



City of Onalaska Automated Collection of Recycling and Trash FAQs

What is Automated Collection?

Automated collection is a thoroughly proven method for collecting garbage and recycling. It is used by more and more municipalities. Each home is provided with special carts which are easy to roll and place curbside on the designated collection day. Garbage trucks equipped with a lifting device will lift, empty and return the carts to the same spot. The operator never has to leave the truck cab and controls the entire loading operation from inside the cab. The entire process takes about 15 seconds to complete.

- **Why is the City changing to automated collection?**
 - Increased efficiency of refuse and recyclables collection
 - Improved worker safety
 - Reduced costs
 - Improved environmental performance by consuming less truck fuel and producing lower emissions
 - More stable annual costs for collection with improved service
 - Likely increase in recycling, since recyclables do not have to be separated. All recyclable materials can go in the **BLUE** recycling cart together.
- **What about the carts?**
 - The City's contracted hauler will deliver two 65-gallon sized carts to your home between Thanksgiving and Christmas.
 - **BROWN** cart is for **refuse/trash**.
 - **BLUE** cart is for **recyclables**.
 - Carts are maneuverable and easy to roll.
 - Carts feature large wheels and do not need to be picked up and carried.
 - Carts have snug fitting, attached lids that won't blow off or get lost.
 - Carts are stable and will withstand winds from 43 to 50 mph.
 - Litter, odors, animal and fly problems have been greatly reduced in areas where the carts are used.
 - Carts have a smooth interior for easy cleaning.
 - The carts are uniform, attractive and contribute to a tidy neighborhood appearance on collection day.
- **What should I do with my old trash cans?**
 - They can be used around the house for other storage needs.
 - They can be used for your Yard Waste disposal.
 - Plastic trash containers can be placed into the **BLUE** automated collection cart for recycling.
 - Metal containers (empty) can be left curbside, and will be picked up as part of our weekly recycling collection. Please do not place metal trash containers in the carts.



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- **Will my refuse/trash and recycle pick up day be changing?**
 - Yes. Please view the map on the City Website: www.cityofonalaska.com (coming October 9th) or stop at City Hall to view it.
- **When should I put the carts out?**
 - Your carts must be at the curb before 5:00 AM on your collection day. After your cart is emptied, remove it from the curb that day.
- **Where should I put my carts?**
 - Carts must be placed in the boulevard area approximately 1 foot from the curb or alley. Do not place your carts in the street!
 - Carts must be placed at least 3 feet from obstacles such as utility poles, mailboxes, trees and parked cars.
 - There must be between 3 feet between the carts.
 - Make sure the cart handle faces away from the street toward your home (see arrows on cart lids).
 - When your carts are delivered, they will be placed in the most ideal location for service. Please place the carts in the same location each week for collection.
- **Why do the handles on the carts need to be facing my house?**
 - The automated collection truck cannot turn carts around as they are picked up. Dumping a cart "backwards" can break or damage the lid.
- **Why do I need to provide space between my refuse cart and recycling cart?**
 - The collection arm on the automated truck requires space to operate safely so please keep 3 feet between each cart, and keep the carts 3 feet away from mailboxes, fire hydrants, telephone poles, low hanging tree limbs and other obstacles that may interfere with the collection.
- **What about street parking?**
 - If cars are parked along the curb where you normally place your carts, please place your carts in your driveway.
- **Is there a fee for the automated collection and/or carts?**
 - No, the costs for the carts, collection and disposal are included with your yearly property taxes. If you wish to obtain a 2nd cart for refuse or recycling, additional fee(s) apply.
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- **When is the program going to start?**
 - The City's hauler, Harter's Quick Cleanup, will begin automated collection starting January 6, 2014.
 - All residents will begin automated collection that week on their new scheduled collection day.
- **When will carts be distributed?**
 - Harter's will begin delivering the carts to City of Onalaska homes between Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- **What can I put in the **BROWN** refuse/trash cart for collection?**
 - Your refuse will consist mostly of food waste and soiled materials that can not be reused or recycled.
 - Packing peanuts, bubble wrap and Styrofoam should also be placed in this cart.
 - Do not place recyclable materials, construction refuse, demolition refuse or hazardous materials in your refuse cart (see *How to Properly Prepare your Refuse Cart* for a more detailed list).
- **What can I put in the **BLUE** recycling cart for collection?**
 - Plastics #1 - #7, glass jars and bottles, tin and aluminum, cardboard/paper, and wire (see *How to Properly Prepare your Recycling Cart* for a more detailed list).
 - You do not need to separate recyclable materials. They can all go in the **BLUE** cart together.
- **Can I use other containers?**
 - No. Only the **BROWN** and **BLUE** carts issued by the City can be used for your trash and recycling materials. Items left outside the carts will not be collected. Carts that are blocked or turned the wrong way cannot be emptied.
- **Do I need to bag my refuse/trash?**
 - Although it's not required, it is recommended that all refuse/trash be bagged in clear or semi-transparent bags before it is put in the cart. Bagging helps keep the cart clean and reduces wind blown litter. The hauler will not pick up litter blown out of carts or if loose litter falls out of the cart. If you wish you can place your refuse loosely into the cart.



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- **Do I need to bag my recycling?**
 - No, recyclables should not be bagged. Place all materials loosely in the cart.
- **What size are the carts?**
 - The 65-gallon carts are 40.58H x 26.70W x 28.11D and weighs 35 pounds empty.
 - Both the refuse and recycling carts are the same size.
- **Will a 65-gallon cart be large enough for my refuse?**
 - Experience has shown that a 65-gallon cart is adequate for most homes. Increased recycling will help reduce the volume of garbage.
- **I have more refuse or recycling than can fit in the cart. Can I get an additional cart?**
 - Yes, the fee for an additional **BROWN refuse** cart is \$100 per year. The fee for an additional **BLUE recycling** cart is \$30 per year. All annual fees must be paid in advance and are subject to change.
- **I'm cleaning out the garage/basement/etc. and I have a lot of garbage to get rid of this week. Where can I dispose of it?**
 - You can deliver overflow garbage to the citizen drop-off area at the La Crosse County Landfill on Highway 16, or if quantities are significant (ie, remodeling, moving, etc.) you can order a dumpster from Harter's Quick Clean-Up or another waste collector who will transport it for disposal.
- **How will large items be collected such as furniture, carpet and appliances?**
 - Collection of large, bulky items was eliminated in January 2011. Please contact Harter's Quick Clean-Up, any refuse hauler, or the La Crosse County Landfill for disposal details and fees.
- **I do not have room for the carts. Can I continue to place my trash in bags for collection?**
 - No, only trash placed in the carts will be collected.
 - If you wish you may take your refuse and/or recycling to the La Crosse County Landfill for disposal but no credit will be received from the City.



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- **If the carts blow over will trash still be picked up?**
 - The 65-gallon carts are extremely stable and can withstand side winds of 46 mph.
 - The homeowner is responsible for bagging all trash and cleaning up any trash removed from the carts due to wind or other acts beyond the control of the City.
 - Harter's will pick up any trash spilled as a result of their collection operations.
- **What if my carts get damaged or stolen?**
 - Each cart is equipped with an RFID (radio frequency identification) tag to track its location.
 - If your cart is stolen Harter's will try to locate it using the RFID tag. If they do not succeed the replacement fee will apply.
 - If the collection truck damages the carts, or damage occurs as a result of normal wear, Harter's Quick Clean-Up will repair or replace the cart at no charge to you.
 - Damage resulting from negligence or abuse by the resident will be the responsibility of the resident.
 - The replacement fee for either cart is \$85.
- **If I move, do I take the carts with me?**
 - No, the carts should stay at the residence if you move. Please leave the carts at the home they were assigned to. The carts are the property of the City, and are assigned to each street address via the RFID tag.
 - Please do not write house numbers or put any other markings on the carts. This is considered vandalism and the replacement fee will apply.
- **Why weren't the bags/boxes I placed on top of my cart collected?**
 - All items must be inside the cart and the lid must be closed in order for material to be collected.
- **My carts weren't completely emptied, why?**
 - The automated container dumping process lifts the container upside down and stops with a slight jolt so waste or recyclables in the cart will fall out, unless it has been wedged, forced, or compacted into the container with some force.
 - The heaviest items should be placed at the bottom of the container to facilitate the dumping of all material.



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- **Extra carts were left at my multi-family house even though I do not rent out any of the units. What do I do with the extra carts?**
 - Automated collection will be provided to residences from single-family up to 4-unit residential properties only. If you accidentally received a cart please contact Harter's Quick Clean-Up (782-2082) for removal.
- **How do I dispose of my yard wastes?**
 - If you wish to use the service you must purchase a \$20 yearly Yard Waste sticker.
 - Yard Waste will be picked up from April - November on the same day as your regular trash pick up (see 2014 Recycler for exact dates).
 - Yard Waste is defined as grass clippings, leaves, hedge trimmings, garden waste and twigs shorter than 24" and less than 1/2" thick.
 - Yard Waste must be placed in a paper yard waste bag or placed loosely in a trash can, with the sticker facing the street or alley way.
 - Only 1 sticker is needed; each can or bag does NOT need a sticker on it.
 - If no sticker is visible your Yard Waste will not be picked up.
- **Where do I place my carts during the winter time?**
 - DO NOT place your carts on top of a snow bank (see picture below).
 - Please shovel an area in the boulevard area approximately 1 foot from the curb or alley, or place them in your driveway after you have shoveled.
 - Do not place your carts in the street.
 - Carts must be placed at least 3 feet from obstacles such as utility poles, mailboxes, trees and parked cars.
 - There must be between 3 feet between your carts.
 - Make sure the cart handle faces away from the street toward your home (arrows on the lid will remind you).

Place cart like this

