

April 2018

Red Deer's new Green Cart program

Program background:

1. What's the Green Cart program?

The City of Red Deer's Green Cart program allows households to deposit their organics, such as yard waste, food scraps, and pet waste in a City-provided Green Cart for year-round, weekly pickup and composting.

2. Why is The City introducing a Green Cart program?

Green Carts will reduce the amount of waste sent to the landfill; approximately 40 per cent of household waste is organic and can be composted. Consistent with The City's Environmental Master Plan (EMP), the Waste Management Master Plan (WMMP) aims to reduce the amount of garbage sent to the landfill by providing waste reduction and diversion initiatives that can be supported by residents and businesses. Green Carts are an easy way for residents to divert organics from the landfill.

3. How do Green Carts help the environment?

Diverting organic waste from the landfill helps reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions and will ultimately prolong the life of the landfill. The compost produced from Green Cart materials will be reused on local agricultural land to add nutrients to the soil, reduce the need for chemical fertilizers, and retain moisture – thereby conserving water.

4. Has the program been tested in Red Deer, and what were the results?

Yes, we ran a two-year pilot program with 2,000 households across the city. Households were chosen to reflect a range of demographics, as best as possible matching the whole city's demographics. They were further broken down by neighbourhood, home assessment value, back alley or front collection, and the year the home was built. The pilot system was created to not only test the system, but to gather feedback from participants on a regular basis, make changes based on their feedback and ensure we launch a system that will work for all Red Deerians. The pilot also included Blue Carts (recycling) and Black Carts (garbage), which will be rolled city-wide in 2019. Results from the pilot program indicated that participating households reduced their garbage by 39 per cent.

Collection start date:

5. When were the carts delivered?

Green Carts were delivered to the front of homes between February 20 and March 16.

6. What else was included with the Green Cart?

Along with the Green Cart, you also received a Kitchen Container, which is a smaller container you can use inside your home to collect kitchen scraps and other organics and transfer them into your Green Cart as necessary.

7. When will Green Cart Collection start?

Green Cart collection will start the week of April 9, on your regular garbage pickup date in the same location you normally place your garbage (front street or back alley).

8. Did all households in the city receive a Green Cart?

No, the cart system (Green, Blue and Black Carts) will replace manual collection so only households that currently have this service received carts. Multi-family properties that have their waste collected in larger dumpsters did not receive carts.

Collection specifics:**9. Is my collection location changing?**

No, the cart pilot project demonstrated that cart collection works in back alleys and the front street. Households will have their Green Carts collected from the same location as their garbage and blue boxes are currently collected. Green Carts were delivered to the front of homes so we could accurately record the cart serial number delivered to each house, but if your garbage is collected in the back alley, so will your Green Cart.

10. How do I set the Green Cart out for collection?

Green Carts are picked up by an automated collection truck, so it's important to follow the collection instructions:

- When: Set out by 7 a.m. on your regular collection day, year-round.
- How: Make sure the lid is closed and place the cart on flat ground with at least one metre clearance all around it so the truck's collection arm can pick it up and empty it. This includes ensuring your garbage bags, blue box and any extra yard waste is clear of the Green Cart so the automated trucks can access it. If the collection contractors are unable to properly access your cart, they won't be able to collect the Green Cart contents that week, so placement is an important step.
- Where:
 - **Front street collection:** Place the cart on the street with the wheels against the curb and white directional arrow pointing toward the street. Make sure the cart is away from parked vehicles or other obstructions such as trees, and that it is not blocking traffic.
 - **Back alley collection:** Place the cart with the wheels toward your property and white directional arrow pointing toward the alley. Make sure the cart is not placed against a fence or garage, and that it is not blocking traffic.
- Make sure to roll your cart back to your property after it has been emptied.

Using the Green Cart and Kitchen Container:**11. What can I put in the Green Cart?**

Check www.reddeer.ca/carts for the full list of acceptable Green Cart materials. In general, you can place yard waste, all food scraps (including meat and cooked foods), and pet waste (including kitty litter) in your Green Cart.

12. What about yard waste?

Food scraps and pet waste should fill up your Green Cart first. Then yard waste can go inside, including grass clippings, leaves, small tree trimmings and garden waste. Place any extra **yard waste only** in cans labelled with a yard waste sticker, or in paper yard waste bags – just like you would have normally set out yard waste in the old yard waste collection program

13. Can pet waste go in the green cart?

Yes. Pet waste, including animal droppings and kitty litter, can be placed in your Green Cart. The high temperatures reached during the composting process will kill any harmful bacteria.

14. What can I use to line the Kitchen Container?

Paper bags, newspapers or certified compostable bags can all be used to line the Kitchen Container and they can be purchased from local retailers; however, you are not required to line your Kitchen Container or Green Cart.

15. What about compostable bags?

Look for certified compostable bags – not biodegradable or degradable – available at most local retailers.

16. How do I clean my Kitchen Container and Green Cart?

The Kitchen Container is dishwasher safe. Both the Kitchen Container and Green Cart can be rinsed out or washed as needed with a mild detergent and water or vinegar and water.

17. How do I take care of my Green Cart so it doesn't smell or attract animals?

Clean out the cart on a regular basis, ensure it is set out on time for weekly collection, keep the lid closed, and store the cart out of direct sunlight if possible.

18. Will Green Cart collection look differently in the winter?

To prevent organics from freezing in colder months, place your Green Cart in an area shielded from the weather (i.e. garage). If this is not possible, you can prevent organics from freezing to the bottom by lining the bottom of the cart with newspapers, pizza boxes, leaves or a certified compostable bag. Lining the bottom of the cart can also help keep it tidy and manage odours.

19. What if I already use a backyard composter?

Backyard composting is the ideal method for diverting your household organic materials from the landfill. However, not all materials are suitable for backyard composting. Meat, fish, bones, cooked foods, pet waste, and dairy products are not suitable for a backyard composter but these materials can be deposited in the Green Cart.

Program details:

20. What happens to the food and yard waste that's collected from the Green Carts?

The City's contractor will pick up the Green Cart materials, and transport it to the composting facility, which can handle a mixture of yard waste, food scraps, and pet waste. The resulting compost will be used on local agricultural land.

21. Will there be a new charge on my utility bill for the Green Carts?

On your monthly utility bill, your waste collection fees will increase by \$1.32; one dollar of the increase directly relates to the Green Cart program. Residents will also see the rate displayed differently starting in March. Currently the utility bill shows the charges for garbage and blue box collection separately, but as of March, there will be a single waste collection rate that will cover Green Cart, garbage and recycling collection.

22. Can I opt out of the program?

Because we charge a single waste collection fee, all residents are charged the same fee regardless of level to which they participate in the program. However, residents are free to choose the level to which they participate in Green Cart and blue box recycling.

23. Where can residents find out more information about Green Carts?

When residents received their Green Cart this spring, an educational brochure with the details of what goes in the cart, how to store it on their property, set it out for collection and who to contact for more information was included. More information can be found on our website, or by calling or emailing the contacts below.

Website: www.reddeer.ca/carts

Phone: 403-340-BLUE (2583)

Email: carts@reddeer.ca

23. When will Blue and Black Carts be available city-wide?

Blue and Black Carts will be rolling out city-wide in Spring 2019.