



## Ottawa's Three-Item Limit For Curbside Garbage Collection Has Begun

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**By David Hill, Barrhaven West Councillor**

On September 30, 2024 the City of Ottawa's three-item limit for curbside garbage collection went into effect, so what does this mean and why is it happening?

This new policy applies to all households that receive curbside garbage collection. So, what does "three items" mean and what constitutes a garbage item? A garbage item includes a container (up to 140 litres), a garbage bag, or a bulky item (furniture and/or large items that cannot fit into a bag or bin, like a couch). For example, you can put multiple smaller bags into a container and put out three containers. Any combination of the above garbage items work, as long as the total does not exceed three items (see the image for more examples). If you have to go over the three-item limit, there will be yellow bags available for purchase. However, before using yellow bags, make sure to compost and recycle as best you can as there is no limit on your blue bin, black bin, or compost – more on this below!

What about illegal dumping? Part of the change includes the hiring and deployment of solid waste inspectors for proactive monitoring, education, and enforcement across Ottawa, particularly areas that are prone to illegal dumping like parks, public spaces, rural ditches, and receptacles. If you come across illegal dumping, it's important that you call 3-1-1 or go to [Ottawa.ca/311](https://ottawa.ca/311) so the City can address it as soon as possible. So why the change? Our landfill is filling up fast and could reach capacity in approximately the next decade. Furthermore, over half of what is dumped in the landfill can be placed in the green, blue, or black bins. The new limit will ensure that households put out three items of garbage instead of six, preventing unnecessary waste from going to the landfill. If you want to explore this topic further, the City of Ottawa's website has a comprehensive overview of the new policy. Again, there will be no limit to how much you can recycle or compost!

How can households maximize recycling? Use the City's waste explorer application if you're not sure about an item. **Things you wouldn't think could be composted like floor sweepings, cat litter and dog feces (in a sealed bag), pet fur, sugar/flour paper bags, waxed paper and much more are all good to go in the green bin!** The bottom line is that recycling and composting awareness is key; and that's why I've been conducting a waste diversion

campaign with volunteers in Barrhaven West neighborhoods for the past two summers to ensure our community is doing the best we can to recycle! If you want to help out with this, get in touch with my office and I'd be happy to welcome you to the waste diversion team!

So please, as we move to the three-item curbside garbage collection limit, check what can go in your blue bin, black bin, and green bin, and check what you can reuse or donate – don't let it go to waste!