

### Appendix 3 Contamination of Recycling Policy (Revised November 2018)

<b>Policy Name</b>	Contamination of Recycling Policy
<b>Committee Date/Name</b>	Operational Delivery Committee, 6 November 2018
<b>Review Frequency</b>	2 years
<b>Next Review Due</b>	November 2020
<b>Implementation Date</b>	7 November 2018

#### 1.0 Purpose of Policy

To establish a policy that details how contaminated **mixed recycling and food/garden waste** bins will be dealt with and to define what contamination is.

#### 2.0 Acceptable Materials

**2.1** The 240 litre **mixed recycling bin** is only for the items that can be recycled as listed below:

- Steel and aluminium cans, tins and foil
- Glass bottles and jars
- Paper and cardboard
- Plastic bottles, trays, tubs and yoghurt pots (all colours)
- Food and drink cartons (e.g. Tetrapak)

Items should be predominantly clean and free of food waste and plastic bags/film in particular.

**2.2** The 240 litre **food/garden waste bin** is for the following materials:

- **Garden waste including:**
  - Small branches, bark and twigs that readily fit into the bin with the lid closed
  - Grass cuttings
- **All cooked and uncooked food waste including:**
  - Tea bags and coffee grounds
  - Egg shells and bones

#### 3.0 Defining Contamination

**3.1** Collection crews will check bins as they are emptying them for evidence of contaminants.

**This will be a visual inspection when they open the lid of the bin. Crews are not expected to wade through the materials.**

**3.2** Items that cannot be put in the **mixed recycling bin** include:

- food waste
- plastic bags or film
- garden waste
- nappies
- clothing
- other general waste materials that cannot be recycled.

**3.4** The following is a guide to help determine whether a **mixed recycling** bin is deemed to be contaminated or not and the action to be take:

<u>Contamination level / Reason</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Action</u>
Severe contamination; or repeat offender of medium contamination	Filled black bags, food waste, nappies, more non-recycling than recycling. Or repeat offender of medium contamination.	1) Do not empty bin 2) Attach Bin Hanger/Sticker 3) Record on Collective 4) Letter sent to householder
Moderate contamination	Obvious misunderstanding of materials accepted – more than two but less than ten wrong items visible when bin lid is opened (there needs to be more recycling than non-recycling)	1) Empty bin 2) Bin Hanger/Sticker 3) Leave wrong items in a bag tied to the bin or remove if possible 4) Record on Collective
Low contamination	Two or less visible wrong items when the bin lid is opened.	1) Empty bin – likely that it is accidental. 2) No requirement to record

**3.5** Severely contaminated **mixed recycling** bins will not be emptied and it is the responsibility of the householder to remove any contamination from the recycling bin before it **will** be emptied **on the next scheduled collection day**.

**3.6** Items that cannot be put in the **food/garden bin** include:

- Household waste or mixed recyclables
- Nappies
- Dog waste, cat litter or other animal waste
- Stones, slabs, rubble or rubber
- Plastic bags
- Plastic flower pots, seed trays or plant labels
- Soil or turf

**3.7 Food/garden waste bins** containing any of the items listed in paragraph 3.6 may not be emptied. It is the householder's responsibility to remove any contamination from the **food/garden waste bin** before it will be emptied on the next scheduled collection day

#### **4 Contaminated mixed recycling bins - procedure**

4.1 Bin identified as low contamination

- a. Where a household **mixed recycling bin** has been identified as having low contamination by the collection crew, the crew will empty the bin. No further action is required.

4.2 Bin identified as moderate contamination

- a. Where a household **mixed recycling bin** has been identified as having moderate contamination by the collection crew, the crew will log this using their in-cab electronic system. This information is available to the Contact Centre and Waste Team staff in real time.
- b. Crew will notify the householder of the issue by placing the appropriate hanger/sticker on the bin.
- c. If the same household has moderate contamination on a repeated basis (more than twice), this will be deemed as **severely contaminated** and the process followed under 4.3 (bin not emptied, etc).

#### 4.3 Bin identified as severely contaminated

- a. Where a household **mixed recycling bin** has been identified as having severe contamination by the collection crew, the crew will log this using their in-cab electronic system. This information is available to the Contact Centre and Waste Team staff in real time.
- b. Crew will notify the householder (bin hanger/sticker, etc) of the issue - why the bin has not been emptied and that they must remove the offending items prior to the next scheduled collection
- c. A letter will be sent to the householder (standard letter):
  - reminding the householder of the correct items for **the bin**
  - that they must remove the offending items prior to the next collection
  - to take any excess materials to a Recycling Centre or Point
  - to contact the Waste & Recycling Team for advice if they are having difficulty
  - **reminding the householder that their bin should be removed from the kerbside following collection to help prevent contamination by others**
- d. If the same household has repeated severe contamination an Officer will visit the householder to discuss and give advice.

4.4 The Council may remove a **mixed recycling bin** where it is demonstrated that the resident persistently presents a contaminated container. This is a last resort and would only happen after all reasonable steps have been taken to provide advice and assistance.

4.5 Where a mixed recycling bin has been removed due to repeated contamination, no additional capacity will be provided for general waste.

#### **5.0 Contaminated food/garden waste bins - procedure**

**5.1** Where a **Food/garden waste bin** is not emptied because it contains items listed in paragraph 3.6:

- a. The collection crew will log this using their in-cab electronic system. This information is available to the Contact Centre and Waste Team staff in real time.

- b. Crew will notify the householder (bin hanger/sticker, etc) of the issue - why the bin has not been emptied and that they must remove the offending items prior to the next scheduled collection
- c. If the same household has repeated contamination, a letter will be sent to the householder and may be followed up by a visit to provide further assistance
  - reminding the householder of the correct items for the bin
  - that they must remove the offending items prior to the next collection
  - to take any excess materials to a Recycling Centre or Point
  - to contact the Waste & Recycling Team for advice if they are having difficulty
  - reminding the householder that their bin should be removed from the kerbside following collection to help prevent contamination by others
- d. The letter may be followed up by a visit from an Officer to provide further assistance, if necessary.

5.2 The Council may remove a **food/garden waste bin** where it is demonstrated that the resident persistently presents a contaminated container. This is a last resort and would only happen after all reasonable steps have been taken to provide advice and assistance.

5.3 Where a **food/garden waste bin** has been removed due to repeated contamination, no additional capacity will be provided for general waste.

## References