

Waste, Recycling and FOGO

FAQ's

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) below will help to explain the new 3-bin FOGO system and help bust some common myths and questions that people have.

What does FOGO mean?

FOGO stands for Food Organics, Garden Organics and refers to the weekly collection of food scraps and garden organics, which once collected will be turned into compost.

A handy way to think about FOGO is 'If it didn't live or grow, it isn't FOGO'.

When will the Organics bin service start?

You will be advised of the specific start date prior to the roll-out however the Town will begin implementing this service from July 2020. The service will be delivered to all households with an existing domestic Rubbish and Recycling bin service.

Why is the Town of Bassendean introducing a FOGO bin?

As the population grows, so does the amount of waste generated. It is important that we take action on our waste now. The new Organics bin service will divert a significant amount of organic waste from landfill, and will instead recycle it into compost.

Organic waste is a problem in landfill as it produces methane, a harmful greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Turning it into compost reduces the impact on the environment and allows waste to become a usable product. Existing landfill sites are also nearing capacity and the creation of new sites can cause significant detrimental effects through land clearing, loss of habitat for local wildlife, and potential groundwater and soil contamination from the leaching of heavy metals and chemicals.

The Western Australian State Government have set targets for 75% of waste diverted from landfill by 2030. The new 3-Bin kerbside system incorporating the FOGO bin will assist the Councils and their communities in achieving these targets.

The FOGO Bin has already been successfully introduced in several local government areas and others are joining this sustainability initiative. Everyone can help reduce the impact of waste and improve environmental outcomes by using their kerbside bins correctly.

What can be put in the FOGO bin?

The average Rubbish bin contains about 60% organic waste that can be composted. All food waste, including fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, bones, dairy products, eggshells, bread, pasta, cereals, tea bags, coffee grinds and table scraps can be put in the FOGO bin. Garden waste includes lawn clippings, garden prunings, leaves, weeds and flowers. Even animal droppings, kitty litter, hair, tissues, paper products and cardboard can be included. An information booklet will be provided to assist you.

Why are the bin lid colours changing?

The bin lids are changing to comply with Australian Standard colours for waste bins. This will assist in delivering consistent messaging across the State and enabling improved source separation and reduced contamination of waste streams.

What changes will happen to my bin service?

If you currently have the two-bin system, your household will soon have three separate bins: one for general waste, a FOGO bin for compost and a recycling bin.

- You will have a 240 litre lime-green lidded FOGO bin, for all your food scraps and garden clippings, which will be turned into high-quality compost and collected weekly
- You will keep your yellow lidded recycling bin, which will continue to be collected fortnightly. A larger 360 litre yellow-lidded recycling bin may be made available upon request if required, however a fee may be charged.
- You will have a 140 litre red lidded general waste bin for general rubbish items that can't be recycled or turned into compost, which will be sent to landfill and collected on the alternative fortnight to your yellow lidded recycling bin. If you find your household is struggling with capacity issues after you start using the new bins, contact us to see if a solution can be provided to you.
- You may also be provided with a kitchen caddy when your new bins are dropped off. The caddy will be attached to your lime-green lidded FOGO bin. Inside the kitchen caddy will be information to help you use your new bins.

What goes in what bin?

Lime-green lidded FOGO bin (WEEKLY):

All food organics including raw and cooked meat, bread, dairy, bones, shells and garden organics. The contents of this bin will be composted so it's important to keep plastic and glass out of this bin. All food waste is to go into your FOGO bin either in a compostable liner, wrapped in newspaper or loose in the bin. Please make sure all food packaging is removed and placed in the correct bin, as any plastic/foam packaging will contaminate the compost.

You can also place pet droppings and kitty litter into a compostable liner or straight into the FOGO bin.

Biodegradable or any other plastic bags/liners are not to go into your FOGO bin, **only compostable liners** are to be used, as they will break down naturally in the composting process.

Yellow lidded recycling bin (FORTNIGHTLY):

Recyclable materials including:

- Paper (excluding shredded paper)
- Clean Cardboard (flattened)
- Glass (clean and empty)
- Plastic containers and plastic bottles (clean and empty)
- Aluminium cans (clean and empty)
- Steel cans (clean and empty)

All items should be clean, dry and empty with lids removed and placed in the bin loosely.

The following items **should not** be placed into your yellow-lidded recycling bin:

- Plastic bags and plastic film
- Nappies
- Meat trays and polystyrene
- Clothing and textiles
- Garden and food waste
- Gas bottles and aerosol cans
- Electronic waste and batteries
- Ropes, cables and hose
- Recycling in bags

Red-lidded general waste bin (FORTNIGHTLY):

General rubbish items that cannot be composted or recycled, such as:

- Nappies

- Hygiene items
- Polystyrene
- Plastic bags
- Soft plastics
- Ropes, straps and hoses

The following items **should not** be placed into your red-lidded general waste bin:

- Organic material (food scraps and garden organics)
- Recyclables
- Hazardous items

Refer to the 3-bin guide that will be delivered with your bins, as well as your collection calendar.

For a full A-Z list of what goes in what bin, visit [Waste and Recycling Options A-Z](#) .

I've heard there were changes to recycling recently? What are they and why?

Changes in global markets and tighter restrictions on recyclables now mean that some materials previously accepted have now been excluded to create a standard approach to recycling across WA. This will help everyone better understand what goes in what bin regardless of what area you live in. The aim of these changes is to reduce contamination and create cleaner recyclables for processing.

There are three main changes to what you can now put into your recycling yellow-lidded bin. Aerosols, soft plastics and meat trays are no longer to be placed in the yellow-lidded bin.

- Aerosol cans can be taken to your nearest household hazardous waste drop off location for recycling <https://m.recycleright.wa.gov.au/locator/hhw-disposal.html> or as a last resort place aerosols in your general waste bin
- Meat trays should be placed in your general waste bin due to contamination and the mixed use of materials used to make them
- Soft plastics (scrunchable) can be taken to any RedCycle drop off point to be recycled into new products, check out your nearest centre at redcycle.net.au or placed in your general waste bin

What are soft plastics?

These types of plastics are soft and can easily be scrunched up into a ball. They include items such as:

- Plastic bags

- Lids on microwaveable ready meals (plastic film)
- Sweet/lolly wrappers and chip packets
- Cereal bags

These items can be placed in your red-lidded general waste bin or collected and taken to your [nearest RedCycle drop off centre](#).

Cling film (cling wrap) can be placed in your red-lidded general waste bin and not taken to RedCycle.

If you are unsure about any other items and which bin to put it in check out the [recycle right website](#) (app currently being updated).

But I have my own compost heap/ worm farm/ bury my organic waste/ have chooks...

Thank you! You are doing a great job and we need more people like you! Have you heard about our Earth Carers course? Click [HERE](#) to find out more.

The organics bin can complement your compost heap as it can take the things that your compost heap can't – like weed seeds, excess lawn clippings and leaves, meat, bones and dairy products. Compost heaps need the right blend of 'green' and 'brown' materials so if you've got excess of one type, you can add it to the green bin, knowing that it will still be composted. Branches that are too thick for the compost heap can also be put in the organics bin.

Worms can be fussy eaters and often do not like onions, citrus, eggshells and potato peels. You can put the things they don't like in the organics bin.

Feel free to continue burying your organic waste as it is great for adding nutrients to the soil. If there are some things that you do not bury, they can be put in the organics bin.

Chooks are great at turning organic matter into fertilizer. There are some things that chooks won't eat so they can be put in the Organics bin.

What's in it for me?

Over time you will save money. In future, waste will cost a lot more as taxes on landfill increase so by diverting organic waste from landfill, it won't cost the Town as much, saving you money in the long term.

Will there be changes to collection days?

It is unlikely there will be changes to your current collection day. If there is to be any changes you will be notified in advance.

FOGO will be collected weekly, while rubbish and recycling will be collected fortnightly. This will ensure there are never more than two bins on your verge at the same time. A calendar will be printed so you know when to put each bin out.

Do I have to use compostable bags?

If you do use bags, they **must** be compostable. You don't have to use bags – you can put things straight in the bin or wrap them in newspaper.

It is still to be determined, however households may be supplied with several rolls of compostable bags and a kitchen caddy at the start of the service to help your household use your FOGO bin.

Can I use plastic bags?

No! Please don't use plastic bags as they contaminate the compost. Degradable and biodegradable bags are not suitable for composting either – the bags need to be compostable to break down in the organics facility and not contain the chemicals found in plastic.

What will happen to the waste in the organics bin?

The waste in the organics bin will be taken to a regional composting site at Red Hill Waste Management Facility. This facility is still to be constructed, however it is likely the process will be that the organics will be checked for contamination and then undergo a combination of static and forced air composting processes.

The compost produced from the collection of organics can be sold to farmers and industry, used in parks and gardens or for rehabilitating land. The potential uses for the compost will be determined by contamination levels.

Will my bin smell?

The Organics bin will be collected weekly so shouldn't smell any more than your rubbish bin does now.

Your rubbish bin will be collected fortnightly. Most things that cause smells in the bin can go in the green organics bin, with a couple of exceptions, such as disposable nappies.

Wrapping food scraps in newspaper helps reduce smells or you can use compostable bags. Layering food waste with dry materials, like lawn clippings & paper can help. Freeze particularly odorous food scraps, like seafood, and put them in the organics bin the night before collection.

Nappies should be placed in the general waste rubbish bin. Emptying the poo down the toilet and securing the nappy in a plastic bag will minimise odours. Research has shown that nappies smell progressively worse for four days then do not smell any worse (or better) after that. So, a rubbish bin with nappies in it smells no worse after 14 days than it does after 7 days.

Will there be any changes to my Recycling bin?

No, there will be no changes to recycling.

My recycling bin is always full. What can I do?

If your Recycling bin is full, you can put newspaper, cardboard and paper in the Organics bin.

Ensure you are sorting your waste correctly into each of your bins to maximise available space. Hints for fitting more in your Recycling bin include: crushing boxes and putting them along the inside edge of the bin, removing lids and crushing plastic bottles and cans. Please ensure recyclables are loose in the bin and not in plastic bags. Recyclables tied up in plastic bags are considered as contamination.

Can I opt out of having 3-bins and remain with just the 2-bin system?

No. Once rolled out, the 3-bin FOGO service will become the standard collection service within the metropolitan area and we are encouraging all households to participate to the best of their ability.

Residents are welcome to contact us and discuss any concerns or restrictions that might inhibit you from fully participating in the 3-bin FOGO system.

Why will you be auditing and checking our bins?

We will be performing bin auditing and bin tagging to ensure households are using their bins correctly. To increase recycling and source separation so the right items go in the right bin, reducing contamination and diverting the waste from landfill.

My family has special needs — I can't have my rubbish bin emptied fortnightly

If you have special needs, please contact us so we can assist you.

How do I find out more information?

For further information, please contact the EMRC Waste Education team on (08) 9424 2222 or WasteEducation@emrc.org.au