



Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we changing from bins to carts?

It is just an easier way to recycle. It eliminates the need to sort recyclables. Residents no longer have to do any heavy lifting—they just roll the carts to the curb. Plus, the lid on the carts keeps recyclables from blowing into your neighbor's yard. And because it is easier, it promotes increased recycling.

How does the new recycling process work since the items are not going to be sorted at the curb?

Your recyclables will still be sorted. But instead of you doing it, it will be done by a state-of-the-art processing facility. Recyclables picked up curbside will be delivered to a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) operated by Mid America Recycling. There, mechanical and manual methods will be used to separate the materials and to remove anything that is not recyclable. Some types of technology used are magnets, "Eddy" current separators, air classifiers, trammels and screens. To see a video from how this process works at another Mid America Recycling facility [click here](#).

Can I continue using my recycle bin?

Starting July 1, 2009, you will no longer be able to set out your green bin for recycling. However, we have a list on the Web site offering many ideas for using the bin — from personal storage to donations to local schools.

What to do with my green bin?

- Keep it
- Donate it to a school to use for their recycling program
- Keep your cans and bottles in it until you return them for deposit
- Load it up with hazardous paints and oils; then take it to the Regional Collection Center to have the hazardous materials recycled
- Store sporting gear in it
- Let your pets use it as a toy, house, play place or bed
- Fill it full of snow to make large snow blocks to build a fort around your house in the winter
- Use it when you go camping to separate out recyclables from the garbage
- Put it in your closet and throw your shoes in it
- Use it to hold paint cans, stains and oils in your garage
- Wire them to your farm fence to let your livestock feed from them
- Use them as planters
- Put it in your new cart to be recycled
- Will I have to pay for the new cart?
- Residents will not be billed for the carts. One will be provided to each single family residence, by Metro Waste Authority (MWA).

Where is the money coming from to pay for the new carts?

MWA will use a portion of the revenue from the sale of the recyclables to finance the cost of the carts. The remainder of the revenue from the recyclables will continue to be passed on to your communities to use at their discretion for community improvements (e.g., beautification, environmental protection, parks and recreation).

Is this new recycling program funded by tax dollars?

No, Metro Waste Authority provides this service and does not receive tax dollars. We are self funded by the programs and services we offer.

Will there be an increase in cost for me as a resident to use the new program?

MWA is not going to charge the cities more than what is currently being charged for the curbside recycling program.

What size are the new carts?

There are two sizes.

The recommended size is a 96-gallon container, which is the same size of the large garbage containers in your community. Approximate dimensions are: Width: 29", Length: 35" and Height: 43."

The alternate size is a 48-gallon container which can be requested by calling 24-GREEN.* Approximate dimensions are: Width: 23.5", Length: 28.75" and Height: 37.5."

I don't think I have enough recyclables to fill up a new large cart – is there an option to get a smaller cart?

Residents are encouraged to try the new 96-gallon cart when the program begins. Cart trials throughout the metro area have shown that most residents will need this size because —

- Recycling is easier so you end up recycling more.
- You will need storage for two weeks of recyclables since collection will be switched from weekly to every other week.
- All cardboard will need to be broken down and placed in the container for pick up
- All recyclables have to fit inside of the cart (imagine holidays, celebrations and events in your home; your cart will fill up quickly with recyclables).

If you decide you need a smaller cart, contact us at 24-GREEN*.

Why is the collection of recyclables being switched from weekly to every other week?

Fewer trips of collection trucks down city roads has cost-saving and environmental benefits.

- Reduces wear and tear on roads; your community will save money on road repair.
- Uses less fuel. Your community will be doing its part to reduce greenhouse gases that are causing climate change. Fuel costs will also be reduced, which one reason this program can be provided as economically as the current curbside collection program.

And, recyclables can be safely stored for several weeks. They do not break down, so they do not cause odor problems or present human health hazards like garbage.

I do not have a cart. How can I get one?

In Des Moines, call the Public Work Department's 24 -hour Customer Service Center at 283-4950 to request one. All other communities in the metro area, call 24-GREEN to request a cart.

What can be recycled in the carts?

The same items that you currently put in your bins: necked bottles, margarine and yogurt containers, cardboard, mixed paper, newspaper, aluminum cans, wire hangers, aerosol cans, and all colors of glass jars and containers.

* Starting July 1, 2009, there may be a fee associated with a cart exchange.