

City of Staunton

Solid Waste Policy

April 10, 2008

Revised: October 23, 2019

It is the policy of the City of Staunton to provide for the prompt, orderly removal of refuse and recyclable materials generated by city homes and businesses. The goal of this policy is to promote the health and safety of residents and visitors, to enhance the appearance of the city, and to provide a convenient, straightforward service to residents and businesses – the customers.

This policy specifically addresses our two primary types of customers – residential and commercial. The unique characteristics of the Central Business District are reflected in regulations specific to some of our commercial customers.

This policy also addresses two types of refuse collection – regular collection of refuse put out as described in the following regulations, and special pickups of refuse - scheduled and unscheduled - put out in any other manner.

1. Hazardous and Unacceptable Materials

- A. The City will not pick up** hazardous wastes including tires, car batteries, pesticides, herbicides, motor oil, anti-freeze, toxic chemicals, or oil-based paints, solvents or large tube type console televisions sets. The city will not pick up liquids, brick or block, pipe, rocks, gravel, lumber, tires, human or animal feces/urine, construction debris or any other material that may pose a danger to refuse crews. For any specific questions on how to dispose of these materials, contact Public Works at 332-3892.

A regional special hazardous waste collection day for household generated hazardous wastes is usually offered in the fall. Watch local newspapers, the internet or TV channel for specific information.

Many local business accept used car batteries and motor oil. Please call to find out.

- B. The City will pick up** dead animals, feminine hygiene products, cat litter, broken glass (but not as recycling) and sharp objects, needles and flat screen television sets, but only if they are packaged in such a way that they pose no danger to health or safety during handling.

2. Regular Collection

A. General Refuse Regulations

- 1 - **Residents and businesses wishing to put out refuse for regular collection must follow the regulations listed here.** Refuse set out other than as described will be considered a request for a Special Unscheduled Collection (see Section 5-C below).
- 2 - **Refuse may be set out in containers or plastic bags.** Containers or bags shall be placed at curbside, or for streets without curbs, no more than three feet from the edge of the pavement. If placement of plastic bags becomes a problem due to animals, the Director of Public Works may require that containers be utilized.
 - a - **Containers:** Containers may be of metal or plastic and must be covered. Containers may hold no more than 45 gallons, and weigh no more than 60 pounds when full. Containers shall be kept in a clean and sanitary condition and free from odor, so flies or other vermin will not be attracted. Containers having visible holes or open cracks or without covers may be considered part of the refuse and taken.
 - b - **Bags:** Refuse may be placed in plastic bags at least 1.5 mils thick that are closed and tied securely shut. Bags of refuse may not weigh more than 60 pounds.
 - c - **Brush** will be picked up if stems/branches are tied into bundles no longer than four feet. Bundles must weigh less than 60 pounds each. Limit 10 bundles per collection day.
 - d - **Organic and food wastes from restaurants** must be bagged, securely tied and placed in covered containers. Liquid grease and oils will not be collected. Non-hazardous liquid wastes will be collected only if solidified in some acceptable manner such as with cat litter or sawdust.

3. Collection Schedules

A. **The scheduled collection times in this policy may be changed on a temporary or permanent basis by the Director of Public Works,** subject to City Manager approval. This is typically done following periods of extreme or inclement weather conditions.

B. Areas Outside The Central Business District

- 1 - Residential and commercial refuse will be collected one day per week according to the schedule published by the Public Works Department. Refuse must be placed at the curb no earlier than dusk the day before pickup and no later than 7 a.m. on the day of pickup. Emptied containers must be removed from the curb no later than 6 p.m. the day of pickup. Containers must be stored at the side or rear of homes or buildings.

- 2 - When a collection day falls on a City holiday, refuse and recycling will be collected on the Wednesday of that same week.

C. Inside The Central Business District

- 1 - **Refuse is collected in the Central Business District daily except Sundays and Wednesdays.** When a City holiday falls on scheduled collection day, residents and businesses should simply hold refuse and/or recycling for pickup on the next scheduled collection day. In the event of multiple holidays in a single week, a pickup schedule will be announced on the City's home page (www.staunton.va.us), the government access cable TV channel, and via local news media.
- 2 - **Refuse customers in the Central Business District are divided into three categories for billing purposes.**
 - a - **Residential refuse (CBD).** Refuse from multi-family buildings is the responsibility of the land-owner/landlord. Billing will be the residential fee (below) for each residential unit.
 - b - **Light commercial users (CBD)** are those who set out four or less bags/containers of refuse on an average collection day.
 - c - **Heavy commercial users (CBD)** are those who set out five or more containers/bags of refuse on an average collection day.
 - (1) **All full-time restaurants are considered Heavy Commercial Users.** Coffee-houses, theaters and other locations where food wastes do not include heavy cooking materials or substantial amounts of cooked foods will normally be considered Light users under this policy, subject to review by the Director of Public Works. Should the amount or nature of refuse from such facilities change, the Director of Public Works may, at his discretion, reclassify the facility as a Heavy user.
 - d - **Public Works may change the status of an account at any time when the amount or nature of refuse set out justifies such a change.** Customers who believe their category should be changed may contact Public Works and the matter will be reviewed.
- 3 - **All refuse must be placed at the curb no earlier than 10 p.m. the day before collection. It must be put out no later than 9 a.m. the day of collection.**
 - a - If containers are used, emptied containers must be removed from the curb by 11 a.m. the day of collection. No containers may be stored or kept on any public property, sidewalks or streets except for special situations as prescribed by the Director of Public Works.

- b - Containers must be stored inside or behind buildings and not in front of buildings or close to sidewalks and streets. Containers or bags must be set out at the curb immediately adjacent to the customer's property.
- c - The Director of Public Works may grant special permission for containers to be placed other than as directed in this policy only if, in his judgment, placement under this policy would create an undue hardship for the customer. Such permission will be granted providing specific conditions are maintained including types of containers, area cleanliness, etc. Permission for special placement may be withdrawn at any time.

4. Recycling Regulations

A. Residents and businesses in the City of Staunton are required to separate recyclable materials from all other refuse materials. RECYCLE.

1. A set of three recycling containers may be obtained from Public Works. There is a \$25 service fee for the use of these containers. Upon return to the City of the three containers in reasonable condition, other than ordinary wear and tear, this service fee shall be credited or refunded to the customer upon closure of the account.
2. Other marked containers may also be used. Recyclable materials placed in plastic or paper bags will not be picked up. Businesses that produce large quantities of glass or metal containers may contact Public Works for approval of other containers or means of pick-up.
3. **Recycling is picked up on the regular refuse collection day citywide for residential customers. In the Central Business District, regular recycling and cardboard is collected on Mondays and Thursdays of each week.** Recycling containers should be placed out and removed at the same time as regular refuse containers/bags and in the same manner and location.
4. Recycling containers holding trash, refuse, food particles or other non-recyclable materials will not be collected. All recyclable materials placed out for collection become the property of the City of Staunton as soon as they are placed at the curb. It is unlawful for anyone to remove any recyclable materials from any such curbside container or from other public recycling containers on public property in the city.

B. Recyclable materials include:

- 1 - Metal** - Metal containers/cans, including aluminum cans are to be emptied and rinsed, where possible. Aluminum foil and disposable aluminum trays are acceptable and will be collected.
- 2 - Glass** - Glass containers are to be emptied of all contents and tops removed. Plate glass, mirrors, light bulbs, Pyrex, or ceramic materials are not accepted for recycling; these items should be placed with regular refuse.
- 3 - Mixed paper** – Newspapers, magazines, cardboard, old books, phone books, junk mail, and office papers may all be recycled.
- 4 - Cardboard** - May be put out for collection only if boxes are broken down or collapsed and bundled with string or cord, do not exceed four feet in any dimension, and do not weigh less than 60 pounds. Do not place large cardboard boxes out at the curb for recycling; any large boxes not folded flat or containing Styrofoam, other packaging materials, or other debris will be collected with regular refuse.
- 5 - Plastics** – As of April 1, 2019, the City no longer collects plastic of any sort for recycling. All plastic items must be disposed of with regular refuse.

C. Sorting of Recyclable Materials

1. Recyclable materials are sorted by city crews at the curb. Residents are asked to help by separating metals, glass, and paper as much as possible. When it is necessary to save bin space, metal and aluminum, mixed paper and small cardboard containers materials may be commingled in bins; please keep glass items separate.
2. Under no circumstances is refuse, trash, food or other materials to be placed in recycling bins. Bins are only for items to be recycled. If unacceptable items are included, bins will not be picked up.

5. Special Pickups

A. Introduction

Since the health, safety and appearance of the City of Staunton is important to its quality of life, Public Works may perform special pickups of refuse and other materials either on a scheduled basis or in response to conditions outside those described in this policy.

- 1 - Public Works** annually schedules and publicizes special pickups of lawn wastes, leaves, Christmas trees and heavy/bulky trash items. These are done at no charge to residents.

- 2 - Refuse set out in any manner not in accord with the provisions of this policy (Sections 2, 3 and 4 above) is considered a violation of this policy and will result in special unscheduled pickup. This is not a convenience service but rather a pickup for blatant violations of this policy. The cost of unscheduled pickups is added to the utility bill of the customer involved.

B. Scheduled Special Pickups

- 1 - **Dates for scheduled pickup** of lawn waste, leaves, Christmas trees and heavy/bulky trash items will be published on the City's web page (www.staunton.va.us) and on the government access cable TV channel.
- 2 - **Leaves** – Residents are asked to rake leaves to the curb each fall so that crews may vacuum them up for composting. The City is divided into sectors and each sector will have two periods for leaf collection. Leaf piles that contain rocks, branches or are inappropriately placed will not be picked up. Leaves may be bagged and placed out with regular refuse however residents are strongly encouraged to place leaves out by the curb so that they may be composted.
- 3 - **Christmas Trees** – Trees are normally picked up the first Wednesday following the start of the New Year, provided items such as lights, stands and ornaments are removed. Trees are composted.
- 4 - **Heavy Trash** – Bulky items, large quantities of yard waste such as brush and branches, furniture and white goods (appliances) are picked up during one week each spring. This is only done once a year.
- 5 - **Special Scheduled Pickups** – The Director of Public works may schedule special pickups when conditions warrant. For example, picking up limbs and branches following severe wind or ice storms.

C. Unscheduled Special Pickups

- 1 - When refuse is stored or placed curbside in a manner not as described in the provisions of this policy including that placed curbside at times not designated for pickup, a Public Works crew may be dispatched to pick up the refuse or materials and remove them. Containers will be picked up with refuse during unscheduled special pickups and will not be returned. Such pickups will be subject to a special fee charged to the property owner or known tenant. (See Section 7-B item 1 below.)
- 2 - **Crews may be dispatched to remove:**
 - a - Containers or bags placed out for collection more than one hour prior to the designated set-out time specified, or left at the curb more than one hour following the specified time for removal.

- b - Containers that are not covered, are overflowing, or bags that are not tied and are damaged.
- c - Containers holding organic or food wastes that are not bagged inside the container.
- d - Other containers or refuse put out for pickup or stored in any manner not described in this policy, or that may pose a threat to public health, safety or appearance.
- e - Containers/bags weighing more than 60 pounds.
- f - Heavy or bulky items placed out other than at the scheduled yearly spring collection will be considered in violation of this policy and subject to the imposition special collection fees.

6. Other

- A. When refuse has been dumped illegally on public or private property or on other occasions when the refuse violates city code, special pickup rules will not apply.

7. General Refuse Rates

- A. Refuse fees are added to city water and sewer bills for property owners or tenants of the property involved. All rates in this policy are monthly. Billing is for a two-month period.

1 - Residential -

- a - Outside the Central Business District - **\$18.98**
- b - Inside the Central Business District - **\$18.98**
- c - The fee is assessed for each residential unit – in both single-family and multi-family structures. For any multi-family structure, the fee may be higher to cover all costs to the city, as determined by the Director of Public Works. Any such higher amount must be set by the Director of Public Works and approved by the City Manager.

2 - Light commercial users (Four or less bags/containers of refuse on an average collection day.) monthly fees are:

- a - Outside the Central Business District - **\$43.09**
- b - Inside the Central Business District - **\$43.09**

3 - Heavy commercial users (Five or more containers/bags of refuse on an average collection day.) monthly fees are:

- a - Outside the Central Business District - **\$91.16**

b - Inside the Central Business District - **\$115.83**

- 4 - IAW City Code, the fee for any refuse service rendered outside the city shall be at least 200 percent of the fee charged for the same of service inside city limits. Refuse service of any kind outside the City Limits shall be at the discretion of the Director of Public Works.
- 5 - The costs of recycling are included in the refuse fees paid by residential and commercial customers. Commercial customers permitted by Public Works to utilize an outside refuse service will be charged **\$18.98** a month for pickup of recyclables.
- 6 - Exemptions: The Director of Public Works may waive all or part of the fees for any multi-family structure or commercial customer if contractual arrangements are made and maintained by that customer for containerized service.

B. Fees For Unscheduled Pickups

1. The fee for an unscheduled special pickup will be set by the Director of Public Works. The minimum fee will be \$95.00.
2. In the event a special unscheduled pickup involves more than five containers, includes furniture and/or other bulky items, site clean-up or other factors, the Director of Public Works may charge the customer the actual cost of the pickup including all administrative, labor and equipment costs.
3. In all cases the fees will be charged with normal Refuse charges to the bill of the property owner or, in the event the property is leased by a person or business with its own utility account, to the tenant. In the event the property is a multifamily structure, billing will be to the landowner, whether tenants have utility accounts or not.
4. Property owners or tenants with city utility accounts are responsible for refuse placed at the curb for pickup at their residence, on their property, or at their place of business, and for the cost of Special Unscheduled Pickups to remove such refuse or materials when not in accordance with Regular Collection regulations. In the event of multi-family buildings, this responsibility is assumed by the property owner. It is illegal for anyone to place trash, refuse or similar materials whether contained or not on private property without the written permission of the landowner. Should residents or businesses believe someone else is placing refuse or other materials at their location, they should report it to Staunton City Police Department immediately.
5. The Director of Public Works may direct special pickups be made without charge following special designated events or to meet special community needs.

8. Disputes / Appeals

A. Any decision made by the Director of Public Works pursuant to this policy may be appealed to the City Manager.

B. Disputes Involving Fees For Unscheduled Pickups

- 1 -** Customers who believe an Unscheduled Special Pickup was unnecessary or have other concerns over the service or the fee shall file a written complaint with the Director of Public Works within 15 days of the receipt of the utility bill first listing the fee.
- 2 -** The Director may waive the fee if, in his judgment, the pickup may not have been necessary or there are other extenuating circumstances. If the Director is unable to resolve their concerns, the customer may appeal to the City Manager.