



AUTOMATED RESIDENTIAL GARBAGE COLLECTION SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

WHAT IS AN AUTOMATED GARBAGE COLLECTION SYSTEM?

Automated garbage collection refers to a collection system where the operator of a collection truck activates a mechanical arm on the side of the collection vehicle to lift and empty standardized garbage cans built for this purpose. This system eliminates the need for workers to physically lift and empty cans into the back of a standard rear-load garbage collection truck.

WHY DID THE CITY CHANGE TO AN AUTOMATED GARBAGE COLLECTION SYSTEM?

Automated collection is more efficient, safer and more economical long-term than the current manual collection. There is a large initial investment required to purchase the equipment and cans but less employees are needed to operate the automated system, reducing the long-term expense. This is especially important with the recent difficulties in staffing a full work force. The automated system will help ensure the work can be done with a smaller work force.

WHY ARE NEW GARBAGE CANS NEEDED?

Regular garbage cans cannot be picked up with the mechanical arm on the automated collection truck. The new cans are specifically built to be grabbed, lifted and emptied by the mechanical arm on the automated collection truck.

WHAT SIZE ARE THE NEW GARBAGE CANS AND WHAT SIZE WILL RESIDENTS GET?

Two sizes of cans will be available to residents; 65-Gal and 95-Gal. A 65-Gal garbage can will hold 4 to 5 typical 13-gallon garbage bags and a 95-Gal garbage can will hold 6 to 7 typical 13-gallon garbage bags.

Residents will receive a specific size and number of cans based on the can service currently billed to any existing utility accounts. Accounts that currently pay for one can will receive one 65-Gal can; accounts that currently pay for two or three cans will receive one 95-Gal can; and any accounts that currently pay for four or more cans will receive two 95-Gal cans.

If a resident wishes to receive a different size or number of cans than discussed above, they will have to notify City Offices prior to September 18th, 2026. Once the cans are delivered, residents will be allowed to change their can size one time within the first 90 days. Any other exchanges after this initial 90-day period will be charged a \$30 fee per can.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY NEW CAN AND WHEN WILL AUTOMATED PICKUP BEGIN?

Currently, the new cans are scheduled to be delivered by the supplier directly to each residence by mid-October. The City will be sharing more information regarding actual delivery dates via the City website, City Facebook page, radio and newspaper. To help ensure cans are delivered to the right address, cans will be delivered curbside to the front of the house regardless of where your garbage is usually picked up. Crews will begin using the new cans once they are delivered using the current rear-load garbage can and “tippers” in a semi-automated system for 1-2 weeks. While doing this, City crews will emphasize where cans should be placed for collection using the new automated truck. We ask residents to take note of these can locations to help with the transition.

WHERE SHOULD I PLACE MY NEW CANS?

Cans should be placed near the alley or roadway where your garbage is currently picked up on smooth, even ground with the arrows on the can lid facing the alley or roadway. Place cans in your pickup location the evening before or prior to 7:00 am of the scheduled collection day. Cans must have three feet of clear, open space around all four sides of the can to allow the automated collection truck to easily grab, lift, empty and return the can to the ground without hitting any obstacles. Cans should not be placed in garbage racks when put out for pickup.

On non-collection days, garbage cans should be stored on private property off the public right of way. For accounts with alley pickup, cans may remain in their pickup location near the alley.

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY EXISTING CAN(S)?

Current cans will remain private property. If you no longer want your garbage can(s), you will be able to dispose of them at the Sanitation Building, prior to December 1st, free of charge.

WILL MY GARBAGE PICKUP DAY CHANGE?

The collection routes are being reviewed and will be revised as necessary to maximize the efficiency of the automated collection system and ensure all cans can be dumped on the scheduled day. With the exception of the Thursday and Friday routes being combined into one Thursday route and garbage being collected four days a week, no major changes are expected.

HOW WILL HOLIDAYS WORK WITH THE UPDATED SCHEDULE?

If an observed holiday occurs Monday – Thursday, garbage collection will resume the day following the holiday and the remaining collection days will be pushed back one day with Friday used as an additional collection day. For example, if the holiday is on a Monday, there will be no garbage collection that day and Monday’s route will be completed on Tuesday, Tuesday on Wednesday, Wednesday on Thursday and Thursday on Friday.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE AUTOMATED TRUCK IS DOWN FOR SERVICE?

These same cans can also be used by “tippers” located on the back of the City’s current rear load garbage truck in what is referred to as semi-automated garbage collection. The tippers will be used when the automated truck is being serviced or in areas where using them is more efficient.

WHAT RULES ARE THERE FOR PUTTING GARBAGE IN THE NEW GARBAGE CANS?

All garbage must be placed in tied garbage bags before being placed in the new garbage cans with a maximum allowable weight of 200 pounds for 65-Gal cans and 300 pounds for 95-Gal cans. This will limit the amount of potentially loose garbage when the can is being lifted and dumped. Do not tightly pack garbage in the cans to allow the garbage to fall freely from the can when lifted. When filled, the lid on the container must be able to close completely, so do not overfill the container. The lids on the new cans are designed to be left closed and will open automatically as the can is lifted and dumped. Keep the lid closed when not in use to prevent debris from escaping and water from entering the can. These rules will help prevent damage to the new cans and equipment. Current ordinances related to residential garbage collection rules and regulations are being reviewed and will be updated as needed.

WHAT KIND OF GARBAGE IS ALLOWED IN THE CAN(S)?

Only household garbage that is bagged and tied is allowed in the can. Items that MAY NOT be placed in garbage cans for pickup include but are not limited to ashes, yard waste, trees and shrub trimmings, tires, construction and demolition debris, commercial and industrial waste, hazardous and flammable waste, waste oil, asbestos, infectious waste, rocks and concrete, car batteries, and electronics including televisions. Pet waste IS allowed in garbage cans if it is double-bagged, securely tied and disposed of in limited amounts.

WHAT IF MY GARBAGE DOES NOT FIT IN THE CAN(S)?

Any household garbage that does not fit in your garbage can(s) may be placed in City blue bags and disposed of at the designated roll-off dumpster at the Sanitation Building. Only garbage placed in blue bags will be allowed to be dumped at this location and will be monitored with cameras to ensure the service is not abused. Blue bags can be purchased at City Offices, Leever’s Foods or Walmart.

HOW WILL I KEEP TRACK OF WHICH GARBAGE CAN IS MINE?

When the cans are delivered, they will be inventoried and each account address will be assigned a serial number unique to the can. The City recommends writing down this serial number to help keep track of which can is yours, but the serial number will be tracked by staff at City Offices and is readily available. Small markings on the can lid to identify individual apartments or house number will be allowed. Please do not mark or paint the body of the new garbage cans to help identify them.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY GARBAGE WAS NOT COLLECTED?

If you suspect your garbage was not dumped and your can was placed in the correct location by 7:00 am, please wait until 2:00 pm on the day of your scheduled pickup before calling to let us know your garbage was missed. Actual pickup times may vary from current pickup times during the transition to the new system.

WHAT IF MY NEW CAN BREAKS?

If your can is damaged, please contact City Offices for any potential needed repair or replacement to be arranged. Damage due to normal use or City operations will be repaired at no cost.

WHAT IS THE COST IF MY CAN IS DAMAGED, LOST OR STOLEN?

The cost to replace the can is \$50.00 (subject to change). This cost is the responsibility of the homeowner if the can is lost, stolen or damaged through no fault of the City or its employees. New cans may be purchased at City Offices Mon- Fri, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

IF I MOVE, DO I TAKE MY CAN(S) WITH ME?

No, City-issued can(s) should be left at the current address, in clean condition. If you are moving to a different address within city limits, there should be a can there when you arrive. If not, a can will be assigned and delivered with a set of instructions. During the setup or transfer of a new utility account, the updated can serial number will be added to your account.