



# Organics and Recycling Guide For General Businesses & Organizations

## Diverting Waste in Squamish

Everyone who lives and works in Squamish produces waste. In 2019, Squamish residents sent an average of **563 kg** of waste per person to the landfill. Squamish's Council Strategic Plan aims to minimize the per person disposal rate to **300 kg** per year by 2021. In order to achieve this target, we've made some changes to the Solid Waste Utility Bylaw that will encourage everyone to help reduce their waste by keeping organics and recyclables out of the landfill (this is called waste diversion).

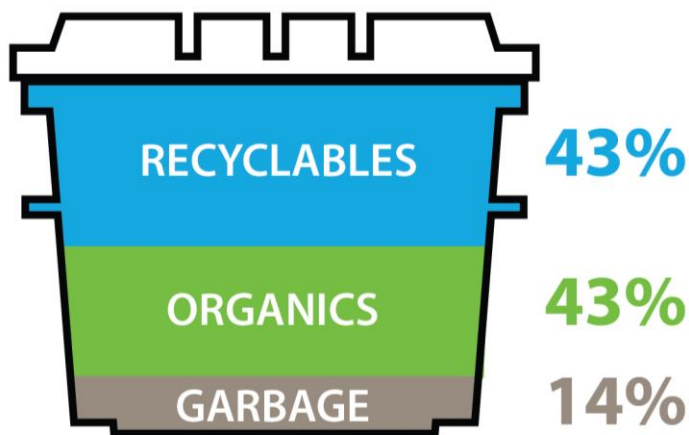
This guide will explain the changes and how to comply, as well as provide some information about why diverting waste is important.

### WHO?

This guide is for any general business or organization that produces waste. This includes: retail shops, department stores, offices, religious and educational institutions, etc.

Recent audits reveal that many of the materials sent to the landfill could have been diverted for composting or recycling. The Squamish Zero Waste Strategy also identified businesses and organizations (as well as multi-family homes) as the largest generators of waste in our community, producing approximately **55%** of all the waste arriving at the landfill. Many people want to align their environmental values and their actions – how can we do better?

Waste in Businesses and Organizations (2018 Waste Audit results)



### The Squamish Landfill

With the Squamish Landfill close to reaching its full capacity, a multi-million-dollar capital project was completed in 2019 to build a wall to expand the landfill vertically. This 10-metre high wall is expected to give the Landfill a lifespan increase of between 5 and 10 years. But you can do your part by keeping organics and recyclables out of the garbage, and help increase the lifespan of the Squamish Landfill.

### WHAT?

The Solid Waste Utility Bylaw improves the way Squamish manages its waste by banning organics and recycling from landfill, and requiring the use of clear bags for garbage.

To comply with this bylaw, businesses and organizations need to:

- ☐ Ensure that organics, recyclables, and garbage are collected and disposed of separately
- ☐ Provide educational information about how to separate organics, recyclables, and garbage to all new staff (and to existing staff annually)
- ☐ Post clear and accessible signage to help staff separate organics, recyclables, and garbage
- ☐ Place garbage in clear, non-coloured, transparent plastic bags (an opaque privacy bag can be used for 10% of your garbage)

## WHEN?

Every owner and occupier must ensure that organic, recyclable and residual materials are placed in the appropriate collection container, without contamination since the Solid Waste Utility Bylaw was adopted by Council on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The District of Squamish (DoS) recognizes that changes to the Solid Waste Utility Bylaw mean changes in the way you manage waste in your business or organization. That's why we have created this guide to help you start diverting waste today!

For more information on Squamish waste management, including bylaw updates, and tools to support changes to infrastructure, systems and training, visit [squamish.ca/retail-waste](http://squamish.ca/retail-waste).

## WHY?

Everyone living, visiting and doing business in Squamish creates waste. Reducing and diverting waste from the Landfill makes social, environmental and economic sense.

### Dollars and Cents

As the costs associated with the collection, transportation and processing of waste continue to steadily rise, the benefits of reducing waste and keeping it out of the landfill become more apparent. Properties that actively manage their waste are able to reduce waste-associated costs and avoid overage charges, now and into the future.

For example, the tipping fees for organics and recyclables have been set lower than the fee for general garbage. However, if your garbage destined for landfill is discovered to contain more than 10% organic or recyclable material (or 5% in 2021) that could have been diverted, you will instead be charged the **Mixed Waste fee**. This fee is set at **\$375.00 per tonne** and is designed to incentivise diversion and penalize those who are not managing contamination of waste appropriately (see the table for comparison). Businesses that do not separate their waste may also be subject to a \$500 fine under the Squamish Solid Waste Bylaw.



WASTE STREAM	LANDFILL TIPPING FEES
<b>Food Scraps &amp; Organics</b>	\$75 per tonne
<b>Recyclables</b> <i>Styrofoam, Plastic Packaging, Containers, Metal, Cardboard, Paper, Glass, Small Appliances</i>	No charge
<b>Garbage (Commercial Waste)</b>	\$170 per tonne

*2020 costs at time of guide production. Fees are subject to change. For tipping fees for all materials, visit: [squamish.ca/landfill](http://squamish.ca/landfill).*

It is in your best financial interest to avoid the Mixed Waste fee (and fines) by separating your waste. Want to know how much you can save? Calculate your costs with our worksheet. Visit: [squamish.ca/retail-waste](http://squamish.ca/retail-waste)



## People and Planet

Organic waste is a valuable resource.

Diverting organics from garbage sent to the landfill helps to:

- reduce methane emissions, a greenhouse gas up to **72** times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>;
- extend the lifespan of the Squamish landfill (saving all taxpayers money);
- return nutrients to soil, which both improves soil health and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers;
- boost soil's ability to retain water and decrease runoff;
- provide an all-natural soil amendment to support farmers producing food in our region;
- show a clear commitment to a greener future, in line with shared community values;
- encourage more environmentally sustainable behaviour in homes and workplaces.



## HOW?

Like any changes in operations, a degree of planning and preparation are required for success. Use this guide to get started on the right track.

## Our Zero Waste Future

*"Zero waste is about building a vibrant circular economy, where unwanted materials are not disposed in a landfill or incinerator, but instead become the raw materials for something new. A strong circular economy keeps valuable resources circulating in the local economy, supporting good green jobs, benefiting the community and reducing harmful environmental impacts."* – City of Toronto

**Squamish has a goal of being a zero waste community by 2040.**



Squamish 2016 Zero Waste Strategy Priorities:

- Implement an organics disposal ban;
- Ensure recycling and organics diversion programs and services are available and convenient for everyone at home, at work and on the go;
- Institute construction and demolition waste diversion guidelines;
- Promote waste minimization.

# STEP ONE – REVIEW YOUR CURRENT WASTE SYSTEMS

*If you don't measure it, you can't manage it.*

Understanding the sources of waste in your business or organization is the first step in managing waste. Review the flow of materials throughout your property to identify opportunities for waste reduction. Reviewing waste can be as simple as conducting visual checks to better understand what is in your waste and to identify common contaminants. For a more in-depth insight into the waste you are producing consider conducting a waste audit or hiring an external company to do one for you.

## HOW TO CONDUCT A WASTE AUDIT



Image source: SERA Architects, Inc.

If you aren't ready to dive into a waste audit quite yet, ask for information from your waste hauler. Hauling companies often track waste weights and frequency of collection, which can help you get a sense of your waste generation. Talk to your team, property users, cleaners or maintenance staff, because they can help confirm existing waste management practices and identify possible ways to reduce waste or manage it better.

**TIP** – Are you producing food or construction waste in your business or organization? There are more 'how to' guides specifically focused on Food Businesses & Organizations and Construction, Renovation, Demolition & Material Suppliers.

These guides are available online at [squamish.ca/foodwaste](https://squamish.ca/foodwaste) or [squamish.ca/construction-waste](https://squamish.ca/construction-waste).

In buildings with shared waste rooms, waste data will be for the whole property. In order to understand the opportunities for waste reduction or increased diversion in your business or organization, gather information on waste before it leaves your space. Work together with others you share the waste room with to determine waste reduction and diversion actions that can be implemented throughout the whole property. Remember, actions will vary depending on the types of waste being produced: household waste can be very different from business waste, but all actions count as you work to reduce your property's waste footprint.

**TIP** – Share a waste room with accommodation properties? There are more 'how to' guides specifically focused on Multi-Family Homes for both Property Managers and Residents.

Multi-Family Homes guides are available online at [squamish.ca/apartments](https://squamish.ca/apartments) or [squamish.ca/property-managers](https://squamish.ca/property-managers).

## Managing Your Waste Contract

Once you have determined which types of waste are being produced in your property, make sure those waste streams are also being collected at relevant waste collection points and in your waste room.

The person currently managing your waste contract(s) will have an existing relationship with your hauler and knowledge of your property's waste, which can help fast track conversations around service additions and/or changes.

Ask your hauler for a quote or reach out to other haulers if your service provider does not offer the collection services you are looking for. In order to get a quote, the waste hauler must establish the level of service and totes that the building will require.

**TIP** – When dealing with a hauler, be ready to answer the following questions to obtain a more accurate quote:

- The size of existing collection bins
- The frequency of collection of existing bins
- The number of businesses in the building and types of usage (retail, food and beverage, office, etc.)
- The waste streams currently collected and any additional waste streams needed

## Haul it Yourself

You can bring organics, recyclables, and other waste directly to the Squamish Landfill yourself (tipping fees apply). The Squamish Landfill is located at Landfill Road (off Highway 99 opposite Alice Lake turnoff) and accepts the following materials (see [squamish.ca/landfill](https://squamish.ca/landfill) for more information):

- |                          |                       |                            |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| • Mixed Containers       | • Wood and Yard Waste | • Mattresses               |
| • Food Scraps & Organics | • Styrofoam Packaging | • Invasive Plants          |
| • Commercial Waste       | • Metal               | • Cardboard                |
| • Appliances             | • Glass               | • Paper                    |
|                          | • Plastic Bags & Film | • Other Flexible Packaging |

## STEP TWO – IDENTIFY WAYS TO REDUCE WASTE

*The best way to deal with waste is to not create it in the first place.*

Frequent review of product purchasing can help you maximize opportunities to reduce waste or to make it easier to sort waste correctly. Smart purchasing can even help minimize the number of waste streams you produce.

Opportunities to reduce the need for sorting can save time and result in lower levels of contamination. Following your waste audit, you should now know how waste is currently generated and disposed of. Use this information to help eliminate or substitute products and make your waste easier to sort or reduce overall.

For example:

- **At Office A** – paper invoices and timesheets are printed and collected, often on one-sided sheets of paper.
- **At Office B** – all invoicing and timesheets are managed digitally and printers are set up for two-sided printing by default.

### Waste Wise Purchasing

- Purchase products that will last. These sometimes come at a higher cost, but will need to be replaced less frequently;
- Try to buy used when possible. This helps keep items out of the landfill and gives them new life in your business or organization;
- Serve coffee 'to stay' and either supply or encourage staff to bring their own mug to use at work;
- AVOID the following items, which end up in the landfill:
  - Rubber gloves – Consider washable, reusable gloves instead (for non food handling purposes);
  - Thermal Paper – Some of these receipts may use harmful BPA coating and therefore cannot be recycled. Use a recyclable paper impact printer or offer electronic receipts!
  - Single-use items such as stir sticks, cups, and bags. While these may seem convenient at the time, most single-use items will outlive their user in a landfill after only being used for minutes.
- Consult historical business levels to ensure purchases are based on need and plan for seasonal variations in business levels;
- Buy in bulk and avoid individually packaged products;
- Seek out eco-conscious products, such as items made from recycled materials;
- Compost your paper towels by placing a designated bin next to the sink;
- Use concentrated cleaning products, so you don't pay for added water and refill when possible;
- Try to repair what you already have. This way, you avoid having to purchase at all!



#### Local Champion!

All of the equipment at one local business is repurposed. For example, one piece which was originally used to mix honey and fruit has found new life at the company. In addition, everything used for serving food and drinks is second hand – much of it donated.

## STEP THREE – RETHINK FOOD WASTE

### *Food is a valuable resource – let's keep it out of the landfill*

Food waste is a big problem. In fact, more than half of all the food we produce in Canada is lost or wasted<sup>1</sup>. Globally, food waste accounts for \$940 billion in economic losses per year. If food waste were a country, it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions after China and the USA<sup>2</sup>!

**TIP** – Check out [www.lovefoodhatewaste.ca](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.ca) for more ideas on how to avoid food waste, including meal planning tips and recipes.

Luckily, there are many ways to address food waste, starting with reduction. Remember, the best way to manage waste is to not create it in the first place. Here are some best practices you can implement to help.

### Reduce

- Know the number of attendees when purchasing refreshments for meetings or conferences, and only order as much as you will need. Then, designate a space in your staffroom fridge for any leftovers so that staff can take them home.
- When ordering food, consider offering variable sizes (e.g. half portions, side options) to cater to different appetites.
- Host a Lunch & Learn to help educate your staff about the problem of food waste and post tips around the lunch room. Check out [www.lovefoodhatewaste.ca](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.ca) for resources.

### Donate

- Designate a “share shelf” in the staff refrigerator where people can donate their leftover, uneaten food for their colleagues to take.
- Make arrangements to donate any leftovers before your conference or event – this will help make donating easier. Check [www.underoneroofsquamish.ca](http://www.underoneroofsquamish.ca) to find local food recovery agencies in Squamish.

### Compost

- Supply clearly labeled compost bins in accessible areas (e.g. the lunchroom, the kitchen) to help staff divert their leftovers. Be sure to train your staff about how to use the bins and what goes where.
- Go the extra step and get a worm composting bin in your office to start producing beautiful soil at work! Find out more about vermicomposting here: [www.compost.bc.ca/education/factsheets](http://www.compost.bc.ca/education/factsheets)
- If you are unable to supply organics collection at your property, ask your staff to bring their food scraps home to compost there.
- When it comes time for a “refrigerator cleanout”, remind staff to take their items home. Be sure to compost any leftover food and leave the containers for staff to reclaim.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/food-waste-report-second-harvest-1.4981728>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Report\\_The%20Business%20Case%20for%20Reducing%20Food%20Loss%20and%20Waste.pdf](http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Report_The%20Business%20Case%20for%20Reducing%20Food%20Loss%20and%20Waste.pdf)



## STEP FOUR – PREPARE PEOPLE FOR UPDATED WASTE SYSTEMS

*Education and engagement are the foundation of successful behaviour change.*

Most people are accustomed to collecting organics and recycling at home, which should make it easier when asking employees or property users to change current behaviours. The key to success is helping people understand WHY changes are needed (see page 4 and HOW they can contribute to shared success. Ensuring people understand the 'why' and 'how' will require education initiatives initially as you plan and launch new waste systems, as well as on an on-going basis.

Engage property users by letting them know in advance that your property is updating the way it manages waste. Invite ideas for waste reduction initiatives, bin locations, etc. Think about how you will share education messages about waste, such as scheduling a meeting, by building waste diversion tips into regular pre-shift meetings, posting to bulletin boards or providing regular updates via email.

Make sure your employees understand, that just like other office protocols, sorting waste is part of their job and a requirement at all times. Integrate waste reduction initiatives into your regular work routines. Look for champions in the workplace who can help advance the team towards your zero waste goals.



**Local Champion!** At one local business, staff noticed high contamination rates when the recycling bin was located outside the office door. By simply moving all the bins together into a single waste diversion station, behaviour changed and contamination rates dropped.

### Curb Contamination Rates

Waste stream contamination occurs when people put waste into the wrong bin. Contamination of waste streams makes it difficult, and in some cases impossible, for recycling and composting facilities to process our waste, resulting in it going to landfill. For this reason, properties that do not manage contamination rates can be subject to fines under the District's updated Solid Waste Bylaw.

Help users understand that contamination negatively impacts recycling. Reduce contamination by providing bins for all waste streams produced, clearly label bins and avoid overflow of bins to ensure an alternate stream isn't selected if the required bin is full. Maintain a focus on continual education to keep contamination rates low and ask for feedback from your staff about what is unclear or not working.



Download training and educational materials at [squamish.ca/retail-waste](https://squamish.ca/retail-waste)

There are many ways to help make waste more user-friendly, from clear signage to educational outreach. One Sea-to-Sky Library reduced waste contamination from 37% to 11% simply by changing the locations of bins and standardizing signage!

# LET'S TALK TRASH

We have the power to collectively reduce our waste footprint by maximizing our waste diversion efforts. Familiarizing ourselves with how each waste stream is processed helps us to better understand the steps required for success. So, here is the nitty gritty on recycling and composting in **multi-family homes, commercial businesses and institutions.**

WHERE	REMEMBER	HOW	END RESULT
<b>Food Scraps &amp; Organics</b>	<b>GREEN BIN</b>	<p>Keep all plastics out (including biodegradable and compostable plastics)</p> <p>Keep food scraps and organics out of the landfill to avoid creating methane, a harmful greenhouse gas.</p>	<p>Food is <b>COMPOSTED</b> at the Sea to Sky Soils Composting Facility through an aerobic process.</p> <p>Nutrient-rich soil amendment used for landscaping and gardening.</p>
<b>Printed Paper &amp; Paper Packaging</b>	<b>FLATTEN</b>	<p>Food soiled paper (napkins, paper towels, pizza boxes, etc.) cannot be recycled – put them in your Food Scraps &amp; Organics bin.</p>	<p>Cardboard and paper are both broken down with a <b>WATER-BASED PROCESS</b>, mulched and combined with virgin fibres. Oils can interfere with this process so food-soiled paper, like pizza boxes, should go in the Food Scraps &amp; Organics Bin.</p> <p>Paper and cardboard products with recycled content.</p>
<b>Corrugated Cardboard</b>	<b>FLATTEN</b>	<p>The wavy (corrugated) centre piece found when looking at the edge of a cardboard box differentiates it from paper packaging.</p> <p>Meal preparation subscription boxes are also accepted.</p>	
<b>Glass Bottles &amp; Jars</b>	<b>EMPTY &amp; RINSE</b>	<p>Glass should always be recycled separately.</p> <p>When glass is mixed with other recyclables, it can easily break and leave shards that cause injuries and cannot be removed.</p> <p>Remove metal lids and put them in the Mixed Containers bin. You do not need to remove the label.</p>	<p>Glass is <b>CRUSHED</b> and used as road aggregate at the landfill.</p> <p>Used locally as road aggregate in the Squamish Landfill.</p>
<b>Refundable Beverage Containers</b>	<b>EMPTY &amp; RINSE</b>	<p>You can return these at the Squamish Bottle Depot and get money back.</p>	<p>Metal is <b>MELTED</b>, impurities such as labels and left over contaminants burn off.</p> <p>Plastic is processed into small pellets that cannot chemically re-bond with any impurities present.</p> <p>Metal can be recycled infinitely into new metal containers.</p> <p>Plastic is often down-cycled into a lesser quality type of plastic. Multi-material items, such as tetra packs are difficult and expensive to recycle and best avoided.</p>
<b>Mixed Containers</b>	<b>EMPTY &amp; RINSE</b>	<p>Try to avoid plastics and styrofoam - these are often down-cycled (meaning the value of the resource is greatly reduced or lost when processed). For example, a plastic bag cannot be recycled into a new bag without the addition of new oil-based material.</p> <p>Plastic-lined coffee cups, milk containers, and tetra packs are accepted.</p> <p>Plastics must be cleaned and properly recycled.</p>	
<b>Plastic Bags &amp; Film</b>	<b>EMPTY &amp; RINSE</b>	<p>If you can easily poke your fingers through it - it belongs in this stream.</p> <p>Keep out zipper locked bags, cling wrap &amp; crinkly plastic.</p>	
<b>Styrofoam Packaging</b>	<b>EMPTY &amp; RINSE</b>	<p>Separate colour and white plastic foam.</p> <p>Needs to be cleaned.</p>	<p>Melted or compacted to condense for shipping. At the end market it's chipped up, melted again and chopped into pellets.</p> <p>Down-cycled into picture frames and crown moulding, which are garbage once used.</p>
<b>Other Flexible Packaging</b>	<b>EMPTY &amp; RINSE</b>	<p>It belongs in this stream if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it is crinkly and loud when crumpled</li> <li>- it is flexible but not stretchy</li> <li>- it has a zipper lock seal</li> </ul> <p>Keep out clingwrap (garbage) and 6-pack rings (BC Liquor Stores).</p>	<p>Flexible packaging is used for recycling research in B.C. Items must be cleaned to be properly recycled.</p> <p>Used in research and development to find efficient ways to recycle this difficult material, or processed into engineered fuel.</p>
<b>Garbage to LANDFILL</b>		<p>Animal waste, diapers &amp; sanitary products, hangers, straws, broken toys, biodegradable and compostable plastics</p> <p>Landfills are designed to bury waste, not break it down.</p> <p>Can it be reused, recycled or composted instead?</p> <p>Squamish's Landfill is nearing capacity, so diverting waste is more important than ever!</p>	

The best way to deal with waste is not to create it in the first place. **REDUCE, reuse, then recycle.**



## NEED HELP SORTING?

Search for an item in the Waste Wizard at [squamish.ca/waste-wizard](https://squamish.ca/waste-wizard) or using the Squamish ReCollect app





## Engage All Property Users

As you consider ways to engage, update and provide continued feedback and education opportunities for employees, customers or property user groups, ensure you think through *all* users of your property. In buildings that have cleaning or maintenance personnel it is important to recognize the role they play in overseeing the way waste flows through your property.

Cleaning or maintenance personnel may be responsible for collecting waste streams from front of house areas, offices, etc. and taking it to waste rooms. This means it is important to ensure updates to your waste system can be adopted into their workflow. Share your waste management goals with your cleaning company or maintenance staff and ensure they are on board because a system will fail if the waste being separated inside the property is all going into the Garbage to Landfill Bin in the waste room.

If you use an external cleaning company, update contracts to reflect your waste diversion goals. Be mindful that when cleaning contractors calculate the costs associated with cleaning a space, they estimate the time it will take them to complete the job. Introducing new systems can increase the time needed to collect additional waste streams or empty more waste segregation stations in your business.

**Local Champion!** Staff at one local business know the importance of communicating waste diversion policies, especially during onboarding: “We start planting those seeds at that point”. It is also important to be forthcoming about sustainability goals and conduct regular waste audits to document and communicate successes and challenges. “If you tell people what you’re doing, customers will feel good about the choices they make”.



**Local Champion!** At one local restaurant, composting is a regular part of kitchen life. Integrating bins into the system doesn't have to be fancy. Adding compost didn't take up much room in the kitchen: “we were already using an extra garbage can anyway”.

Where cleaners currently collect blue boxes of mixed recyclables from under employee desks, cleaning time can be saved by shifting the responsibility on to workers to sort waste as they produce it. This also helps employees be more aware of the waste they are generating. In many instances, it is appropriate to remove blue boxes and consolidate waste collection to centralized waste stations. If cleaners are going to be required to empty additional recycling or organics bins, in addition to existing bins, consider offsetting the increased time it would take to do this by consolidating or reducing the number of centralized waste stations.

## STEP FIVE – REVIEW WASTE COLLECTION AND STORAGE SPACES

*Focus on making it easy for people to sort waste.*

In all properties, it is important to ensure that waste collection points and waste rooms are convenient, clean and simple to use. This will help maximize diversion and minimize contamination both inside the business and in the building's waste room. Think about the way staff or customers 'flow' through your property and ensure waste stations can be seen, easily accessed and used correctly.

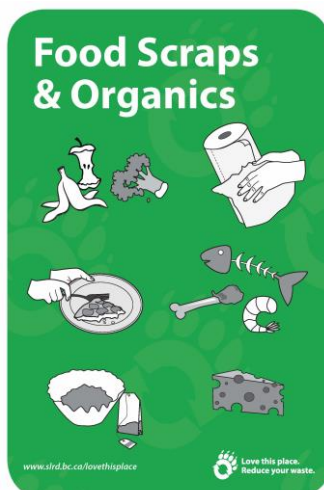
### Install Standardized Signage

Waste signs and colour schemes are being standardized throughout the Sea to Sky corridor and Vancouver. Using consistent signage helps people successfully sort waste wherever they are: public spaces, local waste depots, the workplace, and home.



Download signage at  
[squamish.ca/food-waste](http://squamish.ca/food-waste)

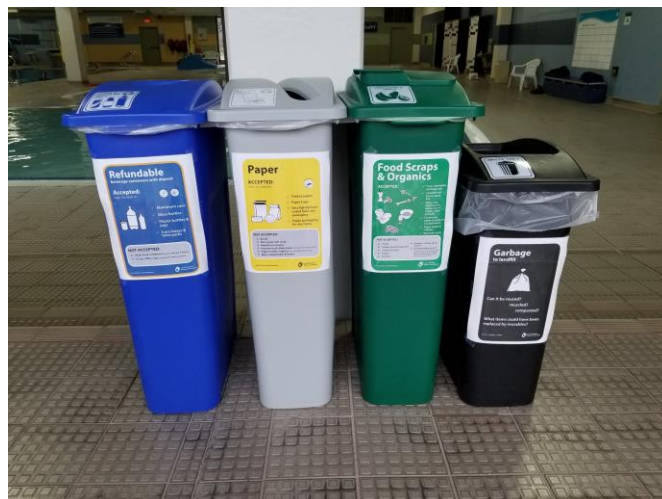
There are a variety of signage options which can be used as bin labels, waste room signage, or posters. Be sure to choose the signs that work best with your space – consider your bin shape and size as well as what information needs to be conveyed.



### Use Your Space Efficiently

Ensure bins are easily accessible for both the user and the hauler. This includes ensuring bins are not allowed to overflow and that the waste streams being collected match the streams being produced.

**TIP** – Remember that waste storage may look different at your front of house versus back of house. Consider who will be using the bins and design according to their needs.





## Consider Waste Bin Locations

When thinking about where to put waste collection points, consider the following:

- Identify areas where waste is generated and try to provide collection in locations that are convenient for users. For example, in restaurants, common collection points are at food prep stations, on the line, in dish pits and front of house stations;
- Seek to provide collection for all waste streams to encourage full separation, but also consider the user's needs. For example, a cook working at a prep station may use a small bucket to collect food scraps, which can be periodically emptied into a central station;
- Consolidate to centralized collection points wherever possible. Doing this makes better use of space while encouraging people to take responsibility for sorting their own waste. Centralization makes it easier to monitor waste levels and identify contamination issues;
- Use clear, colour-coded signage to ensure users can identify where waste needs to go;
- Provide information on how to sort waste correctly at waste collection points. This could be through signage, educational posters or updates on new products and their disposal. Additional waste education materials could be posted in high traffic areas such as a kitchen, staff information boards or employee break rooms.



### Local Champion!

*“One of our smarter marketing moves”*

In one local business office, waste contamination was a big issue. A staff champion decided to invest in some small bins and created clear signage for each waste stream. By re-organizing their waste area, the company not only drastically reduced contamination, but also found an unexpected marketing opportunity. Impressed office visitors often gather around the waste area, admiring the bins and even taking photos. “I used to look at it as nothing but a cost but now I look at it as a marketing expense” says one staff member.

So what is the secret for such a successful waste management system? “Make it public-facing and then it becomes part of your workplace identity and values. Everyone knows what the right thing to do is – they just need to bring that level of diligence that they have at home into the workplace”.

## Explore the Range of Bin Options

When selecting bins consider both the availability of space and the journey that your staff or cleaning contractors will have to navigate to the waste room. If you have a lot of available space, but a long journey or stairs to travel to reach the waste room, selecting a larger bin might not be the best option. Certain materials, such as food waste can be very heavy, so select a bin that allows for safe and convenient transportation.

Bins come in all shapes and sizes and can fit a variety of budgets. Think about where you are putting bins when you are selecting bin options. Front of house waste stations may need to be more aesthetically appealing than back of house options. Lids can get in the way or become dirty - if lids are a must, consider a foot pedaled style, which can be opened hands-free. No matter which bins you select or where they are located, we encourage you to utilize the regionally standardized signage (see page 12).

## Importance of Cleanliness

Keeping waste rooms clean, tidy and well-lit ensures that staff and other users are comfortable taking the time to sort waste correctly, and sets the expectation that waste should be disposed of responsibly. Be sure that any liquid waste from waste rooms or enclosures does not drain to the sewer.

**TIP** – While waste haulers will frequently switch out dirty bins for clean ones, additional services such as waste room power washing can be scheduled for an additional cost.

**TIP** – Consider setting up a small table so that staff can sort their waste while they are in the waste room.

## Using Compostable Plastic Liners

Some properties choose to use bin liners for their organics bins. Be sure to ask your hauler what kinds of bin liners they accept before you purchase.

### Navigating Road Blocks






What about compostable or biodegradable plastic liners? Hoping to do the right thing, many people purchase plastics labeled “biodegradable” or “compostable”. However, these products have many problems when it comes to waste management.

**Biodegradable** plastics eventually break down into smaller pieces of plastic (micro-plastics) and are very challenging to remove from the environment. Because these plastics have chemicals added to help them break down faster, they also cannot be recycled. Therefore, plastics labeled biodegradable belong in the garbage and should never be used in organics bins.

Certified **compostable** plastics eventually break down into organic material. However, they must be heated at a consistently high temperature for a certain period of time in order to do so and many compost facilities are not able to process them. Due to their chemical composition, they also cannot be recycled. Certified compostable plastics should only be as a last resort (after trying paper liners). As a general rule, plastic “compostable” bags are not easily composted in the Sea to Sky Corridor so check with your hauler before you use them.

### IS IT A CERTIFIED COMPOSTABLE PLASTIC?

If it looks like it contains plastic, it must be a certified “bio-plastic” to be safe for soils.

 Products that appear to contain plastic must be certified compostable by the following certifications:	 These do <b>NOT</b> mean compostable:
 <b>COMPOSTABLE</b> IN INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES	BIODEGRADABLE
 COMPOSTABLE www.compostable.info	MADE WITH RECYCLED MATERIAL
 OK compost	MADE FROM PLANTS
 VINÇOTTE	MADE FROM PLANT STARCH
 7 PLA	OXO-DEGRADABLE
 ASTM D6400	NATURAL
 ASTM D6868	BIO
	ECO
	ECO-FRIENDLY
	EARTH-FRIENDLY
	GREEN
	CERTIFIED GREEN
	 AWARE Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment

## In Your Waste Room

The number and size of the waste receptacles, and the service level required should reflect the volume of waste coming out of the property to avoid over paying. When waste is left on floors or on top of bins, your room becomes less appealing and difficult to use properly. Your hauler may even apply additional charges when bins are overflowing, so work with them to ensure your property's collection frequency and amount is sufficient for your needs.



### Navigating Road Blocks

While separating food scraps and organics from garbage is common practice for some, it raises a lot of questions for others. If organics collection is new to your property or property users, prepare for conversations by using these frequently asked questions:

#### What about SMELL?

Wildlife (particularly bears) are attracted by odours. Therefore, ensuring a clean and odour free waste room is an important step in reducing the potential for human-wildlife conflict.

- Regularly clean bins and storage areas to help minimize odour.
- Ask your hauler to swap out bins, increase collection frequency as needed, or power wash waste rooms (usually for an additional charge).
- Consider building in or moving your waste room to a shaded area that gets minimal sun.
- Encourage residents to wrap odour-causing items (like fish) in newspaper or freeze them until closer to waste collection day.

#### What about NOISE?

The main noises associated with waste collection are the emptying of bins and the alarm that sounds when collection vehicles reverse. Placing the bins far enough away from the property can help to reduce the impact of noise. If available, locate your waste room in a space that will eliminate the need for collection vehicles to reverse. Also consider using a road or driveway material that helps to minimize noise.

#### What about wildlife, such as BEARS and RODENTS?

Remember that the waste you are putting in your waste room is not changing; instead, you are simply shifting organics out of the garbage and into a different bin. Bears, rodents and other wildlife can smell your organic waste whether it is in the garbage or in the organics bin. Remember, **your waste room must be wildlife proof**. Ensure doors are locked and secured and bin lids are closed at all times to prevent access to rodents and consider adding a seal to the bottom of your door. Be sure your waste room is equipped with a floor drain that has an interceptor for any liquid waste from rinsing or leakage.

## Bears and Solid Waste

Squamish is proud to be a provincially certified Bear Smart Community. Reducing the potential for human-wildlife conflicts through proper solid waste management and storage is a top priority.

The best way to avoid wildlife conflicts is to reduce odours and keep your waste indoors. If you must store waste outdoors, the Squamish Wildlife Attractant Bylaw requires that it be kept in one of the following:

- a commercial container that is self-latching and secure from wildlife
- a wildlife proof enclosure
- a wildlife resistant container (with locking latches)

Containers must be large enough to prevent overflowing and any damaged containers must be reported to your hauler and repaired within 5 business days. It is also important to discard of any combustible waste (e.g. paper, hay, grass, straw, branches, etc.) as soon as possible so as not to create a fire hazard.



For more information on the Wildlife Attractant Bylaw, visit: [squamish.ca/wildlife](https://squamish.ca/wildlife)

## Wildlife Proof Enclosures

Wildlife proof enclosures are structures with four enclosed sides, a roof, and latching doors. If you are considering a new enclosure or retrofitting an existing one, the District of Squamish has developed guidelines to help (check here: [squamish.ca/food-waste](https://squamish.ca/food-waste)).

**TIP** – Be sure your wildlife proof enclosure is kept locked when not in use. Work with staff to monitor and ensure no attractants are left or are leaking outside the enclosure (this includes keeping grease containers clean and secure).



## Wildlife Resistant Containers

Commercial refuse containers provided by your hauler should lock and be strong enough to prevent access by adult bears. It is important to train your staff on how to operate these containers to ensure they remain latched and inaccessible when not in use.

**TIP** – No matter which container you use, remember to empty and rinse recyclables.



## STEP SIX – NAVIGATE BARRIERS AND FINALIZE LAUNCH PLANS

*Aim to future-proof your waste spaces and systems.*

When reviewing waste systems at your property, the steps covered in the previous pages outline the common guiding principles to success. However, every property is different and some can be faced with barriers to change. In most cases these barriers relate to:

- ongoing contamination from people putting things in the wrong bins
- lack of physical space to update systems, most commonly related to limited waste room (or equivalent) space

### Dealing with Contamination

Ongoing contamination is tied to education, understanding and accountability. This is why it is important to plan for education at launch and on a continued basis, including providing feedback on problem items. Find a staff champion to encourage behaviour change in your property through engagement initiatives. The clear bag system required under the updated solid waste bylaw can also help with accountability.

### Dealing with Space

If you feel your property does not have enough space for organics, recycling, and garbage collection, consider:

- Contacting your waste hauler to discuss options for your unique space.
- Exploring ‘out of the box’ ideas: could sharing waste rooms with a neighbouring property provide a solution to space or cost challenges?
- Evaluating options to expand, retrofit or relocate existing waste rooms/waste storage in light of the increased costs that your property should expect to incur if waste streams are not separated as required under the new bylaw. If you are thinking of going this route consult the District of Squamish planning and/or building department early.

**Remember:** Waste diversion simply means you are reorganizing waste streams and not creating more. In fact, with reduction initiatives, your total waste volume should decrease. As you begin to divert organics and recyclables from your garbage stream, you may be able to downsize your landfill bin to a tote. Discuss container options with your hauler before expanding your waste room.

The following are good start points to consider before retrofitting or building a waste room:

- ☐ Do you have a potential location that would be convenient for managers, employees, cleaners, hauler, etc.?
- ☐ Have you contacted your local waste hauler to explore options for your property?
- ☐ Do you have access to information on access ramp gradients, turning circles, roof heights, etc. to ensure waste trucks are able to access the waste room?
- ☐ Would reworking your space create room for collection of the waste streams produced in your property? At appropriate volumes?
- ☐ Where would you install display signs and educational materials?
- ☐ How would you keep your updated space secure, to prevent the entry of vermin and avoid wildlife conflicts?
- ☐ For indoor spaces, are you clear on compliance standards for ventilation and fire sprinklers?
- ☐ Have you reviewed the District of Squamish website to review relevant planning regulations, building codes and policies?

## STEP SEVEN – LAUNCH, MONITOR AND CONTINUALLY ENGAGE

*Adopting a 'Zero Waste' approach helps the environment and the bottom line.*

Use visual checks and ongoing communication with your hauler, employees, cleaners, etc. to continually monitor for contaminants in your building's waste streams, review opportunities to reduce waste, improve waste collection systems, and keep waste diversion on track.

Ongoing monitoring and continued communications will be the key to success in continually reducing waste. Seek out opportunities to share feedback and be creative. For example: install a white board in the waste room where information surrounding contaminants can be provided for waste room users, or where people can post questions about specific items.

**TIP** – Consider taping challenging or rare items to a blank sign on the appropriate bin to avoid contamination.

Ensure staff are using clear bags to adhere to the Solid Waste Utility Bylaw and allow for visual checks without you needing to get your hands dirty.

Provide information to new staff and plan for annual education initiatives, as required in the Solid Waste Utility Bylaw.

As you plan for the launch of your updated waste systems, infrastructure and processes, and education and engagement efforts, remember you are not alone. Many businesses, properties and communities are already rolling out modernized waste bylaws and there are examples of best practices already in existence for most businesses and organizations.

### Local Champion!

One local business takes waste diversion seriously. Education about what goes where can be difficult, especially since these practices may differ from what people are used to in their own communities. To help solve this problem, staff have created a waste management team that double checks and sorts all the waste produced on site. Everything is then removed and disposed of properly.



# CHECKLIST

## *Reduce waste in Squamish, together.*

Use this checklist to be sure you are in compliance with the Squamish Solid Waste, Sewer Use, Single Use Item Reduction, and Wildlife Attractant Bylaws. You can print this page out and keep it handy as you work through updates to your waste management systems.

### Bylaw Compliance

In order to comply with the above Bylaws you must:

- ☐ Provide separate bins to collect organics, recyclables, and garbage and contract a hauler to service and dispose of this material
- ☐ Store wildlife attractants indoors or, if outdoors, in wildlife resistant containers
- ☐ Provide educational information annually and to all new staff about how to separate organics, recyclables, and garbage and how to reduce conflicts with bears
- ☐ Post adequate signage in waste areas to help staff separate organics, recyclables, and garbage
- ☐ Place any garbage destined for landfill in clear, non-coloured, transparent plastic bags (an opaque privacy bag can be used for 10% of total garbage)
- ☐ Install a grease interceptor to mitigate harm caused by fats, oil, and grease
- ☐ Charge a fee when distributing checkout bags (drive-thrus and take out exempt)
- ☐ Distribute plastic straws only if requested

### Best Practices

For those businesses and organizations wanting to improve their waste management systems beyond compliance, here are some best practices to implement.

- ☐ Conduct a waste audit and develop waste reduction goals
- ☐ Review purchasing policies and food service and distribution practices to identify opportunities for further waste reduction
- ☐ Manage a food donation program to divert waste
- ☐ Discuss updated waste management plans with all staff, including cleaners and custodians (if applicable)
- ☐ Install the recommended standardized signage (available to download here: [squamish.ca/food-waste](https://squamish.ca/food-waste))
- ☐ Implement a human-bear conflict reduction plan through education, signage, and providing wildlife resistant refuse containers (contact [wildlife@squamish.ca](mailto:wildlife@squamish.ca) for more information)
- ☐ Find a waste management champion to monitor and continually improve processes

For information and resources visit:  
[squamish.ca/food-waste](https://squamish.ca/food-waste)



A ZERO WASTE PATH FOR SQUAMISH WILL  
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT, BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY,  
SUPPORT GREEN JOBS AND  
HELP BUILD A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY.

LOVE THIS PLACE, REDUCE YOUR WASTE.



This guide was developed in part by The Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment