



Metro is proposing changes to multifamily regional service standards for garbage and recycling collection.

Since 2015, Metro has engaged with people living in apartments and condos (what we call multifamily homes), local government officials, property managers and owners, and companies that collect garbage and recycling, to better understand garbage and recycling at multifamily homes. We heard that our services for multifamily homes are not fully providing what people need.

We worked with our partners to propose changes to Metro Code and Administrative Rule to create better, more equitable services for residents of apartments and condos, which make up over 25 percent of homes in the region.

Our proposed changes will do two things:

1. We'll **improve the clarity and consistency of stickers and signs, and implement a color-coded system for garbage and recycling collection** at apartments and condos across greater Portland—so that no matter where you are, you'll know what goes where.

Later this year, we're rolling out new stickers that use universal images to better help people know what to put in each bin (a term we also use to describe carts, containers, drop boxes or compactors). Right now, there are some bins that don't have any stickers. There are also some bins that have confusing stickers, or really old ones.

We'll also establish a color-coded bin system. No matter the location, the garbage will be grey, the recycling will be blue, and the glass will be orange. People who move frequently won't need to re-learn the system. Metro is proposing a seven-year deadline for implementing the standard for new bin colors.

- Metro worked with a local consultant, Chris Bell, to identify a cost-effective timeline for implementation that gives collection companies the most flexibility in meeting the requirement.
- The timeline also takes advantage of the seven-year equipment depreciation schedule already built into local government franchised commercial rates.

2. We'll **create an improved and more consistent garbage and recycling collection** experience from building to building, and between multifamily and single-family homes.

Metro is setting a minimum level of service for garbage, mixed recycling and glass recycling. The proposed minimums will increase mixed recycling service at 60 percent of multifamily properties.

People living in single-family homes enjoy a relatively high level of service based on prescriptive code and rule, and we are long overdue to bring multifamily service up to the same level.

The proposed minimums should not result in additional costs. For franchised commercial areas (i.e., all areas outside of Portland city limits), most commercial rate structures already provide for a one-to-one ratio of garbage to recycling collection service.

These are just the first steps we are taking. In the future, we'll look at how to provide better service for bulky items, like furniture and mattresses, a unique need for people living in multifamily homes. We will also improve and expand the garbage and recycling areas at multifamily sites to improve safety for residents and collection companies.

These changes are meant to address concerns that Metro heard from residents, property managers, local governments and collection companies.

In March 2019, Metro adopted the [2030 Regional Waste Plan](#), which sets the policy direction for the region's garbage and recycling system. This plan reflects the needs and ideas from members of our community who have not had a strong voice in the development of environmental plans, policies or programs before.

To inform the plan, in 2017, Metro completed a [collaborative analysis of garbage and recycling](#) in apartment and condominium buildings across greater Portland. In addition to talking with our partners and residents, we also analyzed the level of garbage and recycling use at 4,000 multifamily homes and the level of contamination. Here are some specific things we heard:

- There's **not enough access** to mixed recycling and glass recycling service at many multifamily sites.
- The current collection **equipment is inconsistent and confusing** to those who use it (different carts, containers, colors, stickers and signs).
- **Contamination** in the mixed recycling stream is high.
- **Bulky waste**, such as sofas, chairs, appliances and mattresses, is inadequately managed.

The changes Metro is proposing will decrease contamination in the mixed recycling stream and create safer and cleaner garbage and recycling areas for residents and collection company employees.

Lend your voice.

We encourage you to share your thoughts with us. The full language of these proposed changes and a document that has answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found at www.oregonmetro.gov/servicestandards.

Between September 15 and October 15, you can visit www.oregonmetro.gov/servicestandards to fill out a form and share your thoughts with us. You can also email us at ServiceStandards@oregonmetro.gov or mail written comments to:

Metro
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Key dates:

September 14: Draft of code and rule posted
September 15 – October 15: Public comment period
October 27: Final draft of code and rule posted