

The City of St. John's has updated its [Sanitation Regulations](#) to reflect modern practices of waste collection, including curbside recycling and other ways to divert waste from the landfill.

Beginning January 1, 2022 clear bags will be required for garbage put at the curb in St. John's.

For more details about using clear bags for garbage:

Curbit website <http://curbitstjohns.ca/garbage/clear-garbage-bags/>

City Guide

- winter 2022 https://issuu.com/cityofstjohns/docs/city_guide_winter_2022_online/14
- fall 2021 https://issuu.com/cityofstjohns/docs/city_guide_fall_2021_for_web/16
- spring 2021 https://issuu.com/cityofstjohns/docs/city_guide_spring_2021_online/10

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ST. JOHN'S

When do I have to start using clear bags for garbage?

Starting on January 1, 2022 garbage put at the curb for collection must be in clear, colourless bags – with the exception of one ‘privacy’ bag per week that can be in an opaque, non-transparent (ie. black, white, green, etc) bag.

We encourage you to transition to using clear bags for garbage now, before it is required, to give yourself time to adjust to using the clear bags.

The next time you’re at a grocery or home supply store, have a look for clear garbage bags. Pick up a box to try for yourself so that your household is ready and used to using clear bags and recycling all you can before the new year.

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Why are we changing to – what are the benefits of -- clear bags for garbage?

The main reasons we are requiring clear bags for garbage are to:

- increase recycling
- remove hazardous waste/items from garbage
- heighten safety for collection staff

From a recent waste audit we know that in St. John’s more recyclables are going in the garbage than in blue bags at the curb. Currently only 46% of recyclables placed at the curb for collection are put in blue bags – the other 54% are being put in garbage bags.

Diverting recyclables from garbage to recycling saves the City, and therefore taxpayer, money. The City pays \$82 for each tonne of garbage it brings to Robin Hood Bay, while recyclables cost only \$22 per tonne.

Municipalities across Canada that are using clear bags for garbage have reported an increase in the amount of recyclables diverted from garbage to recycling once clear bags were introduced.

The City of St. John’s has a commitment to develop and implement sustainable programs to maximize the diversion of residential solid waste from landfill; using clear bags for garbage support this.

Reduce Waste. Recycle More.

Much of your household waste is recyclable, right at the curb - more than just pop cans and juice bottles!



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Will all residents have to use clear bags? (Manual & Automated Collection areas)

Yes.

All residents of the City of St. John's will be required to use clear bags for garbage, with the exception of one opaque (not see-through) privacy bag per week.

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How many bags of garbage can I put at the curb? (or in my cart)

A maximum of 4 regular size garbage bags per residence can be put at the curb each week.

This applies to both manual (bags at curb) and automated (carts at curb) collection areas as the City-issued garbage carts hold approximately 4 regular size garbage bags.

One opaque (not see-through) 'privacy' bag is allowed each week; if you use a privacy bag up to 3 additional clear bags of garbage is permitted each week.

If you do not use a privacy bag, up to 4 clear bags of garbage is permitted each week.

There is no limit to the number of blue bags of recycling put at the curb on your recycling weeks.

I have lots of black (white, green, etc) garbage bags as I buy in bulk – what do I do with these bags now?

When clear bags for garbage begins on January 1, 2022, up to one 'privacy' bag per week is allowed at the curb (or in the garbage cart).

You can continue to use your black (white, green, not see through) bags as your one privacy bag per week.

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I have clear bags but the package says they are recycling (or yard waste) bags – can I use them for garbage?

The colour of the bag is important, not what the package the bags came in says.

Beginning in Jan. 1, 2022 waste put at the curb each week in St. John's must be in:

Clear bags (colourless, see-through) for garbage: up to 4 regular size bags (3 with privacy bag)

Opaque bag (not see-through) for privacy garbage: maximum 1 regular size bag

Blue bags (blue see-through) for recycling: unlimited number

Paper yard waste bags for yard waste: unlimited number

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**What can I do with the plastic wrap the City Guide came in?
(alternate: Why did you wrap the City Guide in plastic that cannot be recycled?)**

The plastic wrap that the winter 2022 City Guide came in can be used for household small waste – for example: dispose of used kitty litter or dog ‘poop & scoop’ waste or line a bathroom or office waste bin.

Wrapping the winter 2022 City Guide in plastic achieved goals:

- provided samples of clear bags to residential households efficiently and economically
- demonstrates the use of clear bags that immediately shows the contents inside

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Where can I buy clear garbage bags?

Most grocery and home supply stores carry a selection of waste bags, including clear bags for garbage.

Kitchen catcher sized clear bags can be more difficult to find, however some retailers in St. John’s are carrying them.

An audit of clear bag inventory at St. John’s retailers, undertaken in August 2021, found clear garbage bags at:

Home Hardware <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torbay Road • Village Mall • Goulds 	Dollarama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Drive • Ropewalk Lane • Village Mall • Danny Drive 	Sobeys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Drive • Merrymeeting Road • Ropewalk Lane • Topsail Road • Torbay Road • Elizabeth Avenue
Bidgoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goulds 	Belbin’s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quidi Vidi Road 	Colemans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merrymeeting Road • Newfoundland Drive
Kent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Drive • Stavanger Drive 	Home Depot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Drive 	Canadian Tire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Drive • Hebron Way
Pipers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen Avenue • Elizabeth Avenue 	Walmart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Drive • Aberdeen Avenue 	Costco <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danny Drive

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What about my privacy?

One opaque (not see-through) 'privacy' bag is allowed each week (per collection).

Put items you don't want others to see in your privacy bag; this may include sanitary products, diapers, medical/pharmaceutical objects, etc.

If you have paper documents with private or financial information on them, shred those before putting them in a blue bag for recycling.

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Can I (or Do I) put my white kitchen catchers inside a clear bag?

For your clear bags, if smaller bags are put inside a larger bag, all the bags must be clear.

This includes kitchen and bathroom waste bins: if you remove kitchen catchers or small bags from bathroom bins to put it in a larger clear bag, the kitchen-catchers and small bags must also be clear.

If you do not use clear bags in kitchen or bathroom bins, those can be combined as your one privacy bag per week or you can dump the contents of the small bins into a clear bag.

Non-see through bags inside a clear bag is only acceptable as your one privacy bag per week.

Privacy Bag

Maximum 1 per week

Put any waste items you would like to keep 'private', so that others don't see it, in an opaque (not see through) bag.

Privacy bags can be:

- black
- white
- green
- orange
- any colour opaque bag
- clear with opaque bag(s) inside

What makes a Privacy Bag

1. It could be loose garbage in an opaque bag.



2. It could be loose garbage and/or smaller opaque bags all inside a larger opaque bag.



3. It could be loose garbage and/or smaller opaque bags all inside a larger clear bag.



Clear Bags

3 (plus 1 privacy bag) per week or 4 (no privacy bag) per week

Put loose garbage in a clear bag.

If you put smaller bags inside a clear bag, for example from a kitchen or bathroom waste bin, the smaller bags must be clear and see-through as well.

Clear bags go in the garbage cart or at the curb (maximum of 4 bags) in areas without automated collection.



What NOT to do



Non-see through bags inside a clear bag is only acceptable as your 1 privacy bag per week

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How will the City know if I am using clear bags in my automated bin?

Waste staff will conduct random checks in all areas to learn if clear bags are being used. Notification may be left to indicate the use of clear bags or not.

Automated waste collection trucks are outfitted with a video monitor so that drivers can see what is being dumped in the truck. Notification may be sent to residences that do not use clear bags.

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If I don't use – or can't find - clear bags for garbage, will you collect my waste?

We anticipate some residents may need a period of adjustment to get used to buying and using clear bags for garbage.

We aim to take a 'soft' approach to give everyone time to purchase and start using clear bags for garbage.

At some point, the City will transition to a 'hard' launch where your garbage will not be collected if we identify clear bags are not being used. The City will give notice as to when the hard launch will start.

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I am already recycling, why do I have to use clear bags for garbage?

For residents already doing their part to reduce waste entering the landfill, this program should make no difference except for the colour of bag used.

A primary intent of the clear bag program is to increase recycling participation from those who do not currently recycle.

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Does the use of clear bags increase the diversion of waste from the landfill?

Yes.

Municipalities across Canada who use clear bags for garbage have all reported an increase in the amount of recyclable materials diverted from curbside garbage into curbside recycling.

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Will clear bags be required for all waste at Robin Hood Bay?

No.

Multiple municipalities use the Robin Hood Bay Regional Waste Management Facility and not all have implemented a clear bag regulation, therefore clear bags will not be required at the commercial or residential drop off.

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Where and when can residents dispose of medications/batteries/lightbulbs/etc.?

Household hazardous waste items such as batteries, medication, paint, oils, gasoline, along with other items can be brought to the Household Hazardous Waste Depot at the Robin Hood Bay Regional Waste Facility on Wednesday and Saturday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more details: <http://robinhoodbay.ca/fees-permits/household-hazardous-wastes/>

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How many bags of recycling and yard waste are allowed at the curb?

There is no limit to the amount of recycling or yard waste a resident can place at the curb for curbside collection. Recyclables must be sorted into two categories in separate blue bags - paper products and containers.

For more details about curbside recycling: <http://curbitstjohns.ca/recycle/curbside-recycling/>

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Can I use clear bags for recycling?

No. Recycling must be placed in blue bags only for curbside collection.

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Will there be an exemption to using clear bags? (ie. medical reasons)

There is no exemption in place or planned for the use of clear bags for garbage.

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