

# sorting it out

**for landlords:**  
a guide for multi-unit  
residential buildings



# CONTENTS

<b>IMPORTANCE OF SORTING</b> .....	1
Benefits for your community .....	1
The impact of not sorting .....	1
Financial benefit .....	1
<b>LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	2
Obligation to sort .....	2
What you need to provide your tenants .....	2
Ensuring your facilities are in good condition .....	2
<b>5 STEPS TO SORTING SUCCESS</b> .....	3
1. Engaging your tenants .....	3
2. Monitoring .....	3
3. Policy and compliance development .....	3
4. Enforcement .....	4
5. Lease agreements .....	4
Entering into a new lease agreement .....	4
Amending an existing lease agreement .....	4
<b>RESOURCES</b> .....	5
Important contact information .....	5
Helpful links .....	5
<b>BANNED MATERIAL</b> .....	6



Look around. The leading and most progressive landlords are demonstrating environmental responsibility by ensuring their properties have waste reduction facilities and that their tenants use them. Good waste management reflects on you and how your property is perceived in your community. Be a leader and ensure your waste management practices are up to standard. It may be the law, but it's also the right thing to do for the environment, for our province, for your property and for your tenants.

VISIT US AT  
[reduceyourwaste.ca](http://reduceyourwaste.ca)  
FOR MORE  
INFORMATION!

# INTRODUCTION

## IMPORTANCE OF SORTING

### **BENEFITS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY**

In the past 10 years, we have seen a giant leap in the awareness and efforts placed on protecting the environment and becoming environmentally conscious. Sorting waste in your daily life is part of this cultural environmental change, and you can help contribute to this change starting today.

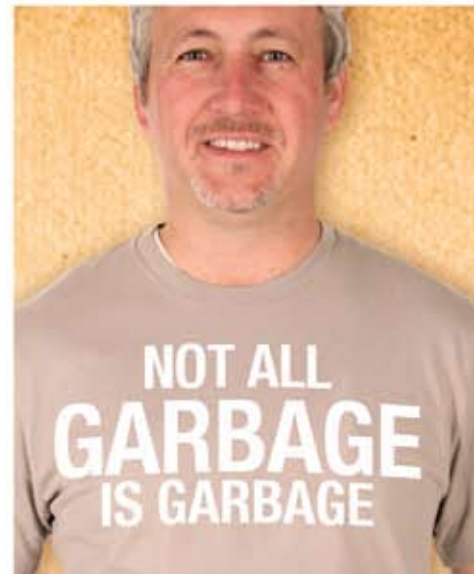
### **THE IMPACT OF NOT SORTING**

Many people believe that their individual actions have little to no impact on the environment, but that is not true. Even the smallest changes can produce enormous benefits. Each person must commit to helping divert material from our landfills by sorting waste daily. Each year Nova Scotians throw away approximately 417kg of waste per year. That's nearly 1000lbs EACH! As a whole, Canadians generate approximately 31 million tonnes of garbage a year and only recycle about 30 percent of that material. There is only one solution to this problem: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Compost! And it starts with YOU.

### **FINANCIAL BENEFIT**

Even if you live in an apartment, the benefits of composting, reducing waste and recycling really add up! A landfill can cost more than \$15 million to create. Space taken up by recyclable and compostable material is not only a waste of taxpayer dollars, but it also negatively affects the environment we live in. Most Nova Scotia municipalities charge additional fees for unsorted waste or will not accept the load. So when landlords and tenants work together, it's better for everyone.

**The province of Nova Scotia has set a goal of reaching a solid waste disposal rate of 300kg/person/year by 2015. Let's cut waste by 1/4 and get to 300kg!**





# LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES - LEAD BY EXAMPLE

This information should be confirmed with your local municipality.

## OBLIGATION TO SORT

As a landlord, you must comply with all municipal bylaws and provincial legislation.

As a landlord you are responsible for:

- Providing storage for all streams of waste - organics, recyclables, paper, cardboard and garbage
- Providing collection of properly sorted material
- Providing information for where to store material, where to dispose of material that is not collectible (sharps, electronics, etc.) and on local collection processes
- Monitoring waste storage facilities
- Ensuring that storage facilities are free of health and safety hazards
- Developing solid waste management rules for the building
- Incorporating solid waste management rules into your lease agreement
- Clarifying the consequences of breaking the rules

## WHAT YOU NEED TO PROVIDE YOUR TENANTS

As a landlord, it is your responsibility to provide the necessary facilities, bins, storage, and information to your tenants. All apartment buildings in Nova Scotia are required to provide bins for organics, paper and recyclables, cardboard, as well as proper storage facilities for tenants to dispose of waste.

## ENSURING YOUR FACILITIES ARE IN GOOD CONDITION

Once you have taken the correct steps to ensure your building is set up for proper waste reduction and sorting, it is also your responsibility as a landlord to ensure that these facilities are kept in good condition. This includes:

- **Cleanliness** – Keeping the bins and the areas surrounding them clean and free of odors is not only important for sanitary reasons, but also to encourage usage. No tenant will want to go anywhere near the sorting facilities if they are unsightly.
- **Timely pick-up** – You can ensure cleanliness by having regularly scheduled pick ups for your building. This will keep waste and materials from piling up and reduce the amount stored in your building.
- **Easy access** – Each facility needs to be easily accessible to all tenants at anytime. If a key is required, it is important to ensure all tenants are provided with one.
- **Safety** – All of the waste facilities in your building should be checked and maintained regularly to ensure they are safe and free of any hazards.

These tips will help ensure your waste facilities are clean and provide your tenants with sorting options they are happy to use. The cleaner your facilities, the less attractive the area is to unwanted rodents or pests.

# 5 STEPS TO SORTING SUCCESS

## 1. ENGAGING YOUR TENANTS

It may seem challenging at first to engage your tenants in waste diversion but there are many ways to effectively get the message across and provide positive reinforcement:

- Put up signage everywhere and anywhere! You can place signs in the lobby, elevator or laundry room to remind tenants how and where to sort, as a friendly reminder to sort in their apartment, or even to provide helpful tips and facts.
- Clearly mark all recycling, organics and waste drop off areas.
- Holding tenant meetings in a common area is a good way to provide new updates, rules, or hold a question and answer session. Make it a social event – it's great for tenant relations and if it's fun, more tenants will show up!
- Newsletters are an easy way to promote waste reduction, by providing tips, updates and information. To be environmentally friendly, send out an e-newsletter to your tenants!
- If your building has committees, suggest a "green committee" that helps motivate change in the building.
- Close off garbage chutes to avoid the "anonymous unsorted bag drop".

## 2. MONITORING

An important step in ensuring your waste facilities are being used properly is to monitor them. You don't need to go sorting through the garbage, but by checking the bins every now and then, as well as doing occasional waste audits, you should be able to determine whether materials are being sorted properly.

## 3. POLICY AND COMPLIANCE DEVELOPMENT

If you find that your tenants are not using the facilities properly, or not using them at all, it is important that you implement rules and procedures to ensure compliance. Sorting waste is the law. If your building waste is unsorted, the property owner may be accountable for any fines incurred.

All tenants should be aware of the facilities and proper signage should be placed in all common areas and around the facilities. All tenants should also realize that they are responsible for sorting waste, as outlined in their lease (see page 4). By reminding and encouraging your tenants through signage, newsletters and verbal discussions, compliance should improve over time.





## 4. ENFORCEMENT

Waste from your building may be audited or checked by municipal staff or the waste hauler. If a tenant refuses to sort waste, or if waste is found to be unsorted, there are steps that you can take with your tenants including:

- Give a verbal or written reminder
- Ask your Waste Reduction Educator for their help. Working together you may be able to solve the problem
- Require the tenant to store all waste in their dwelling unit until specific times when the waste storage facility will be unlocked or until collection day
- Require the tenant to tag their bags of waste so when audited, it can easily be determined from which unit the bags originated

If the waste hauler continues to find unsorted waste, the property owner may receive a fine from the local municipality or solid waste authority. If it is found that the unsorted waste comes from a specific tenant:

- You may ask the tenant to re-sort the waste properly
- You may file an “Application to Director”\* which could result in
  - the recoup of any fine that has been paid as a result of unsorted waste
  - retaining a portion of the security deposit to cover the fine
  - applying for termination of tenancy

\* Residential Tenancies Act, R.S., c. 401, Section 13”

## 5. LEASE AGREEMENTS

One of the most important ways to ensure your tenants participate in your building’s composting and recycling programs is to clearly demonstrate their responsibilities in their lease. Standard Form of Lease is available for \$1.00 at Access Nova Scotia or at [gov.ns.ca/snsmr/access/permits/forms/renting-residential-property.asp](http://gov.ns.ca/snsmr/access/permits/forms/renting-residential-property.asp).

### WHEN ENTERING INTO A NEW LEASE AGREEMENT

1. Review the booklet “Sorting it out for Tenants” with your new tenant, completing required information on page 3.
2. When executing the lease, be sure to check the “Separation of recyclables, organics and refuse” and “facilities to separate recyclables, organics and refuse” boxes in Section 9 – *Rent Includes*.

### WHEN AMENDING AN EXISTING LEASE

1. Four months prior to the anniversary date of the lease signing, notify the tenant in writing that there will be a change in building rules and explain, in particular, the new requirements of the tenant and the landlord.
2. On the anniversary date of the lease signing, the written notice becomes part of the lease, so attach a copy.
3. Review the booklet “Sorting it out for Tenants” with your new tenant, completing required information on page 3.

# RESOURCES

For tips on how to sort correctly and how to make sorting a routine part of your day, please see the Tenant Guide or visit [reduceyourwaste.ca](http://reduceyourwaste.ca).

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

All municipalities in Nova Scotia have waste reduction educators. These knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff have a wealth of information on the 3R's and composting and are happy to share it. They can also provide free education sessions. Call your waste reduction educator today and discuss how they can help you! To find an educator in your area, visit [rff.com](http://rff.com) or call 1-877-313-7732.

## HELPFUL LINKS

For quick and easy access to sorting guides, tools and resources on sorting waste in your region visit [reduceyourwaste.ca](http://reduceyourwaste.ca).

- The Residential Tenancies Act can be seen at [gov.ns.ca/snsmr/pdf/ans-residential-tenancies-standard-form-lease.pdf](http://gov.ns.ca/snsmr/pdf/ans-residential-tenancies-standard-form-lease.pdf)
- To reach RRFB Nova Scotia, please contact 1-877-313-7732 or visit [rff.com](http://rff.com)
- To review the Solid Waste Resource Management Regulations, please see [gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/REGS/envsolid.htm](http://gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/REGS/envsolid.htm)
- To recycle unwanted electronics, please contact Atlantic Canada Electronics Stewardship (ACES) at [ACESewardship.ca](http://ACESewardship.ca) or 1-877-774-3260
- To return beverage containers for a refund, please contact RRFB Nova Scotia at 1-877-313-7732 or visit [reduceyourwaste.ca](http://reduceyourwaste.ca) to find an ENVIRO-DEPOT™ near you
- To recycle unwanted cell phones, please contact the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association at 1-888-797-1740 or [recyclemycell.ca](http://recyclemycell.ca)



# BANNED MATERIAL

This is a list of materials banned from disposal in landfills in Nova Scotia. Additional materials may be banned by your municipality.

BANNED MATERIAL	WHERE SHOULD IT GO
Refundable beverage containers* (excluding milk product containers)	ENVIRO-DEPOT™ for a refund or a Recycling bag
Corrugated cardboard	Flattened and bundled
Newsprint	Recycling bag (or in grocery bag; check your Municipal sorting guide for details)
Metal food containers	Recycling bag**
Glass food containers	Recycling bag**
Low and high density polyethylene plastics 	Recycling bag**
Food waste and other organics	Green cart or backyard composter
Electronics	ACES Drop-off Centres***
Used tires (rims removed)	Take back to a tire retailer (up to 4 at a time)
Leaf and yard waste	Green cart or backyard composter
Household paint	ENVIRO-DEPOT™*

**STARVE A LANDFILL**



PAPER CONTAINERS ORGANICS

- \* To locate an ENVIRO-DEPOT™ in your area please call 1-877-313-7732
- \*\* See [reduceyourwaste.ca](http://reduceyourwaste.ca) for sorting guides
- \*\*\* To locate an ACES Drop Off Centre in your area please call 1-877-774-3260 or visit [ACESewardship.ca](http://ACESewardship.ca). To recycle your cell phone contact [www.recyclenycell.ca](http://www.recyclenycell.ca) or 1-888-797-1740