



# RECYCLING MATTERS

FOR A WASTE-FREE COLLAR CITY

## Wishcycling + Contamination

We all have the best of intentions when we recycle. Sometimes, meaning well does more harm than good. We're going to dive back into one of our favorite topics, **wishcycling**: what it is, what it does, and what you can do instead. We'll also cover **contamination**, a closely related topic!

### Wishcycling

**Wishcycling** is putting items that you aren't completely sure about into your recycling bin in hopes that they will reach the correct destination and be recycled.

When items that are not accepted as single stream recycling reach the sorting facility, it can be difficult for both the laborers and machines to separate them out. As well, the recycling facility is only equipped to handle items and products that are part of the curbside recycling program. If they receive items that are not part of that program, they will be thrown out and sent to the landfill instead.

Commonly wishcycled items:

- plastic bags
  - recycle at a retailer as film plastic (they will have a special bin)
- ink cartridges
  - bring to an office supplies retailer
- plastic utensils
  - opt for reusable utensils whenever possible; plastic utensils are sadly destined for the landfill
- single-use coffee cups (lined with plastic)
  - opt for reusable coffee mugs whenever possible - plus, they will keep your beverage at an optimal temperature for longer! Disposable coffee cups are also destined for the landfill



Pictured: an ink cartridge, and a disposable cup

When in doubt, find out! Search our recycling guide at [www.troyny.gov/recyclingguide](http://www.troyny.gov/recyclingguide).

### Contamination

So how do wishcycling and contamination intersect? **Wishcycling** is a form of **contamination**. Contamination is a term that describes items and products that are put into the curbside recycling but are not accepted; it also refers to the condition of accepted items. For items to be successfully processed, they must not only be accepted through the program, but also be empty and free of food or liquid residues. If food containers are not properly rinsed, they will be sorted out at the recycling facility and ultimately put in the garbage. Make sure your single stream recycling is clean!

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# Yard Clean-up Season

**To our residents with municipal recycling and trash service:** your leaf bags are picked up on your regular recycling and trash collection day. **If you have brush and branches you'd like collected, please schedule a pickup with our DPW Dispatcher: (518) 270-4579.**

Troy residents can also drop off their branches/brush and bagged leaves at the Troy Resource Management Facility (AKA the Alamo) on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 am to 1 pm.

## Other notes about yard materials:

- Place leaves and lawn clippings in brown paper bags
- Make sure everything is easily visible for collection
- Branches and brush should be trimmed to 4-5 feet in length and bundled
- Plastic bags **will NOT** be accepted
- Please keep trash out of yard bags!
- **Do NOT** put your bags or bundles in the street or on the sidewalk; instead, put them at the edge of your property



*Pictured: fall foliage and autumnal berries.*

# Battery Recycling Drop-off: Open!

**We are officially accepting batteries! This program is open on Tuesdays from 9 am to 1 pm. Please notify the laborer at the facility that you have batteries so they may assist you.**

Please note that all batteries must be taped, and separated by rechargeable and single-use as well as type.

**If these hours aren't accessible for you, STAPLES has a battery take-back program!**



*Pictured: a pair of batteries.*

# Curbside Composting Program Close-out

This program was administered in partnership with local food scrap hauler FoodScraps360 and the Town of Bethlehem for a curbside food scrap collection service. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) awarded the City of Troy funding towards From the Ground Up: An Environmental Stewardship Initiative, which started on September 29th, 2021.

The program was divided into three phases. Phase one was six months, and included 75 households. Phase two was also six months (adding an additional 50 households) bringing the total to 125. The longest phase was the third, which was one year (with an additional 125 households) for a total of 250.

Thanks to this program, 101,085 pounds of food scraps diverted from the landfill. That's 50.5 tons – the weight of approximately 33 Volkswagen Beetles – that was instead used to create nutrient-rich compost and support our neighbors' ability to grow their own food.

To view the full report of the program's impacts, visit [www.troyny.gov/foodscraps](http://www.troyny.gov/foodscraps).



*Pictured: finished compost at the Town of Bethlehem composting facility*



*Pictured: food scraps breaking down in the compost pile at the Town of Bethlehem's composting facility*

## Upcoming Events

COMMUNITY-BASED SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

### TROY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FACILITY (ALAMO) OPEN

*Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 to 1*

*Services: food scrap drop-off, pallet pick-up, mulch pick-up,  
bagged leaf and branch drop-off, battery drop-off*

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