



July 20, 2009

Recycling can help add green to your wallet

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Amendments to the city's Pay-as-You-Throw Ordinance will cause trash bills to look different beginning Sept. 1.

The change is intended to clarify the unit rate a hauler charges for garbage. The new format is designed to make it clear that the less you throw away, the less you pay.

Choose the trash subscription size needed and recycle as much as you can to keep costs down. The goal of the city's changes is to encourage more recycling and reduce our community's carbon footprint.

Keep in mind that, with our open competitive market for trash collection, the city of Fort Collins does not determine trash rates; they are set by the hauler. If your trash bill is higher, now might be the time to look at the size of service subscription.

Some people find they rarely fill up their trash container and can get by with a smaller size. This is especially true now that the single-stream recycling collected by haulers includes cardboard, paperboard (such as cereal boxes) and plastics marked with the recycling symbols Nos. 1-7.

If you're like my family, our recycling container is overflowing every week. We've downsized our trash container once and might even get down to the 32-gallon container, or one bag per week. The less we throw away, the less we pay. Recycling continues to be provided free of charge.

Changing your trash can size can be done any time; smaller carts or cans are available from haulers on an ongoing basis and typically are delivered within a short turnaround time.

To help us all in recycling more, we have the opportunity to get a new, larger recycling container, available upon request from trash haulers. Just let your hauler know you're ready to upgrade to a large recycling container (64-gallon, or even 96-gallon) to replace the smaller open-topped recycling tubs. Fort Collins trash haulers will have the new carts available no later than Jan. 1, 2010, to customers who request them.

Also beginning Jan. 1, 2010, haulers will change to an every-other-week pick-up service for recyclables. This schedule will reduce costs and reduce road and noise impacts of recycling trucks in neighborhoods.

Read more about Pay-as-You-Throw, what to recycle and the Rivendell Recycling Drop-off center at fcgov.com/recycling.
