

Haulers FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q: Am I required to pick up recycling?

A: Yes. Starting July 1, 2015, all solid waste haulers (whose vehicles have a payload of more than 1 ton) must also offer pickup of recyclables, unless municipal collection is already available for the area you service. You may not charge a separate fee for recycling pickup. However, you may increase your trash hauling fees to cover the cost of picking up recyclables. You may also subcontract these services to another hauler. The recyclables you must pick up include cans, aluminum foil and pie tins, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles and jugs (made of PET and HDPE), corrugated cardboard, white and colored paper, newspaper, magazines, catalogs, paper mail and envelopes, boxboard, and paper bags.

2. Q: Am I required to pick up food scraps and leaf/yard debris?

A: Yes. Starting July 1, 2016, all solid waste haulers who pick up trash from residential and commercial customers will be required to include pickup services for leaf/yard debris. **Starting July 1, 2017, all solid waste haulers will also be required to include pickup services for food scraps.** You may charge separate fees for these services, and you may also subcontract these services to another hauler.

3. Q: If I run a bag drop, what are my rules for food scraps and leaf/yard debris?

A: As with your current fast-trash operation, you will be required to remove all trash, recycling, food scraps, and leaf/yard debris from your collection site by the next business day. More detailed guidance for fast-trash operators will be coming soon from the Agency of Natural Resources.

4. Q: Do I need to pick up recycling and food scraps every time I pick up trash?

A: No. The frequency of pickups does not need to be the same for all materials. Haulers may choose to pick up recyclables along with, or alternating with, regular trash. While there are no rules for frequency of food scrap pickup, we recommend that haulers pick up food scraps on

at least a weekly basis to reduce and discourage odors, insects, rodents and wildlife. Large commercial customers may need to have their food scraps picked up more often due to larger quantity or space limitations.

5. Q: Are there a certain number of times each year or season that I'm expected to offer pickup of leaf/yard debris?

A: The law does not include any specific requirements here. More detailed guidance will be coming soon from the Agency of Natural Resources.

6. Q: Is anyone going to enforce the landfill bans on recyclables, food scraps, leaf/yard debris and clean wood debris?

A: Yes. The Agency of Natural Resources does have enforcement authority under 10 V.S.A. Section 8003(a), and some solid waste management entities may also have enforcement authority under local laws. However, education and outreach will be the primary method of implementing Universal Recycling.

7. Q: What happens if all of our competitors don't offer pickup of recyclables, food scraps, and leaf/yard debris as required by the law? Doesn't this give them a price advantage? And what can we do about it?

A: If you discover that certain haulers are not following the law, you will be able to file a complaint with the Agency of Natural Resources.

8. Q: What can I do if my customer leaves banned material at the curb?

A: You have two options. Option 1: you can leave the banned material at the curb along with a notice indicating why it's being left behind and instructions on what the customer needs to do in order for you to pick it up (i.e. sort the materials properly or put them back out on the designated day). Option 2: You can pick up the material separately, provide a notice in your invoice that the materials were sorted improperly, and indicate if an additional fee has been added as a result.

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- 9. Q: If my customers put banned materials in their trash and I haul it to the dump without knowing it, will I face a penalty, fine, or other actions?**
A: No. The law only prohibits individuals and companies from knowingly disposing of banned materials in the solid waste stream destined for the landfill (dumpsters, trash cans, trash bags, etc). However, if you do dispose of banned materials with full awareness, enforcement may include fines, revocation of your state waste transporter permit, or other actions.
- 10. Q: Will we be provided with educational materials on the Universal Recycling Law (Act 148) to give to our customers?**
A: Yes. The Agency of Natural Resources is developing educational materials; once completed, these will be posted on the ANR website and, if requested, distributed to haulers to include in customer invoices, mailings, etc.
- 11. Q. What is, and is not, allowed in terms of customer fees for these new required services?**
A: The Universal Recycling Law (Act 148) does not dictate hauler prices, but there are some general guidelines. (1) Haulers can't charge separate fees for pickup of mandatory recyclables. (2) You can, however, increase your prices for trash collection to offset the cost of collecting recyclables. But if you do this, you should clearly explain the cost increase to your customers so your new rate structure is transparent. (3) You are allowed to charge separate fees for the collection of food scraps and leaf/yard debris. (4) All municipalities, as well as haulers that operate within those municipalities, must implement unit-based pricing (also known as Pay-As-You-Throw or variable-rate pricing), in which charges to residential customers are based on the volume or weight of the material collected.
- 12. Q: I'm considering handling the pickup of food scraps and leaf/yard debris myself. What permits do I need?**
A: You must obtain a Solid Waste Haulers Permit from the State of Vermont, and you must also comply with local hauler licensing requirements in your solid waste management entity.
- 13. Q: Is there any financial assistance available to help small haulers purchase equipment for hauling food scraps and leaf/yard debris?**
A: There are no grants available at this time. But the Agency of Natural Resources will pass along information on potential low-interest financing opportunities as they become available. You might also check with your local solid waste management entity to see if they have any funding or financing options.
- 14. Q: I haul with a truck that has a payload (rated capacity) of 1 ton or less, and I don't currently have to get a state solid waste hauling permit. Does that mean I am also exempt from the hauling requirements in Act 148?**
A: Yes. However, you are not exempt from the landfill bans on mandated recyclables, food scraps, and leaf/yard debris, which apply to every business and resident in the state on specific dates. Exemptions are available, but you must apply to the state or your local solid waste entity. However, there are very few trucks that actually have payloads of 1 ton or less. In fact, some pickup trucks sold as ¾-ton are actually rated as more than 1 ton with payload, and would therefore NOT be exempt from the hauling requirements. If you are using a pickup truck of any kind, we strongly urge you to check with the Agency of Natural Resources to verify whether or not your vehicle is exempt.

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