

Trash Talk: Ways to Reduce Garbage and Garbage Odours

Waste reduction is everyone's job and with a little consideration and effort, it is possible to reduce the amount of waste that is going to the curb in the garbage cart. Less garbage means that our landfills will have a longer life span, reducing the need to create new landfills on valuable land, which would be better used for other purposes. By creating less garbage, it is also easy to reduce odours in the garbage bin as well.

Here are some tips to keep potential odours in your garbage bin at bay, and tips to create less garbage in general.

Tips for a less smelly garbage bin:

- Start a composting system; a lot of the smell coming from garbage cans is the smell of organics breaking down. Organics are the number one source of methane gas in a landfill, but removing organics from the garbage equation we can reduce odours and curb green house gas emissions from landfills. The Regional District has a lot of information, resources and tips on how to create your own backyard composter, [click here](#) and [here](#).
- Store leftovers or scraps of meat in the fridge or freezer until the day of collection.
- Odours are often caused by liquids, since liquids are banned from all landfills province wide, you should absorb liquids up into newspapers or paper towels, saw dust or kitty litter. Contain absorbed liquid in a plastic bag and put it in the garbage bin that way.
- Place a couple of charcoal briquettes at the bottom of the bin to absorb odours.
- Sprinkle a small amount of powdered garden lime, baking soda or powdered laundry detergent at the bottom of your cart and/or on top of bags.
- Fasten a dryer sheet to the inside of the lid.
- Mix a solution of water and bleach (4:1) and spray in the bin and on the lid.
- If you have young children at home, you can flush solids from diapers down the toilet.
- Rinse out your garbage cart on a regular basis; plastics do absorb odours over time.

Tips for creating less garbage:

- Analyze the foods you are purchasing. Is it possible to purchase the same product from a different brand that has less packaging?
- Try to minimize the number of disposable products you're purchasing and using. Bring your own bags to the grocery store, not just for the final purchases, but also for produce or bulk goods.
- Before throwing items away, ensure that there are no recycling options. There are province-wide recycling programs for: motor oil, motor oil containers, antifreeze and containers, electronics, small appliances, large appliances, light fixtures, ALL light bulbs, medications, beverage containers, electronic toys, ALL batteries, tires, thermostats, paints, flammable and hazardous materials/liquids, and outdoor power equipment.
- Before throwing items away, ask yourself if the item can be used further, maybe for a different purpose.

Lastly, it is understandable, after taking as many actions as possible to reduce waste, that some families may still have too much garbage for their bin. This is a good opportunity to get to know your neighbours, who might have room to take a bag or two of your garbage in their bin for collection. The Smithers/Telkwa Transfer Station is open 7 days a week for public drop off of garbage. You may also wish to purchase a different size of garbage cart from the Town of Smithers Public Works.