

Regional District of Nanaimo Expanding Curbside Organics Program

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) is pleased to announce that the RDN Curbside Organics Program will be accepting yard and garden material as of March 1, 2023. Through our newly expanded curbside collection program, residents in Electoral Areas A, B, C, E, F, G, and H, District of Lantzville, City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach can top up their organics cart with leaves, grass trimmings and light yard trimmings such as twigs and small branches. This service expansion provides residents with a convenient, cost-effective way to dispose of their yard and garden material while helping the RDN to increase organic material diversion and improve air quality through reduced greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). Lower GHGs will be achieved through a decrease in backyard burning and fewer visits to the Church Road Transfer Station and Regional Landfill by residents and haulers to dispose of organic yard material.

“The collection and conversion of leaves, grass and light yard trimmings into compost throughout the region supports both a circular economy and helps the RDN get closer to its 90 per cent waste diversion goal,” said Vanessa Craig, RDN Chair. “We are grateful to receive a Clean BC grant and to work collaboratively with our waste management partners to roll out the expanded organics program that will benefit both residents and the environment.”

The expanded Curbside Organics Program is funded in part by a grant through the Clean BC - Organics Infrastructure and Collection Program by the Province of British Columbia and RDN Curbside reserve funds. This funding, combined with favourable contracts with our curbside contractor, Waste Connections Canada, and Convertus, where the region’s food waste gets composted, has allowed the RDN to provide this new service with just a 1 per cent increase (approximately \$2 per household) in the curbside utility fee for 2023 and again in 2024. This increase is separate from the 3 per cent fee increase for general curbside service.

Residents can top up their current 100 litre organics cart with leaves, grass and light yard trimmings during this first phase of the program. Light yard trimmings include twigs, small branches and prunings that are less than 1.5 cm (0.5 inches) in diameter and no longer than 60 cm (2 feet). To ensure collection, the lid of the organics cart must be able to fully close. In 2023, the RDN will monitor the program, conduct public surveys and meet with residents to understand what level of service best fits their unique needs. The information, along with a recommendation, will be presented to the RDN Board in early 2024. For more information on the expanded Curbside Organics Program, visit getinvolved.rdn.ca/expanded-organics. Residents of the City of Nanaimo can check which yard and garden materials are accepted in their organics carts at nanaimo.ca/city-services/garbage-recycling/kitchen-waste.

Residents should note that although organic waste from yards is now accepted, the following priority invasive plants cannot be placed in the organics cart and must be disposed of at the landfill due to their

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toxicity and/or seeds being resistant to the composting process: giant hogweed, invasive knotweeds, garlic mustard, spotted knapweed, wild chervil, poison hemlock and gorse. To learn more about invasive plants in our region, visit getinvolved.rdn.ca/invasivespecies and to learn how to dispose of them, visit rdn.bc.ca/what-goes-where.

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