

ZERO WASTE

Theme: Recycling – The Last “R”



ZERO WASTE BACKGROUND

The City of Dorval is pleased to continue the city-wide Zero Waste challenge! Since the start of the pandemic, many people have shifted their focus inward to their homes and immediate communities. That makes this the perfect time to examine our own habits and lifestyles, and reset our intentions.

To be clear, the term “zero waste” is only a shorthand term for a global waste reduction strategy. It is not expected that the City and its citizens will actually be able to reduce waste generation down to zero. We can, however, rethink what items we bring into our homes.

To help citizens reflect on what actions they can take, every few months, the City will be offering different activities and events under various environmental themes, as well as different levels of actions we can take individually. You are invited to participate in these themed challenges and activities, so that we can reduce our waste production as a community and achieve our Zero Waste targets!



WHAT THIS THEME IS ABOUT

Some of us may remember learning about the 3 R's: reduce, reuse, and recycle. More recently, a better understanding of waste management has introduced additional "R" choices to bring us to 5 or even 7 R's, including refuse (to minimize unnecessary materials or packaging), rot (to choose compostable options when possible), repurpose/repair (to increase the duration of items, even for other purposes), and rethink (about general consumption and waste disposal habits).

Regardless of what system you follow, one thing is clear: recycling is the least-effective "R" of the group and should be resorted to as a final option when none of these other choices are possible, ultimately making it "the last R".

For this final theme and the conclusion to our 2021 year of Zero Waste themes and challenges, we will look at what can be recycled, how it is recycled, and some tips to follow to make it more likely that what goes in the recycling bin actually gets recycled.

The emphasis will be on what we can actually recycle in our own green bins at home. Many other materials, including electronics, batteries, hygiene packaging, and more can be disposed of in environmentally responsible ways through the City's different programs. Consult our **April 2021 Zero Waste** information (Spring Cleaning) to see the correct way to dispose of different waste materials.

The materials we can recycle through our residential recycling program fall into four categories: paper, glass, metal, and plastic. We will review each of these four, as each has its own particular considerations.

PAPER RECYCLING

Paper and paper products, like cardboard, can be recycled if they are clean. Fortunately, any paper or cardboard items soiled with organic waste, including greasy pizza boxes, dirty napkins or tissues, and even soiled paper towels can be disposed of in the organic waste bin instead.



Despite the fact that paper products can be recycled in a relatively efficient way, this process still involves large amounts of water and energy, which has its own environmental footprint. This is why we should prioritize reducing our paper consumption, so that we resort to recycling paper only when necessary.

Reducing the amount of documents we print off a computer is an easy way to reduce our paper consumption, and using recycled paper when printing is necessary is a more eco-friendly choice. Sharing printed resources, like books and magazines, is also a way to reduce our consumption of paper products. Additionally, both flyers dropped off in mailboxes and at home through the weekly Publisac delivery can be cancelled with a few simple steps. Both of these types of advertising produce a huge amount of paper waste that, even if recycled, has an environmental cost.

To opt-out of receiving unsolicited items in your mailbox (i.e. junkmail), you can obtain a sticker from City Hall or the Sarto-Desnoyers Community Centre and stick it inside your community mailbox. Canada Post workers will know you have chosen not to receive unsolicited mail, but you will still receive important newsletters and notices from the municipal, provincial, and federal governments.

Publisacs are another source of paper waste that can be easily “refused”. Weekly flyers are largely available online, so if you wish to stop receiving a Publisac, you should request a “pictogram” to display in your window, by phoning **1 888 999-2272** or completing the online form at <https://www.publisac.ca/en/i-want-a-pictogram>. Publisac should then send you a sticker to put up in a visible location in front of your home.

METAL RECYCLING

Compared to the recycling of other materials, metal is recycled at quite a high rate and can be reused and reprocessed many times without losing quality or strength. Nearly 5 million tons of steel are recycled each year in Canada¹, and for every ton of steel recycled, 1,100 kg of iron ore, 650 kg of coal, and 50 kg of limestone are saved. In addition, recycling steel only consumes one-third of the energy needed to produce new steel from iron ore².



The recycling process of metal involves using magnetic separators, and the different materials are sold to other facilities. Metal scrap is melted down, impurities are removed, alloys are added, and it is then sold to manufacturers. While it is a fairly efficient system, metal recycling still requires enormous amounts of energy and leads to the emission of greenhouse gases during the process. While your household may not produce a large amount of metal waste, be considerate of your consumption habits and make sure to recycle metals either through the weekly collection or specialized pickups for construction-related metal waste.

Electronic devices also contain metals, some of them quite rare, which can be recuperated and reused in the production of the next generation of device. Mobile phone and computer collection points exist through organisations like Electrobac, and certain distributors and manufacturers also offer buyback programs. Additionally, you can schedule a pickup of information and communications technologies (ICT) waste by the City, in partnership with EPRA-Québec's *Recycle My Electronics*[™]. More information is available through the City website at www.ville.dorval.qc.ca/en/services/various-waste-pickups/information-and-communications-technologies-ict-waste-pickup.

GLASS RECYCLING

Glass can be recycled endlessly, while maintaining its properties. Like metal, recycling glass avoids the need to produce new glass from virgin resources. Recycled glass can have many uses. For example, it can be integrated in products to enhance their properties: glass powder can be added to concrete to reduce the use of cement (which means less CO² emissions from cement production).



One of the greatest challenges with managing glass recycling, however, is preserving its purity in terms of colour and contaminants.

In Quebec, the consignment system for certain bottles (e.g. beer bottles) actually allows for the reuse of bottles without needing to fully recycle them, and helps avoid contamination with other materials found in curbside recycling bins. The provincial government is currently developing a broader consignment system for more glass bottles (and other materials as well, including plastic water bottles) that should begin in the next 1-2 years. One of the aims of this program will be to improve the reuse and recycling of glass bottles without contamination. Information about the project is available through the RECYC-QUÉBEC website at www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/entreprises-organismes/mieux-gerer/consigne/foire-aux-questions.

For other glass bottles, they can easily be reused or be put into the weekly recycle bin. Surprisingly, glass jars **do not need** to be completely cleaned out. While rinsing a glass (or plastic) food container before putting it into the bin helps reduce contamination, insects, odours, and mess in the bin, it is not essential to completely clean out a container – this might be a relief, especially when emptying a peanut butter jar! Containers should be *emptied* however.

A great resource to find tips and tricks about what can and can't be recycled – and how to “prepare it” – is by following the recycling company Tricentris (@tricentris) on social media!

PLASTIC RECYCLING

Plastics are present in our everyday lives and have many uses, but when it comes to their reduction, it can be challenging. There are many types of plastic materials and not all of them can be recycled. What is even worse is the existence of many “single-use” plastic items, which cannot be recycled or which can only be recycled through special processing, like “type 6” plastics and Styrofoam. The City of Dorval offers type 6 plastic recycling in the Public Works yard, located at 550 Bouchard Boulevard.



While plastic can be a durable material, and is unavoidable in certain ways, managing the plastics we bring into our lives is an important way to limit our waste. Choose reusable alternatives over disposable plastic items, as explored in our **July-August Zero Waste “Gatherings” issue**. Properly dispose of plastic waste when it can no longer be used, such as through curbside recycling (for plastic types 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7). The City of Dorval also offers a special recycling drop-off box for hygiene products, including toothbrushes, razors, toothpaste tubes, and other items containing plastic that cannot go into the normal collection bin. This box is located at the reception of the Sarto-Desnoyers Community Centre.

When in doubt about where to dispose of plastic waste (or any waste for that matter), a helpful resource to consult, produced by RECYC-QUÉBEC, is the “Ça va où?” App. This application allows you to search for specific items and learn of the proper way to dispose of them. Being more aware of what can or cannot be recycled can influence our consumer decisions.

ACTIVITIES

To help you with this theme and with your environmental habits in general, the City is pleased to be offering some educational sessions, as well as various exciting activities!

PRESENTATION OF DORVAL'S HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENT KIT

November 10, at 7 p.m.

At the Dorval Library

Join us in person (or view the recording afterwards) to get acquainted with the new Home Energy Assessment Kit available for all Dorval residents to borrow from the Dorval Library. This kit contains a few tools to assess the energy efficiency of your home and, in this workshop, we will explain how each tool can be used. **Details here.**

PUBLIC SCREENING OF "ADDICTED TO PLASTIC"

November 19, at 7 p.m.

At the Dorval Library

A Canadian documentary on modern society's "addiction" to plastic: our prolific use of this product, its effects on the earth and on us, and where our unwanted plastic ends up. A brief discussion period will take place immediately after the screening.

Details here.

ZERO WASTE QUIZ

November 26, at 7 p.m.

Via Zoom

Take part in this fun and informative quiz to test your "green" knowledge while learning tips and tricks to help improve our environment. **Details here.**

ENVIRONMENTALLY-CONSCIOUS HOLIDAY CRAFT (CRAFT AND COOKIES!)

November 27 to December 19

Pickup at the Dorval Museum

A free take-home kit for children to make holiday crafts with recycled materials. Kits must be reserved in advance. **Details here.**

ANNUAL DORVAL LIBRARY BOOK SALE

December 1 to 5

At the Peter B. Yeomans Cultural Centre

The popular used-book sale, hosted by the *Friends of the Dorval Library*, returns this year, just before the Holidays! Why not give a second-hand item, personally selected, to a loved one this holiday season? **Details here.**

HOUSEHOLD CHALLENGES

For each theme, we issue a challenge to adopt in order to reduce your waste, as part of the Zero Waste challenge. Each challenge focuses on a habit you can adopt, and is offered in three levels: moderate, advanced, and expert!

Moderate impact: This one is simple: opt out of unwanted paper advertising products! Using the instructions described on page 3, set up a “no unsolicited mail” sticker in your mailbox and a pictogram indicating that you have opted out of receiving the weekly Publisac delivery, if you do not regularly make use of this material.

Advanced impact: Target one room of your home and think about all of the recyclable materials produced as waste in this room. Then, reflect on ways to reduce the production of new recyclable (and non-recyclable!) waste. As with all of the “Zero Waste Challenges”, the emphasis should not be on eliminating every possible form of waste, but making realistic commitments to minimize waste production. We offer an example on page 10 of what this might look like for the bathroom.

Expert impact: Say goodbye to single-use plastics! Set a target (for example: one week, one month) during which time you and your household will not accept or use single-use plastics, including straws, take-out food containers, and plastic bags. This can also extend to your shopping habits: use reusable bags for purchasing fresh produce, avoid plastic wrap to store foods, and avoid single-portion packaging for foods (like yogurt, fruit cups, snack bars, etc.). Completing this challenge may require you to get creative, but with proper planning, this can be beneficial not only for the planet, but also for your budget!



RESOURCES

To learn more about what is done with recycled materials (in French):
<https://www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/citoyens/mieux-recuperer/que-deviennent-les-matieres-recuperees>

Examples of items made from recycled materials (French videos):
<https://www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/visitezuncentredetri/>

Details on Montreal's project to study the distribution of paper flyers (in French): http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=6877,143319574&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

To learn more about how recycled glass can be used:
<https://www.eeq.ca/en/news/documents-and-publications/plan-verre-linnovation/>

There is a pilot project for recycling glass bottles and food containers of all colours taking place in Ahuntsic-Cartierville until December 2021 at the SAQ Dépôt Marché Central and Place Fleury (corner Fleury Est and Garnier) (in French): <https://montreal.ca/articles/ici-recupere-le-verre-7292>

The “Ça va où?” App is available for download onto mobile devices through Google Play and the Apple App Store. More information can be found through the RECYC-QUÉBEC website at <https://www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/appmobile-cavaou> (in French).



REDUCING WASTE IN THE BATHROOM

As mentioned in our “Advanced impact” challenge, it can be overwhelming to try and reduce all waste, so picking one area of our home and starting there can be more manageable. To give an example of some of the choices you can make, we are profiling here choices we can make in the bathroom to reduce our waste!

Instead of...	Try...
Disposable razors	Metal safety razors
Shaving cream in disposable cans	Shaving cream “puck” refills
Disposable toothbrushes	Toothbrushes with replaceable heads
Toothpaste tubes	Tooth tabs or baking soda + peppermint oil in a refillable container (consult your dentist first!)
Dental floss in plastic containers	Dental floss refills, stored in a reusable container
Soap and shampoo in plastic bottles	Refillable containers or solid bars
Deodorant in plastic applicators	Deodorant in jars or refillable applicators
Disposable menstrual products	Washable pads, period underwear, menstrual cup
Synthetic shower puff	Natural loofah

Finally, the City offers a few resources that can be helpful in your waste-reducing quest. Beyond the hygiene product recycling container available at the Sarto-Desnoyers Community Centre, there is also a subsidy program for reusable hygiene products, such as washable diapers, sanitary napkins, and menstrual cups. More information can be found on the City’s website **here**.

References

- ¹ Preliminary Resource Recovery Report Card and Gaps Assessment for Canada, Kelleher Environmental, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ecccc/food-loss-and-waste/Kelleher-NRCan%20CE%20Report%20Card.pdf>
- ² Efficient use of resources and high recycling rates, ArcelorMittal Canada, <https://canada.arcelormittal.com/en/sustainability/our-10-outcomes/outcome-4-resources/recycling-and-byproducts>