

ZEROWASTE

Frequently Asked Questions

1 Why is York introducing this program?

There is evidence that greater sustainability can be achieved when people take personal responsibility for their waste management practices. It prompts each of us to think before we throw something out. Every paper cup, food carton, and banana peel. Capturing more organic waste via kitchenette receptacles will improve our recycling results and keep unwanted insects and odours out of your office.

2 What are the benefits?

By adopting these practices, the York community will benefit with improved air quality, health and environment in our work space. It will also lead to a better use of university resources and contribute to York's broader sustainability goals.

3 Where should I dispose of my organics if my office area doesn't have a kitchenette or group eating location?

There may be a kitchenette on the floor above or below your floor. Many buildings also have exterior compost digesters at one of the main floor entrances. If neither of those options are possible, take your organic waste home (wasteless lunch concept) or deposit it into the garbage receptacle at your nearest tri-bin unit.

4 How often am I supposed to empty my office deskside waste and recycle bins into the tri-bins?

Most recyclables like paper and plastics will not rot, and therefore can be brought to a tri-bin when your deskside bin is full, or at your leisure during the day as time permits. Remember that organic waste should go directly into one of the NEW organic bins or an exterior compost digester (per No. 3).

5 If I put something in the wrong bin, what happens to the recycling stream?

Paper coffee cups are the worst offenders. They go into the waste bin only. Try to put material into the right bin. If you make a mistake the recyclers accept up to 5% non-compliance. After that it costs York more money to process the shipment.

6 How often will the common area tri-bins be emptied?

Tri-bins will be inspected daily and serviced as required by custodial staff.

7 What goes in the mixed paper products bin?

- Office paper, fine paper, photocopy paper wrap, envelopes, file folders
- Hard and softcover books, magazines, newspapers, inserts, junk mail flyers, phone books, boxboard, egg cartons, construction paper, brown paper towels
- Anything that remotely resembles paper
- Sticky note paper and clips/staples are acceptable

NOT ACCEPTED:

- Plastic binders or transparencies (bundle and place significant quantity on loading dock for redistribution)
- Do not put paper coffee cups in this bin. They go in the waste bin only.

8 What goes in the Mixed Bottles/Cans bin?

- All glass, plastic, and metal cans and bottles
- Milk and juice cartons
- Aluminum trays/foil
- Plastic tubs, lids
- Remember to return as much of this as possible to your home. Bring tupperware to work and then bring back home.
- Remember to empty out all liquids into a sink before depositing the container into a tri-bin receptacle.

NOT ACCEPTED:

- Foil with paper or plastic lamination
- Yogurt lids
- Plastic bags, utensils
- Light bulbs (place on loading dock in cardboard for pickup)
- Window glass or mirrors
- Crystal, ceramic or porcelain
- Any personal items should be brought back home for your municipality recycling/waste box.

9 What goes in the waste bin?

Anything that has lots of food on the plate/cardboard, wrapping (granola bar/chip bags) and your paper coffee cups.

10 What goes in organics?

- Food, meat, napkins, banana peels, apple cores, coffee grinds, Kleenex etc.

NOT ACCEPTED:

- Non-organic materials such as Styrofoam cups or plastic utensils

11 What else can I recycle at York?

- Used clothes, telephone directories, computer hardware, batteries, old books
- For full list see [Recycling Program](#).

12 Can I request an organic waste digester or tri-bin?

Yes, please contact Mr. Lorie Thatcher, waste management supervisor, at ext. 77526 for discussion.

13 What should I do if my black deskside waste bin is dirty?

This means there are liquids or organic waste being deposited into the deskside bin. Please clean out at your nearest kitchenette and curtail liquids and organics from being deposited into your deskside unit.

14 Can I call for a supply of deskside waste bin plastic bags?

Plastic liner bags will no longer be supplied to the community. We will collectively save 30,000 bags each year!

15 How often will the tri-bins be cleaned?

The units will be washed as needed. Community members can send a note to facilities@yorku.ca if they notice their tri-bin needs cleaning because of liquid spills or organic deposits.

16 How will classrooms, boardrooms and cafeterias be affected?

All areas other than office deskside units will be inspected daily and serviced as required, as is the current procedure. One of our goals is to reduce the plastic tri-bin replacement bags below the current 60,000 used each year. Community members following appropriate disposal practices of organic waste and reducing the liquid content in the waste stream will be the key.