



Hamilton












## Minimizing Single-Use and Takeaway Items in Hamilton

Single-use plastics and takeaway items harm the environment by creating excessive waste and depleting valuable resources. Unfortunately, many single-use items cannot be recycled or composted in Hamilton and end up in the landfill. The City of Hamilton is committed to reducing the amount of single-use and takeaway item waste generated by food service establishments.

**You can help keep food-related single-use plastics and takeaway items out of the landfill by having your business switch to products that are reusable or recoverable.**

Beginning January 1, 2026, there will be changes to the items collected in your blue box as part the Provincial Blue Box program. Check with your service provider for an up-to-date acceptable items list.

	<b>REUSABLE OPTIONS</b> (best practices)	<b>RECOVERABLE OPTIONS</b> (recycled or composted)	<b>PROBLEMATIC ITEMS</b> (garbage)
<b>BEVERAGE CUPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accept reusable cups from customers</li> <li>Offer a discount or other incentive to customers that provide their own reusable cup</li> <li>For dine-in service, only provide reusable cups</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose cups such as those made with a single plastic or paper fibre material</li> <li>Choose recyclable plastic lids</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid black and dark plastic cups and lids</li> <li>Avoid Styrofoam cups and lids</li> </ul> 
<b>TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS AND SERVICWARE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accept reusable take-out containers from customers</li> <li>Offer a discount or other incentive to customers that provide their own containers for take-home food</li> <li>For dine-in service, only provide reusable serviceware</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose recyclable containers and lids made from aluminum or a single plastic</li> <li>Choose compostable containers made with 100% paper fibre</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid containers labelled as biodegradable</li> <li>Avoid compostable containers with a plastic (shiny) coating</li> <li>Avoid Styrofoam containers</li> </ul> 
<b>CUTLERY, STRAWS AND CONDIMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For dine-in service, only provide reusable cutlery</li> <li>For dine-in service, only provide reusable straws</li> <li>For dine-in service, serve condiments in reusable cups or dispensers</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only provide takeout cutlery, napkins, straws, and condiments on request</li> <li>Choose straws that are paper or bamboo and are not lined with other materials</li> <li>Choose cutlery and chopsticks that are bamboo or wood</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid single-use plastic cutlery</li> <li>Avoid cutlery labelled as biodegradable</li> <li>Avoid compostable plastic cutlery</li> <li>Avoid pre-packaged single-use cutlery bundled with other items such as napkins</li> </ul> 

## Compostable vs. Non-compostable

### But it says it's compostable

Not all products labeled as compostable or biodegradable, like cutlery, take-out packaging and coffee pods, are accepted in municipal green bin programs. If you do not have City of Hamilton green bin collection, please confirm with your service-provider if the material is accepted in their green bin program.

### Why are they not accepted in Hamilton's green bin program?

Hamilton's composting facility is designed to process food waste into compost and certain types of compostable labelled products do not break down fully and end up going to landfill. These include items containing Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances (PFAS), which is a coating used on compostable labelled products to resist heat, oil, stains, grease, and water.

For a list of acceptable compostable products, visit [hamilton.ca/greenbin](https://hamilton.ca/greenbin) or use the  item search tool to determine if it's acceptable in Hamilton.




If you haven't already, download Hamilton's Waste App to help with proper sorting.





The City of Hamilton regularly tests products at the composting facility to determine if they can be accepted in the green bin program. If you have an item you would like tested, please contact [wasteeducation@hamilton.ca](mailto:wasteeducation@hamilton.ca).

Visit [hamilton.ca/businesswaste](https://hamilton.ca/businesswaste) for more information on waste collection and proper sorting.

 [hamilton.ca/waste](https://hamilton.ca/waste)

 [wasteeducation@hamilton.ca](mailto:wasteeducation@hamilton.ca)

 905-546-CITY (2489)

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