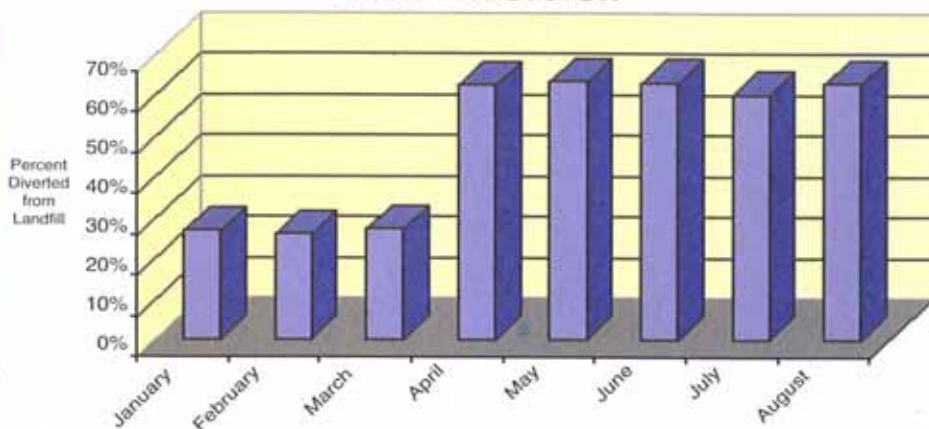




# Richmond Hill is **Going GREEN!**

2007 Diversion



The success of the Green Bin program to date has proved that Richmond Hill residents are ready and willing to separate their organic materials. Jeff Meggitt, Richmond Hill's Manager of Waste Management was enthusiastic: "Richmond Hill's diversion rate has increased by 30% per month since the program started in April. This translates to an average of 1300 tonnes per month being composted instead of landfilled in Michigan."

**Many thanks to our residents for keeping organic materials and recyclable containers separate from their wastes.**

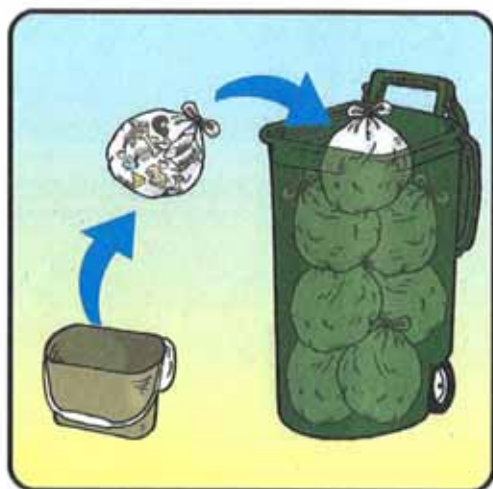
Thanks to your efforts we are diverting 85 garbage trucks a month from landfill.

## Why Plastic vs Paper Bags?

**Q:** Residents have been asking us why we use plastic bags and can take diapers in our Green Bin program when other municipalities can't.

**A:** The facility that processes organic materials for York Region has equipment that shreds the full plastic bags to remove organic materials from the plastic. Using plastic bags is clean, reducing the "yuck" factor, and therefore people find it easier to participate in the program. Although the plastic bags eventually end up as waste, more material is captured because of the bags. Diapers are also shredded and the internal contents are composted when the plastic liner is removed.

In paper bag programs, the bagged materials go directly into the composting process, eliminating that first step of shredding the bags. Because diapers are encased in plastic, they cannot be included in paper bag or biodegradable bag programs.





# What Happens to Green Bin and Blue Box Materials?

When set out at the curb, Blue Boxes and Green Bins are collected by a two compartment truck. One compartment holds Blue Box materials and the second holds Green Bin materials.

## Blue Box



Blue Box materials are collected "commingled", which means that all of the materials are mixed together in one compartment. This makes for more efficient collection, and the sorting facility can easily separate them afterwards.

Most of the Blue Box material is sorted mechanically by using specialized equipment that separates the materials by size, shape and weight.

Sorting stations remove cardboard, paper, steel, aluminum, plastics and glass. The majority of separated materials are then baled for transport except certain materials like newspaper and glass, which are shipped loose. Please do not put your recyclables in bags. Bagged materials and shredded paper are physically different in size to other blue box materials and the processing machines are not designed to handle this material.

Blue box materials are sold to markets to be made into a variety of new products. Old paper becomes newsprint, plastic bottles become fleece sweaters or insulation for jackets and sleeping bags, aluminum and steel cans are made into new cans or a multiple of other metal products.



## Green Bin



Green Bin material goes through a shredder that opens all of the bags of organic material. The material (bags and all) is then loaded into long concrete enclosed tunnels inside a building, where the material is composted under climate controlled conditions.

Existing micro-organisms in the food waste break down the material naturally producing compost. The material goes through an initial rapid breakdown known as the thermophilic stage. This process creates heat that pasteurizes or sterilizes the compost, ridding the material of any pathogens. It's this pasteurization phase that allows the Green Bin to accept animal wastes and diapers while still producing a compost that's safe to use. This part of the process takes about 14 days.

The compost is then screened to remove any plastics or contaminants and is placed outdoors in windrows for the final composting stage. At this point the material is still composting, but at a much slower rate and at lower temperatures.

Once complete the compost is tested to ensure it meets the strict quality guidelines set out by the Ministry of the Environment. The finished compost is then used in a variety of applications including horticultural and agricultural use, land reclamation and roadside erosion control.





## Yard Waste

Yard Waste is collected at the curb on Mondays 17 times a year. (Check your calendar for dates) This material makes up about 7 per cent of our waste stream - close to 3600 tonnes a year.

Yard waste is collected in brown paper bags, boxes and loose from rigid containers. Plastic bags are not acceptable for yard waste. This material is taken to the Miller Composting Site on Bloomington Road where the yard waste is placed outdoors in long piles called windrows. Paper and boxes will decompose along with the yard waste - no de-bagging required.

Windrows are turned regularly to introduce oxygen and to help break up the larger pieces. Over the next 6 months, temperatures, microbial activity and moisture are monitored as the yard waste decomposes. By the time the material starts to look more like soil, or humus, the volume has decreased by about two thirds.

Finished compost is screened to remove any plastics, rocks etc., and then it may be blended with soil for different landscape purposes.

### Remaining 2007 Yard Waste Dates: October 29, November 12 & 26, December 10

Yard waste must be in paper bags, cardboard boxes or a rigid container that can be emptied. Maximum weight 18 kg (40 lbs). Brush must be tied in bundles no longer than 1.2m (4'). Maximum branch diameter is 10 cm (4"). No root balls accepted.

Don't forget to compost your pumpkin with either your yard waste or Green Bin.

**COMPOST FACILITY**  
Miller Waste Systems  
1351 Bloomington Rd.

#### Hours of Operation

**Summer:**  
March 31 to November 30  
Monday-Saturday  
7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Winter:**  
December 1 to March 30  
Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



\* Residential materials are accepted at no charge.  
Commercial materials are subject to a fee.



## Moving?

### Some Do's & Don'ts for Residents

1. Blue Boxes and Green Bins that were provided by the Town belong to the house. **Do** leave them behind when you move.

2. **Don't** leave waste at the curb at any time other than on collection day. Items left at the curb at any other time are in contravention of the by-law and are subject to fines.

3. There is a 4 item limit for waste every other week. **Do** purchase tags (in sheets of 5 for \$10) at any Richmond Hill library or community centre. Extra items will only be collected if a collection tag is attached.

4. **Do** plan ahead. If you are moving and have extra items:

- **Do** take reusable furniture, housewares or clothing to one of the many thrift stores in the area.
- **Do** call the Town well in advance to book a free appointment for the monthly appliance collection.
- **Do** make arrangements for extra items to be disposed at the Georgina Transfer Station or have someone put them out on the appropriate day.

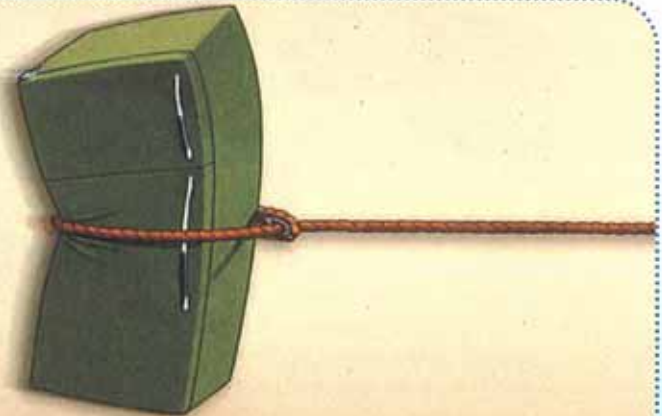




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*Working Hand-in-Hand*

# The Great Refrigerator Round-up!



That old, inefficient second fridge of yours is wasting up to \$150 per year in electricity. Through the Great Refrigerator Roundup program residents can call and have an old refrigerator picked up for FREE - The Ontario Power Authority will even haul it out of your basement for you and then take care of it in an environmentally responsible manner.

Once the various components are recycled and reclaimed from that inefficient fridge, the remaining items to be taken to a landfill site will just about fit inside a cowboy hat!

The program began in July and will run until the end of the year. By calling 1-877-797-9473 or visiting the "Every Kilowatt Counts" website [www.everykilowattcounts.com/roundup](http://www.everykilowattcounts.com/roundup) you can arrange for free in-home pick up your old refrigerator. Terms and conditions apply, please call or check the website for more information.



## Is Your Bin Broken?

Broken Blue Boxes and Green Bins will be exchanged for FREE at the Operations Centre. Damaged bins are then sent back to the manufacturer for recycling.

Bins can also be purchased at the following prices;

**Blue Box - \$10 Green Bin - \$18**

**In-House bin - \$4**

The Town does not provide free bins to households.



**For more information contact  
the OPERATIONS CENTRE**

[www.richmondhill.ca](http://www.richmondhill.ca)

**1 200 Elgin Mills Road East, 905-884-8013**



Please recycle  
this newsletter