



# Going Green in Scarborough

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## SCARBOROUGH: YOU SURE LOOK GOOD IN GREEN!

*What people do says a lot about what they think.*

Well, guess what Scarborough residents are *doing*? More than 90 percent of you are filling up your green bins and wheeling them to the curb for weekly pick-up. What an excellent, encouraging response!

Clearly what Scarborough residents are *thinking* is that the Green Bin Program is important and worth the effort. Thank you for embracing this initiative so enthusiastically and for showing you care about your community and environment.

You can feel positive that every time you separate your organic materials, such as food waste and soiled paper food packaging (see back page for details), you are personally reducing the amount of material that Toronto households send to landfill.

### Just look at these numbers!

Kilograms of green bin organic waste set out weekly per Scarborough household: **4**

Based on collections to date, estimated tonnes of organics Scarborough will divert annually from Michigan landfill: **23,000**

Estimated number of trucks no longer going to Michigan landfill each year thanks to Scarborough's efforts: **670**

## LET'S AVOID LANDFILL

By now, the green outdoor bin and the smaller, beige kitchen bin, which the City of Toronto delivered to your doorstep last spring, have become as familiar to you as your blue and grey boxes.

Your new green and beige bins join the family of recycling containers as one more step toward the City of Toronto's plan to eliminate landfill by the year 2010.

The City's Keele Valley landfill site closed in 2002, and Toronto now trucks all its waste to Michigan, U.S. Despite strict policies and procedures governing landfill operations, the fact is, using any part of our world as a landfill does not make sense.

What many people may not realize is that a full 30% of the garbage that goes

to landfill is organic material. The Green Bin Program "diverts" that material away from landfill and turns it into useful compost instead.

The program allows us to demonstrate that, as civilized people, we can clean up after ourselves.

# HOW the Green Bin Program works

**1** Either line your indoor kitchen container with a plastic bag (no need to buy special bags: your used grocery bags will do just fine), or line your green bin. There is no need to line both bins.

**2** Do not include any other plastic items; e.g. plastic baggies, bread bags, plastic packaging. (These smaller items clog our processing system.)

**3** Empty the contents of your indoor kitchen container (plastic bag(s) included) into your outdoor green bin. (Twist or tie your bags loosely to make it easier for the City's processing plant to remove them.)

**4** Place your green bin at the curb by 7:00 a.m. on your collection day (please refer to your collection calendars to find out what to put out and when\* – or check out [www.toronto.ca/garbage](http://www.toronto.ca/garbage)).

**5** Latch your bin before you set it out, and make sure the plastic bag you've used to line the green bin is completely tucked into the bin (otherwise the edges may be used by animals to pull the bin over).

**6** Don't overfill your green bin. A bin or bag that weighs more than 20 kg (44 lbs) will not be picked up. Place your overflow green bin material in a see-through plastic bag beside your bin, or buy a second green bin for \$15 (see "Where to buy this new bins," page 3).

**7** Your green bin material will be picked up at the curb and placed into one of two compartments in a City collection vehicle. That material is then taken to the City's Dufferin Organics Processing Facility.

**8** Operators inspect the organics and remove large, unwanted items. A biological process called anaerobic digestion\*\* converts the material into solids, which is then turned into clean, rich compost.

**9** You can wash both bins with soap and water. Do not put your indoor container in the dishwasher.

\* The City will not send trucks out to collect material placed out on the wrong day.

\*\* Anaerobic digestion is an engineered biological process that breaks down organic material in the absence of oxygen and produces renewable energy in the form of bio gases (i.e. methane and carbon dioxide).

## GOOD NEWS! YOUR BLUE AND GREY BOXES ARE NOW SHARING THE LOAD

The City used to transport your grey box recyclables to one processing facility, and your blue box recyclables to a different facility. New technology has now streamlined that process. As of August, the City is trucking Scarborough's blue and grey box contents to the same place: a brand new facility capable of separating and processing both types of material.

On a City-wide basis, this will potentially reduce the number of trucks needed to collect recyclables, which in turn will save on collection costs and reduce traffic and air pollution. The new system also explains why your garbage collectors are now putting Scarborough's blue and grey box material into the same compartment in the collection truck.

**Do residents need to do anything differently?** No, not really. You can continue to use your boxes as you do now – or you can mix your blue and grey box material in one box. Bonus: if you happen not to have a lot of recyclables on collection day, you'll only need to take one box (any colour – you pick!) to the curb.

Do we still need both a blue and a grey box? Probably not. We may evolve to a one-container system as boxes wear out and need replacing. Stay tuned for more information.



# You asked US...

## Should I use plastic bags to line my green bin and kitchen container?

Yes – but there is no need to line both bins. You may line either your green bin with a plastic bag (any bag that fits will do), or your indoor kitchen container with a plastic bag (no need to buy special bags -- your grocery bags will do just fine). **Do not place your organics loose in the green bin.** Plastic liners in either container reduce odour, prevent spillage during pickup, and stop the organics from freezing to the inside of the bin in winter. The City's processing plant is able to remove the plastic bags you use to line your bins. Please avoid putting any other plastic in your green bin. Tie your bags loosely, or just twist them (no twist ties!).

## What do I do when the bin is full or too heavy by pickup day?

A bin or bag that weighs more than 20 kg (44 lbs) will not be picked up, so use a see-through plastic bag for your overflow material – one big bag please, not several small ones. We recommend that you use the overflow bag for non-food items (e.g. diapers, animal waste) because they don't attract animals. You could also purchase a new outdoor green bin for \$15 (indoor kitchen container \$4).

**Where to buy new bins**  
**Scarborough Transfer Station** 1 Transfer Place  
(north on Markham Road, left on Nugget Avenue)  
**Tuesday to Friday:**  
6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
**Saturday:**  
6:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

## What do I do if the green bin breaks?

The containers have been thoroughly tested by the manufacturer and are guaranteed to last five years. The City of Toronto did additional testing, including drop tests, and involved both collectors and ergonomists to analyze the bins. If your bin cracks or breaks, please take it to the Scarborough Transfer Station (see "Where to buy new bins," above), or call Customer Service at 416-338-2010 for more information. (We encourage residents to write their address on their green bin with a permanent black marker.)

*Here are the top questions residents asked us when they called Customer Service at 416-338-2010.*

### Will animals (raccoons) get into the green bin?

The bins are durable and designed to be animal-resistant. You can take additional steps to discourage animals:

1. Please remember to securely latch the lid on your green bin before setting it out.
2. If you use a bag (strictly optional) to line your outdoor green bin, tie the bag loosely (no twist ties) and make sure it is completely tucked into the bin when you set it out; otherwise the edges may be used by animals to pull the bin over.
3. If you store your green bin in your backyard, stretch a short bungee cord from handle to handle over the cover. Please remove the bungee cord before placing the bin at the curb. (Long bungee cords won't do the trick.)
4. If possible, set your bin out in the morning rather than the night before.

You'll find more questions and answers at [www.toronto.ca/greenbin](http://www.toronto.ca/greenbin) – look for "Frequently Asked Questions."



# DON'T BE FOOLED BY THIS OPTICAL ILLUSION!

We hear from residents who think their green bin organic waste is being tossed into the same place in the collection truck as their regular garbage. Don't worry! What you may be unable to see from your window or porch is that the City's collection trucks have two compartments. Each compartment is distinctly separate from the other. Green bin material goes in one compartment, and garbage or recyclables go in a different compartment.

