

**Business and School Requirements**

**Managing Items Banned from the Trash**

To reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions, protect public health, and conserve resources and landfill space, Vermont law bans certain items from the trash. Your local waste management experts can provide no-cost advice and training. They can also help you figure out ways to reduce waste, which can save you money. Find your local experts at [802recycles.com](http://802recycles.com).

**State law requires everyone in Vermont to recycle clean and dry:**



- Uncoated paper, boxboard, and cardboard
- Containers: from food and drinks, empty and rinsed
  - Metal cans
  - Glass bottles and jars
  - Plastic bottles and containers labeled #1 and #2 (ask your recycler what else is accepted locally)



Tips for recyclables:

- 1) Learn more about what to recycle at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com). If you don't have recycling, ask your trash hauler for recycling service, and set up containers to collect recyclables where they're produced.
- 2) Label your recycling bins with [signs](#) that describe what can be recycled.
- 3) Teach your staff to recycle properly. Make sure they follow through, and coach them frequently.

**State law requires everyone in Vermont to manage their food scraps separately from the trash.**

Tips for leftover food and food scraps:



- 1) Donate quality food to staff or a local food shelf.
- 2) Find food scrap haulers or learn about drop-offs and on-site composting at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com).
- 3) Track excess food and food that goes bad so you can modify purchasing, preparation, and storage to save money by having less excess and less waste.

How food scrap management works:

- Haulers often provide collection bins and tell you what can go in them.
- Collect food scraps in easily washable containers, like 5-gallon buckets, and empty them into the larger bins. Clean the buckets regularly.
- Teach staff to separate food scraps properly. Keep trash, like produce stickers and silverware, out of the food scraps.



**Hazardous and hard-to-manage items must be collected separately.**



Find a special recycling drop-off near you at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com) for these items:

- Batteries and Cell phones
- Electronics
- Paint
- Fluorescent Lightbulbs
- Mercury Thermostats (older, with dials), Thermometers, and Switches

These items are banned from the trash or dangerous: Ask your local waste experts or transfer station where to bring them (find local info at [802recycles.com](http://802recycles.com)).



- Large Appliances and Scrap Metal
- Tires, Used Oil, Filters, Auto Fluids
- Clean Wood: not pressure treated/painted
- Explosives, Fireworks, Gasoline, Pesticides, Pool Chemicals, Propane Tanks/Cylinders
- Hazardous Wastes (cleaners, degreasers, etc.)

\*If you have hazardous waste, you must notify VT DEC: <https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/hazardous/administrative/epa-site-identification-numbers>

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### What are food scraps?

Food scraps are parts of food that are typically **discarded rather than eaten** (peels, rinds, cores, eggshells, seeds, pits, bones, shells, coffee grounds and filters, loose-leaf tea, and fats/oils/ grease), and food that was **not finished** ("plate scraps", uneaten leftovers, food that went bad). Any type of food can become food scraps, including bread, pasta, soup, vegetables, fruit, sauces, meat, fish, dairy, sweets, etc.

### Can I compost any additional items with food scraps?

Ask your composter or hauler if they accept other organic materials, such as residual animal feed, wooden stir sticks, or compostable paper. Find [a food scrap hauler](#) at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com). Do not include produce stickers, butter packets, plastic bags, twist ties, or other non-compostable items in your food scraps.

### We only have small amounts of food scraps at our office, job site, or non-food store. How are we expected to manage these food scraps?

Food scraps are banned from the trash for everyone in Vermont, including all businesses and institutions. ANR-DEC expects workplaces to have system for managing food scraps separate from the trash and inform employees. Workplaces use a variety of systems, such as compost on-site, subscribe to a food scrap pick-up (collect a bucket of scraps weekly, biweekly, or monthly), have staff take turns bringing food scraps to a drop-off or home, or encourage employees to take scraps home individually for home composting.

### How much does food scrap collection cost?

Costs vary, as they do for trash and recycling services, and must be negotiated with your hauler. Find haulers in your region at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com). When comparing quotes, consider how often the hauler would empty and clean your containers and whether they provide a cover material for the food scraps.

### How can we discourage insects from the outside food scrap cart in the summer?

When it is warm out, cover food scraps with several inches of dry brown plant material (e.g. wood shavings, sawdust, etc.) or coffee grounds to hold in smells and slow down insects.

### Is it okay to give food scraps to pig farmers or chicken farmers?

Only food scraps that have not touched meat/fish or their oils/juices may be fed to pigs. To learn more, read the Vermont Agency of Agriculture's [Guidance on Feeding Food Scraps to Pigs](#). Chickens may be given any food scraps, including meat.

### How do we keep bears away from our collection containers?

Review DEC's [tips for keeping bears away from food scrap \(and trash\) containers](#) before you have a problem. Consider using [bear-resistant containers](#) and store containers where bears cannot access them. You can also [place an electric fence around the containers](#) to deter bears. Attach a piece of aluminum foil with peanut butter or bacon grease to the electric fence to bait the bear. The bear will be zapped and learn to stay away. Many bears avoid the smell of ammonia, so you can also attach an ammonia-soaked sponge or rag to the lid of your containers and reapply ammonia regularly, so it stays moist. If a bear disturbs your containers, try to scare the bear away from a safe distance. [Contact VT Fish and Wildlife](#) for more advice on deterring the bear before it becomes a recurring problem.

### Is anyone going to enforce the law's requirements?

Yes. The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has enforcement authority. However, education and outreach are the initial methods of implementation. Solid waste districts and towns may have enforcement authority under local ordinances.

Learn more at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com) or call VT DEC at 802-828-1138.