

# WASTELINE

Recycling and solid waste information for the citizens of Omaha, Nebraska

City of Omaha

Hal Daub, Mayor

November, 2000

Public Works Department

Don Elliott, Director

Environmental Quality Division

## Have you ever wondered...

**T**HERE ARE A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS that are frequently asked about Omaha's solid waste services. In this issue of **Wasteline** we will answer some of the most common questions we receive from you, our customers. In future issues we'll continue to answer these frequently asked questions. If you have a question that is not answered, please contact us by phone (444-4500), mail (see the return address) or e-mail (wasteline@ci.omaha.ne.us). Now, on to the questions and answers.

*Why are there so many rules about how I set my garbage out and why are they all necessary?*

The city is required to request bids for work that is to be contracted, from companies that are capable of fulfilling the work that needs to be done. So how does that relate to how my garbage is set out, you ask. Well, the bids we receive for garbage, yardwaste and recycling collection which amount to over \$10,000,000 per year must be compared and evaluated. By defining how items will be set out and how many containers will be set out, the bidders will bid on an equal amount of work and they will be able to estimate the number of employees and the number and type of trucks that will be needed to complete the work.

*Why do I have to use "see-through" bags for garbage collection?*

The "see-through" bags allow the collector to watch for materials that are banned from collection, such as yardwaste, motor oil, or other liquids. The next question explains this further.

*Why are there materials that Deffenbaugh will not collect?*

State and Federal regulations prohibit depositing certain materials in landfills. Those items include such things as

yardwaste, motor oil, tires, appliances, and liquids. Since these materials are not accepted at the landfill, they can not be collected with the rest of the garbage. There are severe penalties if our contractor violates these prohibitions.

*Why are there weight limits on the cans and bags that we can set out?*

Most people in good health can carry or drag cans or bags weighing more than the limits to the curb each week. However, do you believe you would be able to repeat this task at each of the 1,000 homes on the collection route, who could each have five containers of garbage, and do this five days a week, 52 weeks a year in the rain, freezing temperatures or Omaha's high humidity? It boils down to making the method of collection safe for the people that have to do the job. So remember there are weight limits, that you will find inside this issue of Wasteline.

*Why must cardboard boxes be broken down and cut into pieces 2 feet by 2 feet?*

The compartments in the recycling trucks do not compact materials, so boxes that are not broken down take up space that would hold more material. Essentially the truck would be hauling around a considerable amount of air. The maximum size of the flattened cardboard pieces is determined by the hole or opening on the side of the truck. Bigger pieces just won't fit on the truck, and won't come out of the truck if we were able to force them in.

*Why can't I put my grass clippings and other yardwaste out in plastic bags?*

Yardwaste that is collected in Omaha is sent to a composting facility where the material decomposes and makes a product the City sells under the trade name **OmaGro**<sup>®</sup>. Plastic bags do not decompose, and would contaminate the **OmaGro**<sup>®</sup> product making it an unmarketable product.

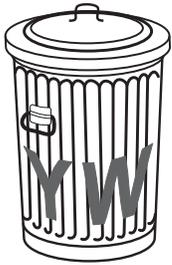
**Yardwaste Collection Ends The Week of Nov. 27 - Dec. 1**

# Yardwaste

**Yardwaste collection will end on December 1, 2000**

Yardwaste is collected from all households from the beginning of April, through the end of November. A complete week of collection is provided at both the beginning and end of the season. During the winter months, yardwaste is not collected—separately or with garbage.

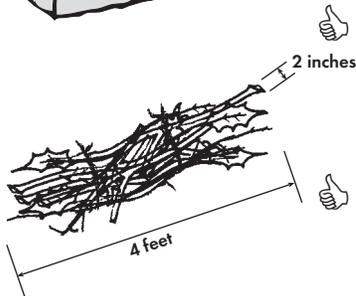
## Yes!



- 👍 Grass clippings and leaves.
- 👍 Garden waste.
- 👍 Fallen apples.
- 👍 Trash cans up to 32 gallons and weighing up to 45 pounds, marked with a **YW** on both sides.



- 👍 Unlimited number of properly prepared marked cans, paper bags or brush bundles.
- 👍 Special yardwaste paper bags weighing up to 40 pounds.



- 👍 Bundles of branches and brush, tied with string or twine and weighing up to 30 pounds.
- 👍 Bundled branches may be up to 2 inches in diameter and 4 feet in length. They may weigh up to 30 pounds.

## No!

- ⊗ Mixtures of yardwaste and garbage.
- ⊗ Litter, trash or garbage.
- ⊗ Whole cans of dirt or sod.
- ⊗ Street sweeping sand, litter or rocks.
- ⊗ Plastic bags of yardwaste.
- ⊗ Cardboard boxes of yardwaste.
- ⊗ Pet manure.
- ⊗ Kitty litter.
- ⊗ Branches over 2 inches in diameter.
- ⊗ Branches over 4 feet long.
- ⊗ Plastic or nylon rope/twine or wire used on brush.
- ⊗ Unbundled brush.

### Collection Pointers

- Place all materials at your collection point by 6AM. 🕒
- If your collection was missed, call 444-5238 *after* 7PM on your collection day.
- Leave a couple feet of space between your yardwaste, recyclables and garbage containers.
- Recycling and solid waste information for Omaha is available from **FRED** an automated fax and voice system. With a touch tone phone, dial 444-3610. For a fax index select document 90. For voice information select from these categories:

Recycling, Curbside	680
Recycling, Special Topics	683
Recycling, Drop-off Sites	685
Garbage Collection	682
Yardwaste Collection	681
Collection Problems	684
Bulky Item Disposal	686



# Recyclables

Set out by 6:00am

## Paper sack #1—Newspaper

- Includes: Coupons, advertisements, Parade section and all paper that came with the newspaper.
- Lay sack on top of bin.
- *Do not include:* phonebooks or other paper, rubber bands, plastic bags.

Yes



## Paper sack #2—Mixed Paper

- Includes: Magazines, catalogues, cereal boxes, junk-mail (including mailing labels and plastic windows), detergent boxes, greeting cards, wrapping paper, paper-back books, office and school paper.
- Lay sack on top of bin.
- *Do not include:* pizza boxes, juice boxes, milk cartons, phonebooks, hardbound books, tissue paper, paper plates, or frozen food boxes.

Yes

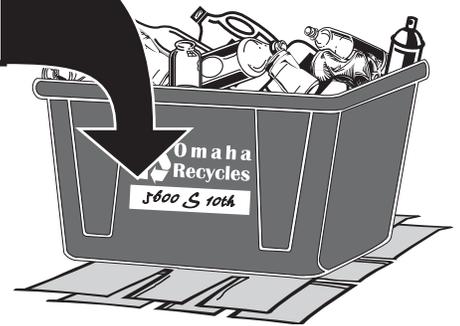


## Loose in the bin (*Not in plastic bags*)—Containers

- Remove lids and throw in garbage.
- Plastic bottles marked PETE ♻️, including: Bottles that held pop, cooking oil, mouthwash, shampoo or cleaners.
- PETE ♻️ *not included:* plastic cups, toys or cookie trays.
- Plastic bottles and tubs marked HDPE ♻️, including—bottles and tubs that held milk, juice, cleaners, margarine, whipped topping, or yogurt.
- HDPE ♻️ *not included:* motor oil or auto product bottles, lawn chemical bottles, toys or cookie trays. No 5 gallon buckets.
- Glass bottles & jars.
- Aluminum cans & Steel (tin) cans, including—empty aerosol cans, empty and dry paint cans. Tip: Place end (lid) of food cans inside can and crimp closed.
- Corrugated cardboard. Flatten. Cut to 2 feet by 2 feet. Place in bin or on ground under bin.
- Write your address on the bin, where indicated with a permanent marker.

Yes

Write your address here.



## Recycling Collection Tips

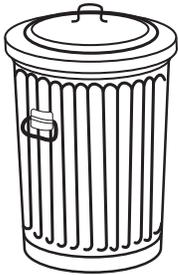
- Write your address on the bin using a permanent marker.
- Remove snap top lids and screw on caps from all containers and place in garbage.
- *Do not include:* plastic bags, Styrofoam®, motor oil bottles, plate glass, syringes, light bulbs, drinking glasses or pizza boxes.
- Flatten all boxes. Cut to 2 feet by 2 feet.
- Remove bin from curb as soon as possible after collection.
- All recyclables set out for collection must be in a green bin. (Except pieces of cardboard that should be placed under the bin)

# Garbage

**Set out by 6:00am**

Because of state and federal mandates, there are limits to the types of waste that you may include in your garbage. Each household is limited to 5 properly prepared trash cans or clear bags of garbage per week.

## Yes!



- 👍 Trash cans up to 32 gallons and weighing up to 45 pounds when full.
- 👍 See-through bags (clear bags preferred) and weighing up to 30 pounds when full.
- 👍 Up to five containers of trash per week (example 2 trash cans and 3 bags).
- 👍 Place within 5 feet of curb, approved alley or other approved location.



## No!

- ⊗ A mixture of garbage and yardwaste.
- ⊗ Rocks, dirt and concrete.
- ⊗ Dead animals.
- ⊗ All liquids.
- ⊗ Tires, engines or other large auto parts.
- ⊗ Bulky items (couches, chairs, stoves, etc.).
- ⊗ Dark plastic bags that you can't see through.
- ⊗ Motor oil and automotive batteries.
- ⊗ Cardboard boxes (empty or full).
- ⊗ Natural Christmas trees.
- ⊗ Any material not in a can or see-through bag.

### Take Note!

- Celebrate America Recycles Day, November 15. Complete your entry to *win the American Green Dream Home or other great prizes*. Entry form inside.
- Upcoming collection holiday—Thanksgiving Day, November 23, Thursday and Friday collections are delayed by one day.

If your recycling bin is missing, damaged or you need a second bin, call 444-5238.

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Printed on a 50% recycled content paper that includes 20% Post-consumer fibers and 30% Pre-consumer fibers.



#### WASTELINE

City of Omaha  
Environmental Quality Division  
5600 S. 10TH St.  
Omaha, NE 68107-3501

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 1512  
OMAHA, NE

**Yardwaste collection ends the  
week of November 27 —  
December 1**

# Why "Buy Recycled?"

Most Omahans help the recycling effort by putting materials in their recycling bin. But many people don't realize that another important step to keep recycling working is to "Buy Recycled" or "Close the Loop" by purchasing products made from recycled content materials. Purchasing recycled content products helps maintain market demand for recyclables and ensures the continuation and expansion of recycling programs everywhere. If consumers purchase more products with recycled content the manufacturers will continue to use recyclable materials in their products and expand their usage to even more products.

Fold here



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Place  
Stamp  
Here

AMERICA RECYCLES DAY ENTRY  
C/O ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIV.  
5600 S 10TH ST  
OMAHA, NE 68107-3501

Fold here

Cut here, then mail



**Celebrate  
America  
Recycles  
Day  
November  
15**



# Win The "American Green Dream House"

## Support America Recycles Day November 15

Thanks to you, recycling is working! The proof is that the paper, plastic, steel, aluminum, and glass that you've been recycling is now made into all sorts of everyday products and packages, which are available on the market right now. There's just one thing left to do: Buy Them!

That's the "cycle" in recycling: You recycle items, that are collected and bought by manufactures to make into new products.

Why is "Buy Recycled" so important? It's simple. In order for the materials that have been collected in Omaha to have value and get used in the manufacturing of products, those products need to be in demand. You create that demand by purchasing products made from, or packaged in recycled paper, steel, aluminum, glass, or plastic.

Fill out your pledge below and mail by November 15, 2000, and you could win one of many great prizes, even the "American Green Dream House," a brand new three bedroom, 2-1/2 bath home built primarily with recycled materials. A \$200,000 value! Those under 18 can win a trip for their family to Walt Disney World. Numerous Nebraska prizes will also be drawn. But you can't win if you don't make a pledge, and recycling will lose if you don't.

**The fine print:** Entries must be postmarked by November 20, 2000. National prizes will be drawn on December 15, 2000. Nebraska prizes will be drawn on November 27, 2000. **One entry per person.** No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Your name and address will not be used for direct marketing purposes, in-fact if you don't win, your entry will be recycled without being looked at. For a complete set of rules or contest winners, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: America Recycles Day Contest Rules & Winners, 1727 King St., Ste 105, Alexandria, VA 22314-2720.

### For America Recycles Day, I will (check one or more):

- Buy more recycled-content products
- Increase my recycling efforts at home and work
- Other recycling-related effort: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if you are under the age of 18.

*Make copies for other household members, or make your pledge via the Internet at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org).*

Cut here, then mail