot.wasteline.org>.

**5. Where and how do I place my cart at the curb for collection?**

You should place your cart at the curb line with the handle of the cart towards your house. Place your cart 3 feet away from all obstructions, including cars, poles and additional carts.



**6. How can I find out my collection service days?**

The pilot program will not change your collection day for combined garbage/yardwaste. Recycling collection will change to every other week. For the recycling collection schedule follow the calendar provided with the cart, or view the calendar on-line at <http://pilot.wasteline.org>.

**7. Are services provided during the holidays?**

The pilot program area will observe the same holidays as have always been observed for waste collection in Omaha. During the 6 month pilot program, only the Thanksgiving holiday will delay collections one day for Thursday and Friday collections. Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on a Sunday this year and do not impact the collection schedule. You can join an e-mail list for reminders about holiday collection schedules at <http://join.wasteline.org>.

**8. Should I keep my garbage cans and my green recycling bins?**

Yes. When the pilot program is over the carts will be collected and you will resume using 32-gallon garbage cans and see-through plastic bags for garbage and the recycling bins for recyclables.

**9. What happens to the carts when the pilot program is over?**

The carts are the property of Waste Management and will be collected during the final week of the pilot program the week of **April 17-21, 2017** and will be collected on your normal collection day. All carts are tracked by a serial number and if at the end of the pilot program, Waste Management is not able to collect your cart, there will be a \$90 replacement charge.

**10. Who should I call if I don't receive carts and my neighbor does?**

All questions should be called in to the City's Pilot Helpline, 402-444-4500.

**11. Is there a cost associated with the carts and the pilot program? Who is paying for the pilot?**

You will not be charged for being part of the pilot program.

The carts are the property of Waste Management on loan to the assigned address. Waste Management is providing all the necessary equipment and absorbing any additional costs of the pilot to help the City understand and learn about automated collection. The resident is responsible for proper care of the carts.

**12. Do I have to participate?**

Yes. You must use the two provided carts if you want to have your garbage/yardwaste and recycling collected. In order to fully understand the change to automated collection, we need 100% participation. The City will survey residents in the pilot area prior to and at the end of the program to get your feedback. We will report the results in **WASTELINE** after the pilot program ends. This information will be taken into consideration in developing future solid waste collection contracts.

**13. What size is the cart?**

The cart is 96 gallons. The dimensions are approximately 26" wide, 35" deep and 43" high.

**14. How many garbage bags do the carts hold?**

The 96 gallon cart holds approximately eight 13-gallon garbage bags. Actual cart capacity depends on how full the bags are and the size of bags used.

**15. I already own a similar cart, can I use it instead?**

No. The carts delivered to you by Waste Management are designed to withstand the pressure placed on them by the collection equipment when the cart is being emptied. Also, Waste Management's carts are warrantied against most damages.

**16. What do I do if my cart is damaged?**

Please contact the Pilot Helpline at 402-444-4500. Waste Management will replace a cart at no charge if the cart is damaged by Waste Management or if it is damaged as a result of normal wear and tear. However, if the cart is damaged by the resident due to negligence and the cart cannot be repaired, there is a \$90 cost to replace the cart. If the cart is damaged by the resident but requires only minor repairs, there is a \$40 charge to repair the cart. Cart replacement or repair will take five (5) business days.

**17. What if my cart is lost or stolen?**

For replacement of lost or stolen recycling carts, call the Pilot Helpline at 402-444-4500 and also call the police to file a report (Non Emergency Police number 402-444-4877 or on-line at <http://tinyurl.com/j2n8j6u>). Waste Management will replace a stolen or lost cart at no charge as long as a Police Report is filed. If a police report is not filed and the resident needs a new cart, there will be a \$90 charge. Carts will be replaced within five (5) business days.

**18. What do I do with my cart if I move?**

The cart is assigned to the address, not the resident. The cart must stay at the address where it was delivered.

**19. I just moved into the pilot area and I don't have a cart. How do I get one? Will you pick up my garbage until I get one?**

The previous resident should have left their cart when they moved. If they did not, please notify the City's Pilot Helpline 402-444-4500. A cart will be delivered to you within five (5) business days and your garbage/yardwaste, and recycling will be collected if you have requested a cart or carts, but they have not yet been delivered.

**20. What if the one 96-gallon garbage/yardwaste or recycling cart is too small for my family?**

All residents in the pilot program will initially receive one 96-gallon cart for garbage/yardwaste and one for recycling. If you determine that the 96-gallon cart does not meet your needs, Waste Management will deliver an additional cart. Call the Pilot Helpline at 402-444-4500 to request additional garbage/yardwaste or recycling cart. During the pilot additional carts will be replaced within five (5) business days. At the start up of the pilot, it may be up to ten (10) business days for the delivery of an additional cart.

Extra carts that are requested must stay at the address until the end of the pilot. No carts may be turned in early.

To allow for additional yardwaste, up to six of the special paper yardwaste bags may be placed outside of the cart to be collected. Bundles of brush that are 4 feet in length and weigh no more than 30 pounds and tied securely with string may be substituted for paper bags of yardwaste. Household garbage must fit in the cart.

**21. What should I do if I can't fit all of my household garbage into my cart and I choose not to have a second cart?**

There is no provision for excess household garbage. You will have to hold on to excess garbage until the following week.

**22. What if the 96-gallon cart is too big for my family?**

All residents in the pilot program will receive 96-gallon carts. Only the elderly and disabled who are enrolled in the special collection program will receive smaller carts.

**23. Does garbage need to be placed in a bag before it is put in the cart?**

Yes. Using bags in the garbage carts helps keep odors in and animals out. Placing loose garbage in the cart creates unsanitary and unhealthy conditions. Also, as your sanitation worker empties your cart, loose garbage may blow out and litter your neighborhood.

**24. Should my recyclables be in plastic bags?**

No. Please do not put recyclables in plastic bags. Plastic bags are not acceptable in curbside recycling programs and may cause damage to the recycling facility processing equipment. Place recyclables loose and directly into your recycling cart. Paper items may be placed in a paper bag.

**25. Do I have to use the cart or can I just put my bags at the curb?**

Automated collection requires the use of the garbage and recycling carts provided to you. You must use these carts to have your materials collected. One of the many benefits of carts is to prevent animals from getting into your garbage bags and scattering garbage throughout your neighborhood.

**26. What time does my cart need to be placed out for collection?**

Place both your recycling and garbage/yardwaste carts out before 6AM on your regularly scheduled solid waste collection day. Remember that recyclables are only collected every other week during the pilot program. A Recycling Collection Schedule will be included when the carts are delivered to notify you of your recycling collection weeks. You may also refer to the recycling collection calendar at <http://pilot.wasteline.org>. Please remember to keep carts a minimum of three (3) feet from one another and all other obstacles (bushes, mail boxes, cars, fire hydrants, etc).

**27. Why do I have to keep my carts three feet from each other carts and or other objects?**

Carts must be three feet apart and away from other objects like cars, light posts, bushes or mailboxes so that they may be serviced safely. The trucks use a mechanical arm with a gripper on its end to service carts. If there is not enough room around the carts the gripper on the arm may not open and close properly. Sometimes there may not be enough space to put your carts 3 feet away from objects. If this is the case your materials will still be collected, however it is a slower process since the driver will have to get out of the truck and wheel the cart to the truck. This defeats some of the benefits of automated collection. Please help us be as efficient as possible.

**28. What happens if I forget to place my cart at the curb on collection day?**

If your cart is not at the curb by 6AM, Waste Management is not required to return and make the collection. If your cart was out at the curb and it is missed, call the Pilot Helpline at 402-444-4500 to report the miss and the contractor has 24 hours to make the collection. The collection vehicles have in-cab computers that record when each collection is made or if the cart was not out for collection.

**29. What if I do not want a recycling cart?**

We encourage you to recycle, however you are not required to recycle. Keep in mind if you do recycle, you will have more room in the garbage cart for your garbage and yardwaste. If you do not want to recycle, we ask that you store the cart on your property until the end of the program when we will collect the carts.

**30. Can I request a different size recycling cart?**

No. During the pilot program, we ask that you use the cart provided. Only the elderly and disabled who are enrolled in the special collection program will receive smaller carts.

**31. What do I do with extra recyclables that won't fit in my cart?**

You must save the material for your next collection day or take them to one of Omaha's drop-off sites. The list of drop off sites can be found at <http://www.omaharecycles.com>.

**32. Will I be able to recognize the recycle truck from the garbage truck?**

Yes. The trucks for recycling are clearly marked.

**33. Where does the recycling material go after it has been collected from the curb?**

All of Omaha's recyclables are processed by Firststar Fiber, a local company. Firststar Fiber sorts the recyclables and prepares them for the secondary product market. They can only process recyclable materials, so only place acceptable materials in your recycling cart.

**34. What happens if I put garbage in my recycle cart?**

Once the materials have been dumped into the truck by the mechanical arm, it cannot be taken out nor can it be processed at the recycling center. Thus, when garbage is placed in the recycling cart and emptied into the truck, the entire load can become contaminated and might have to be diverted to the landfill. The driver will make a record on the in-cab computer if garbage is discovered in the recycling cart.

It is important to only put recyclable materials in the recycle cart and contact us if you need an additional garbage cart. Remember, most drop-off sites are open 24/7 if you have excess recyclables.

**35. Can I leave my carts at the curb all the time?**

No. Carts must be brought back from the curb and stored near your house. A cart may be placed out for collection no earlier than 5PM the day before your scheduled collection day. It should be returned to the house as soon as possible after collection, but no later than 10AM the day after collection. This is no different than the current restrictions.

**36. Where can I store my garbage cart?**

Carts can be stored where ever it may be convenient for you. It may be in your garage, side yard, or back yard.

**37. Do you have the same expectations for elderly and disabled residents?**

Households where all residents are elderly (age 70 and older) or disabled, that are enrolled to have Special Collection service, will receive a 35-gallon cart for garbage and 35-gallon cart for recycling. If these carts are too small, Waste Management will exchange a 35-gallon cart for a 96-gallon cart within five (5) business days. Please call the Pilot Helpline 402-444-4500 to request a change.

**38. What kinds of garbage can I put in the automated garbage cart?**

Household garbage items, except for those items listed below, may be placed in the garbage cart. It is recommended that garbage items be bagged and tied first, then placed in the cart. This practice will keep your container cleaner, minimize odors, and reduce the chance of windblown litter.

Do not place the following items in your garbage cart:

- Hot ashes or coals
- Household chemicals†
- Medical waste
- Liquids
- Fluorescent bulbs†
- Paint†
- Tires
- Automotive batteries†

†Contact UnderTheSink for disposal of these items, 402-444-7465 or <http://www.underthesink.org>.

**39. In addition to bagging my garbage, what else can I do to control odor in my wheeled cart?**

Other ways to help control odor in your garbage cart include double bagging when the odor is more offensive, making sure the cart lid is closed tight, and leaving a dryer sheet inside the cart.

**40. How do I dispose of large items that will not fit in my 96-gallon cart?**


Bulky items can be taken to River City Recycling at 6404 S 60th Street for a minimal charge. Be sure to let them know that you are interested in participating in the City's cost share program.

#### 41. What kinds of recyclables can I place in the recycling cart?

The same recyclables that you have been putting in your green bin will still be collected. Residents can mix all **Clean** recyclable materials together and place them into their cart with the yellow lid. The most important things to remember about recycling are:

1. Recycle all empty plastic bottles, cans, paper and cardboard
2. Keep food and liquids out of your recycling. A quick rinse does wonders!
3. Keep plastic bags out of the recycling – don't bag your recyclables

The following items are acceptable:

<b>All Clean Paper, including:</b>	Magazines	Greeting Cards	Paperback Books
	Newspaper	School Paper	Wrapping Paper
	Detergent Boxes	Phonebooks	Paper Egg Cartons
	Junkmail	Catalogues	Cereal Boxes
<b>Corrugated Boxes</b>	Shipping boxes Break them down flat so they don't fill up your cart!		
<b>Plastic containers</b>		Bottles	Food containers
	Caps and lids on!	Jugs Cups	Tubs Buckets
<b>Aluminum and Steel (tin) cans including:</b>	Food cans	Drink cans	
	Empty aerosol cans	Empty/dry paint cans	
<b>Food boxes including:</b>	Juice Boxes	Juice Cartons	Gable-top
	Soup Boxes	Milk Cartons	Aseptic Carton
<b>Shredded paper</b>	Must be in a paper bag! Fold over top and tape shut.		





#### 42. What kinds of materials are not allowed in the recycling cart?

The recycling program can only recycle the material listed in question 41 and no other material should go into the recycling cart. Below is a list of materials that are particularly troublesome and should not be placed in the recycling cart.

- **No glass bottles.**  
(use a drop-off site)
- **No food waste.**
- **No plastic bags.**
- **No needles.**
- **No Hazardous material**
- **No hangers**

These items are **not recyclable** in the cart

Foam containers

Paper plates

Aluminum foil

Pots and Pans

Batteries

Toys

Clothing

#### 43. Does yardwaste go in a cart?

Yes. Put yardwaste in the cart with the green lid along with your household garbage. Yardwaste can be placed loosely in the cart and doesn't need to be bagged. Yardwaste in the pilot program will go to the landfill. If you have more yardwaste than will fit in the cart, up to 6 special paper yardwaste bags weighing up to 40lbs, may be placed outside the cart and will be collected. If you still have excess material, maximize your recycling to reduce household garbage and use a mulching mower to reduce your grass clippings. A home compost pile may also be an answer.

You can request a second garbage/yardwaste cart by calling the Pilot Helpline at 402-444-4500.

#### 44. Who do I contact for more information?

Call the Pilot Helpline at 402-444-4500 or visit: <http://pilot.wasteline.org>.

#### 45. Why were these areas selected?

The pilot areas chosen by Waste Management and the City represent curbside service location conditions that allow for use of an automated side-load collection vehicle for solid waste collection.

Citywide collection will also require use of semi-automated equipment due to the variety of service location conditions (e.g., narrow alleys) present across the city that makes fully automated collection impractical or unsafe for some areas.