

Waste guide for apartment buildings





City of Sydney residents generate around 70,000 tonnes of waste every year.

That's equivalent to around 13,685 city buses full of waste lined up end-to-end from Sydney to Newcastle.

Three quarters of the City of Sydney's residents live in apartment buildings, so how your strata community looks after waste and recycling can make a real difference.

Would you like less mess, less hassle, and a greener, more liveable city?

Read on to learn how we can help you and your residents reduce, reuse and recycle resources.

Become waste wise

This guide covers:



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Help your building avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle.

How to set your building up for success

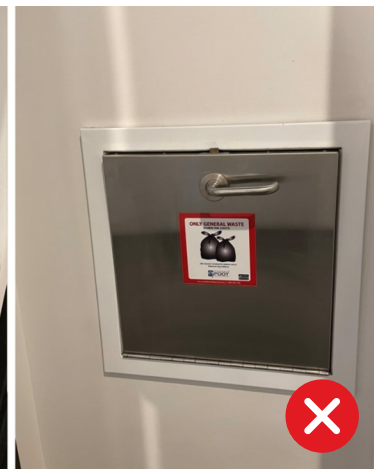
Residents are more likely to recycle in clean, well-organised bin and chute rooms.

This can also reduce cleaning and maintenance costs.

Residents use waste infrastructure better when:

- the space is well-lit, tidy and cleaned frequently to reduce odour and pests.
- bins are in good condition. Order bin repairs through our website: [cityofsydney/binrepair](https://cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/binrepair)
- bin lid colours are correct and bins are grouped with others of the same colour.
- red lid bins appear first on entry to bin rooms.

If you'd like to optimise your building's bin set-up, get in touch with our service experts: binoptimisation@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au



How to set your building up for success

Did you know effective bin signs in apartment buildings can increase recycling by 14%
That's truck loads.

Keep signs clear and consistent for residents. Only use the most recent City of Sydney signs to ensure the information is correct.

Order free stickers and signage from our website:
cityofsydney/binposters

We deliver and install signage and stickers **free of charge.**



Services you can access

What goes in which bin

Yellow lid bins – Recycling

Recycle plastic bottles and containers, glass and aluminium containers, paper and cardboard in City of Sydney provided recycling bins. Make sure all packaging is empty and dry.

Please avoid plastic bags going into yellow lid bins

They cause major problems and ruin everyone's good work.



Green lid bins – Garden organics

Grass clippings, prunings and leaves will be made into compost and mulch.



What goes in which bin

Maroon lid bins

– Food scraps

Participating apartment buildings can recycle food scraps. Find more information on the next page.



Red lid bins

– Rubbish

These should be used as a last resort for items that cannot be reused, recycled, or composted.



Food scraps recycling

We offer a food scraps recycling service to residential apartment buildings.

We provide participants with everything they need to recycle food scraps, including food scrap bins, small kitchen caddies, and an initial supply of compostable caddy liner bags.

Food waste typically makes up one third of our residents' red lid rubbish bins.

By collecting and recycling food scraps, we can reduce landfill waste and create beneficial products like fertiliser and compost.

By using our food scraps recycling service, you could potentially reduce the number of red lid bins in your building and save money on your rates.

For more information or to register your interest, visit city.sydney/food-scrap-collection



"The more neighbours get involved and the more ownership they take... the more everyone feels at home."

Maggie - Food scraps champion

"I've also been using it for my coffee grounds. I'm really happy about that because they were going in the bin or down the drain".

Fiona - Food scraps champion



Images: Food scraps program participants, Potts Point. Photography by Katherine Griffiths

Bulky goods

We collect old furniture, mattresses, whitegoods, electronics and other big household items.

We'd like your help to manage bookings and inform residents about this free weekly pick-up service.

- One booking for each item group per week is available. If your building has lots of bulky items, book regular collections to ensure each pick-up is under our 4m3 limit.
- Assign a building manager, cleaner or resident representative to make bookings for your building online: **city.sydney/bulkygoods**
- Ask residents to contact this person when they have unwanted household items for collection. You could put up a notice with all the details in the common areas.
- Make sure items are separated into 3 groups: 1) mattresses, 2) furniture and bulky items, 3) metals, whitegoods and electronics.
- If space is available, set up a collection point inside the building to store items in between collections.
- Use any other communication channels you have, such as Facebook, email or digital signs, to regularly remind residents about the pick-up service.



Images: Erko apartment building in Erskineville.
Photography by Jes Lindsay

Tricky waste collection



Doorstep recycling

A free and easy way for residents to recycle tricky items that don't belong in the bin.

Make it easier for residents to participate by creating a designated drop-off area in your lobby and provide access to the driver to collect the bags.

We collect:

- clothes in any condition
- small electronics and batteries
- light bulbs
- empty vapes
- polystyrene
- x-ray scans
- aluminium coffee pods
- printer cartridges
- paint
- tablet blister packs

Residents can book a collection by visiting [city.sydney/doorstep-recycling](https://city.sydney.gov.au/doorstep-recycling)

Drop-off places



Recycling stations

Drop off the following items at our stations located in City of Sydney customer service centres, libraries and community and recreation centres:

- household batteries
- mobile phones
- small light bulbs
- small electronics (less than 11cm wide)

city.sydney/recycling-stations



Bottom Image: Ultimo recycling pop-up event

Ultimo recycling pop-up

Residents can drop off tricky items for recycling at 83 Bay St, Ultimo including:

- clothes and toys in great condition
- small electronics and batteries
- light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- empty vapes
- polystyrene
- aluminium coffee pods
- printer cartridges
- x-ray scans
- paint
- household gas cylinders
- tablet blister packs

city.sydney/recycling-pop-up

Drop-off places



Household Chemical CleanOuts

We host free Household Chemical CleanOut events from time to time.

city.sydney/chemical-cleanout

Find other drop-off locations and dates by calling the NSW environment line on 131 555 or visit the **Household Chemical CleanOut website**

Recycle It Saturday

Drop off tricky household items at our free quarterly Recycle It Saturday events at Alexandra Canal Depot including:

- old electronics and household appliances
- mobile phones, headphones and chargers
- batteries (including car batteries)
- polystyrene
- empty vapes
- clothes and toys in great condition
- x-ray scans
- household gas cylinders
- large cardboard
- tablet blister packs

Find more information at city.sydney/recycle-it-saturday

Main Image: Chemical CleanOut event at Alexandra Canal Depot.
Photography by Cassandra Hannagan

Go the extra mile

Go above and beyond with these great initiatives



Textile recycling

In NSW alone about 305,000 tonnes of clothing is discarded every year.

Does your building have room for a charity bin? Many charities collect unwanted clothing and other textiles free of charge. They are sold to raise funds. Visit recyclingnearyou.com.au/clothing

Image: Altair apartment building.
Photography by Jes Lindsay

Coffee pods

Coffee pods cannot be recycled in City of Sydney yellow lid bins.

Many apartment buildings have set up their own coffee pod recycling as it doesn't require much space.

Recycling pods can turn coffee grounds into compost, and the aluminium can be infinitely recycled into new products.

Nespresso offers free collections, we also offer a free collection through our doorstep recycling service, or visit TerraCycle for more information on other programs.

nespresso.com/au/en/nespresso-bulk-recycling-box-kit
terracycle.com

city.sydney.gov.au/doorstep-recycling

TerraCycle

TerraCycle has many options for recycling items such as toothpaste tubes, haircare and makeup containers, children's toys and dish and hair care packaging. It's free to set up and ship to TerraCycle, so you can choose a collection that's best suited to your building.

terracycle.com

[Recyclingnearyou.com.au](https://recyclingnearyou.com.au) has other useful options for increasing recycling in your building.

Go the extra mile

Go above and beyond with these great initiatives



Image: Glo apartments foyer

Book exchange

If you have space, setting up a book exchange on common property is an easy way to recycle unwanted books and bring residents together with minimal upkeep.

Many apartment buildings run successful book exchanges, including Glo in Erskineville, pictured.

Usable furniture

Remind your residents of local services that re-home furniture and other household items.

- The Bower offers a collection service, drop off centre and workshops to restore furniture items.

bower.org.au

- Pyrmont Cares collects usable furniture and whitegoods and distributes them to those most in need in inner Sydney.

pyrmontcares.org.au

If furniture is no longer usable, remember to book a City of Sydney bulky waste collection.

Be inspired

Erko Apartments

From garbage holding room to **unlimited magical recycling possibilities**

Wendy is Erko's waste and recycling champion.

She reimagined and transformed this space in Erskineville into a recycling hub.



Image: Wendy in Erko's reuse room.
Photography by Jes Lindsay

Be inspired



How it works

Residents can take what they need and leave what they can in the dedicated re-use room - everything from DVDs and toys to stationery and crockery.

- A new packaging station makes shipping and moving easier with access to boxes and bubble wrap.
- Residents can also recycle tricky items like coffee capsules, light bulbs and textiles.

Community buy-in was key to the room's success. Wendy fostered support by creating:

- bespoke multilingual signage in the waste room, lifts, and foyers
- regular social events and charity collections
- an active Facebook group to promote social connection.

Residents appreciate the convenience of the recycling facilities - there's no need to conform to set drop-off times or travel to set locations across the city.



Lessons

- Start small and build momentum.
- Get all the help you can: cleaners, building managers, volunteers and subscription services.
- Enjoy the wins and focus on the positives.

Images: Erko's reuse room.
Photography by Jes Lindsay

Be inspired

Altair:
the apartment
building going
the extra mile
with recycling



Image: Mario with coffee pod recycling at Altair apartment building.
Photography by Jes Lindsay

Be inspired



A key to Altair's success is their long-standing building manager, Mario. The ardent recycler is held in high regard among the residents of Altair.

In addition to the City of Sydney's recycling services, residents can recycle:

- coffee pods - this collection is a hit with residents
- secure paper shredding
- needles and syringes
- textiles - the building set up a clothing donation bin

How it works

- Mario installed changeable lift notice boards with easy-to-understand information so residents receive regular issue updates and reminders about recycling opportunities.
- Regular owners' newsletters provide background information on significant initiatives that do not require voting.
- Statement of purpose explicitly includes a sustainability benchmark.

Lessons

- Make sustainability a core value and consider it in all aspects of decision-making.
- Waste education takes time and perseverance.
- Communication messages should be simple, signs clear, and recycling receptacles kept in the one area to avoid confusion.



Image: Mario with the secure paper disposal at Altair apartment building.
Photography by Jes Lindsay

How to encourage your residents

Try these tips to help you educate and empower your residents.



Provide new residents with recycling information in a welcome pack including:

- where to find waste and recycling bins and other onsite or local recycling facilities such as charity clothing bins.
- information about what goes in what bin.
- how to use the chute system correctly.
- how to book a household bulky pick-up and where to leave these items.
- a link to the City of Sydney waste and recycling webpage [cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/waste-recycling-services](https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/waste-recycling-services)

We also offer recycling guides in Simplified Chinese, Indonesian, Thai and Russian.

Take new residents on a tour of the building's waste and recycling facilities.

- Communicate with your residents about recycling through social media, posters or your building's newsletter. Consider translating your communications into other languages, if needed.
- Sign up to our **Sustainable Apartments monthly newsletter**. [cityofsydney/apartments-newsletter](https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/apartments-newsletter)
- Join our closed Facebook group, **Sustainable Apartments**, to connect with other buildings across the City of Sydney's area: [facebook.com/groups/sustainableapartments](https://www.facebook.com/groups/sustainableapartments)

Get extra help from us

- If you have a question about recycling or reducing your waste, get in contact with our waste avoidance experts.

city.sydney/waste-expert

- Sign up for the Recycle Helper Service. A waste education officer will be in touch within one week to arrange an inspection of your building's bin and chute rooms and provide recommendations to improve recycling and reduce waste.

city.sydney/recycle-helper