Waste and recycling guidelines

For residents, new developments and businesses

Adopted Date	*18 February 2025*
Responsible Officer	*Manager Waste Services*
Last Updated	*December 2024*

Contents

1. Purpose

These guidelines provide residents, developers, and businesses within the Darwin Municipality with information on their obligations and entitlements in relation to waste management.

2. Scope

These guidelines have been developed to provide:

- residents with a clear understanding of what waste collection services they are entitled to and their responsibilities for bin storage and presentation
- developers with guidance to assist building design and waste management plans as part of the development approval process
- businesses with guidance on how to responsibly manage their waste and recycling.

For guidance on City of Darwin's other services, please refer to City of Darwin's Waste & Recycling | City of Darwin | Darwin Council, Northern Territory

3. Guidelines

City of Darwin provides residents with two types of waste and recycling services:

- kerbside collection of individual bins from single dwellings
- manual collection of shared bins from a bin enclosure or room at multi-unit dwelling properties.

Each service has different entitlements and requirements for storage and collection.

City of Darwin has also committed to improving waste and recycling services and performance across all areas of its community, in alignment with the City of Darwin 2030 Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy. This includes residents, businesses, and new developments.

3.1 Residential waste and recycling services

The sections below provide guidance on the waste and recycling services for single and multi-unit dwellings. Where a property may be considered either type or suitable for either service, City of Darwin will assess the right service for the property.

3.1.1 Kerbside collection services for single dwellings

Single dwellings are self-contained properties intended to be occupied by a single household or family (Figure 1). They typically include detached houses, townhouses, and duplexes, up to a group of 3 dwellings. Some properties may share a driveway; however, each is designed as a separate living space, with separate entrance and amenities.

Figure 1: Example of single dwellings

Service entitlements

Each single dwelling property is entitled to a kerbside collection service for:

- one red lid 240-litre waste bin, emptied weekly
- one yellow lid 240-litre recycle bin, emptied fortnightly (Figure 2).

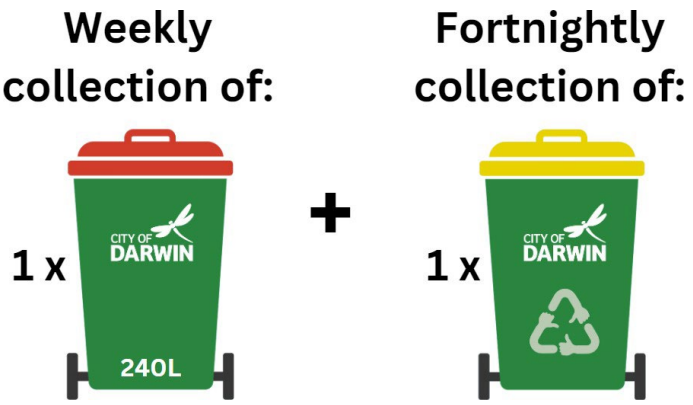


Figure 2: Kerbside service entitlement per single dwelling

Bin storage and collection

Residents must store their bins discreetly within the property boundary when they are not presented for collection and limit the impact of smell and litter on their neighbours.

Kerbside service bins will only be collected from public roads. Drivers stay in the waste collection vehicle and are unable to move bins from private roads or within a property to collect them.

For efficient bin collection:

- Bins must be placed out for collection on the kerbside verge directly in front or next to the property by 6:00 am on the collection day.
    - Bins can be placed in a driveway if vehicle access to dwellings can be maintained, such as in a shared driveway.
    - City of Darwin will consider requests for an alternative bin presentation area if there are access or safety issues. City of Darwin must approve all alternative bin presentation areas.

- Bins must be presented:
    - at least one metre from obstructions such as cars and trees, clear of overhanging branches and 0.5 m from other bins (Figure 3)
    - with wheels facing the property
    - with a closed lid and not overflowing
    - weighing no more than 70 kg.

Figure 3: Example of correct kerbside bin presentation

3.1.2 Manual collection services for multi-unit dwellings

Multi-unit dwellings are residential buildings or housing complexes that contain 4 or more properties within a single structure or closely grouped structures (Figure 4). They are typically apartment buildings, but can include townhouse complexes, where each unit is designed for individual occupancy but shares common areas and facilities.

Figure 4: Examples of multi-unit dwelling properties

Service entitlements

Multi-unit dwellings are entitled to a manual collection service of bins shared by all residents within the building or property. Bins are directly collected from the property's bin room/enclosure. Bin size and collection frequency options include:

- 240 L, 660 L, or 1,100 L waste bins collected two times per week.
- 240 L, 660 L, or 1,100 L recycling bins collected weekly (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Manual collection service collection frequency and bin size options for multi-unit dwellings

The number of bins a property is entitled to is based on the volumes in Table 1.
The entitlement rate is multiplied by the number of bedrooms, then divided by the bin size and number of collections per week.

The Appendix 1 offers guidance on calculating entitlements.

Table 1: Multi-unit waste and recycling generation rates

	Waste	Recycling
Entitlement per bedroom per week	40 litres	25 litres

When assessing bin entitlements:

- Properties with chutes may require an extra bin so that there is always one under the chute.
- Using a 660-litre bin or 1,100-litre bin is preferred to reduce the number of bins needing collection.

Bin storage and collection

The design of bin storage areas (Figure 6) in new multi-unit dwelling developments should meet the guidelines in Appendix 2. City of Darwin recognises that existing properties may not be able to meet these requirements. At a minimum, existing bin storage areas should:

- be accessible by all residents, including those with a disability
- contain City of Darwin approved signage 2024 Recycling bin stickers.pdf
- enable bin collection to occur via a sealed pathway (for example, concrete, paving, asphalt).

Figure 6: Example of manual service bin storage area

The City of Darwin collection contractor will enter the development to collect waste and recycling bins. Residents should note that:

- If access through a locked door or gate is needed, the property manager or caretaker must provide remotes/keys to the collection provider.
- If bin access is impeded, the property manager or caretaker must place bins on the verge for collection and return them within 24 hours after collection.

3.2 New development requirements

City of Darwin's By-law (27) Collection Service requires a waste management plan to be submitted with a Development Permit application for new:

- standalone multi-unit dwellings
- mixed-use developments (residential co-located with offices, retail, café/restaurants, etc.)
- master planned developments
- large and complex developments.

A waste management plan can be prepared by the property developer or specialist. For large and complex developments, City of Darwin may require an independent qualified consultancy to develop the plan.

Multi-unit dwelling properties require additional considerations for managing waste and recycling. These include shared bins, storage areas and signage, collection vehicle access, and manual bin collection services. The design of these properties can impact residents' ability to manage waste and recycling effectively, as well as the services that can be provided. Preparing a waste management plan during the development design phase ensures that these factors are adequately considered.

The waste management plan should include the information detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Minimum requirements for a waste management plan

	Details required
Development details	• development name and location • number of dwelling/bedrooms • details of other tenancies (for example, land uses, areas).
Estimated waste and recycling generation	• estimated waste/recycling generation • entitled/provided bin size(s) and number of bins • number of collections per week.
Waste management system	• design provisions (drawings) for bin storage area(s) • transfer pathways for residents to dispose of waste and recycling and for collection of the bins • bin storage and collection location(s). • location and content of recycling signage, including pictograms.
Traffic considerations	• collection vehicle parking location(s) • vehicle swept pathways.
Guidance for occupants	• available waste and recycling services including information on what can and can't be recycled (based on the City of Darwin guidance on its website) • responsibilities of residents and building management • minimising and managing issues of contamination.

To support the development of a waste management plan:

- Appendix 1 provides multi-unit dwelling waste and recycling bin entitlement calculation procedure.
- Appendix 2 provides waste and recycling design and planning guidance for new multi-unit dwellings.
- Appendix 3 provides an example checklist for the development of a waste management plan to be submitted to the City of Darwin.

3.3 Business waste and recycling guide

City of Darwin does not provide waste/recycling bin collection services to commercial and industrial businesses. These properties must arrange private waste and recycling collection services.

City of Darwin may provide services to community or not-for-profit organisations, upon request, which align with the in-kind support policy.

Adequate waste and recycling services are recommended for businesses that align with the type of waste generated (Table 3).

Table 3: Recommended recycling services for commercial and industrial properties/tenants

Property/ tenant type	Mixed recycling	$0.10 deposit containers	Cardboard	Organics*	Paper/ confidential paper
Office or consulting	X	X		X	X
Retail	X	X	X		X
Restaurant/café/ takeaway	X	X	X	X	
Hairdresser	X	X	X	X	
Warehouse	X	X	X		X
Mechanical/tyre service centre	X	X	X		X
Supermarket	X	X	X	X	
Fruit & vegetables, butcher, and seafood retailers	X	X	X	X	
Medical	X	X	X		X

** If available.*

Bin storage and collection

Businesses must store their bins on-site and be appropriately screened from view. To minimise interference with pedestrian or vehicular movements, collection vehicles should be able to:

- park on-site to collect and return bins
- enter and exit the property in a forward gear
- minimise the need for reversing.

Loading zones/areas should be positioned and have designated collection times to minimise amenity impact on residents, neighbours and the public arising from noise or odour during bin collection.

4. Definitions

Single dwellings are self-contained properties intended to be occupied by a single household or family. They typically include detached houses, townhouses, and duplexes, up to a group of 3 dwellings.

Multi-unit dwellings are residential buildings or housing complexes that contain 4 or more properties within a single structure or closely grouped structures.

5. Legislative references

City of Darwin By-Laws 2023 (NT)

6. Policies/related documents

City of Darwin's 2030 - Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy

Green Industries SA (formerly Zero Waste SA)
South Australian Better Practice Guide: Waste Management in Residential or Mixed-Use Developments
https://www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au/resources/better-practice-guide-for-waste-management-in-residential-mixed-use-developments-2014-

Sustainability Victorian
Waste Management and Recycling in Multi-unit Developments Better Practice Guide
https://assets.sustainability.vic.gov.au/susvic/Guide-Waste-Management-and-Recycling-in-Multi-unit-Developments.pdf

7. Application and responsibility

The Executive Manager Environment and Waste Service is responsible for the implementation and review of this document. This document will be reviewed every 4 years or as required.

Appendix 1: Multi-unit dwelling entitlement calculation

The procedure for calculating bin entitlements for a multi-unit dwelling property and an example calculation is provided in Figure 7.

Multi-unit dwelling property waste and recycling bin entitlement calculation

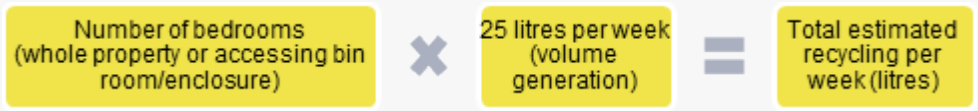
Waste bins (red lid):

Calculation of entitlement volume:

Calculation of bin entitlement:

Recycling bin (yellow lid):

Calculation of entitlement volume:



Calculation of bin entitlement:

**plus an additional bin for under each chute.*

Example property entitlement

A multi-unit dwelling property with 120 bedrooms with a single waste room and a chute for general waste. The property is suitable for 1,100 L bins for both general waste and recycling.

- **General waste generation and bin entitlement**:

  120 bedrooms x 40 litres per week (entitlement)

  = **4,800 litres per week of general waste generation**.

  4,800 litres per week ÷ 2 (collections per week) ÷ 1,100 litres (bin volume)

  = **Total entitlement of 4 x 1,100 litres general waste bins** (3 x 1,100 litres bins in the bin room/enclosure plus an added bin under the chute).

- **Recycling generation and bin entitlement**:

  120 bedrooms x 25 litres per week (entitlement)

  = **3,400 litres per week of recycling generation**.

  3,000 per week ÷ 1 (collection per week) ÷ 1,100 litres (bin volume)

  = **Total entitlement of 3 x 1,100 litres recycling bins**.

Figure 7: Multi-unit dwelling property waste & recycling bin entitlement calculation procedure and example

Appendix 2: Waste and recycling design guidance

The sections below provide a summary of City of Darwin recommended waste and recycling design considerations for new multi-unit dwellings and other developments.

In-dwelling waste and recycling disposal

Space within dwellings for waste and recycling bins should be provided in a convenient location that facilitates source separation by locating bins in a central area, for example, within kitchen cabinetry. Internal design should also allow for future services, such as organics recycling.

Chutes

Chute systems must meet all relevant standards and requirements, including the National Construction Code, fire safety and chute inspection, servicing, and cleaning.

For properties over four stories, waste and recycling chutes should be considered, noting:

- a minimum of two chutes is required (general waste and recycling)
- chute access points must be:
    - provided on each level and within reasonable walking distance of all dwellings (less than 30 metres)
    - located in a separate room or behind cabinetry (to prevent odours/spillage issues)
    - accessible for all residents, including those with a disability.

Transfer pathways

Resident transfer pathways between dwellings and the bin storage area/chute must be within reasonable walking distance (less than 30 metres).

Collection contractor transfer pathways between bin storage areas and collection points must:

- be no more than 30 metres
- be at least 1.4 metres wide
- be sealed surfaces (for example, concrete, pavers, asphalt)
- have no obstructions or steps and a slope no steeper than 1:10
- not pass through the living, lobby, or communal areas of a property.

Bin storage areas must be accessible by collection providers through no more than one locked gate or door (code access is the preferred method of entry).

Bin signage and education

Bin rooms and chute access points must have signs to inform users how to use the waste and recycling system:

- signage needs to align with the Australian Standards for mobile waste container colours, markings, and designation, in alignment with 2024 Recycling bin stickers.pdf
- requirements and responsibilities for waste and recycling should be included in strata or lease agreements.

Bin storage area design

All bins must be stored within the property boundary, at least 3 metres from windows, doors and living areas.

Enough space must be provided for all City of Darwin provided waste and recycling bins (Figure 8), any other proposed bin/waste collection services and manoeuvring bins.

- Bin storage areas must:
    - be accessible by all residents, including those with a disability
    - be screened from residents/tenants, neighbours, and the public
    - prevent the spreading of waste and litter
    - be sufficiently ventilated to minimise the spread of odour
    - have floor and wall finishes that minimise staining and enable cleaning
    - comply with relevant Australian Standards and the National Construction Code
    - not block vehicle or pedestrian sightlines for entering/leaving the property.
- Storage areas should include space for additional recycling activities:
    - $0.10 deposit containers
    - hard waste, E-waste, batteries, smoke detectors and light globes
    - expected future services (for example, organics)
    - donation bins for the reuse of clothing.
- Consider the security of the waste room:
    - Access should only be available to residents of the development, the property manager, and the collection contractor.
    - Consider installing security cameras to reduce issues of misuse and to allow the property manager to view bins under chutes and when they need to be rotated.

Note: Mixed-use developments require separate bin storage areas for residents and commercial tenancies.

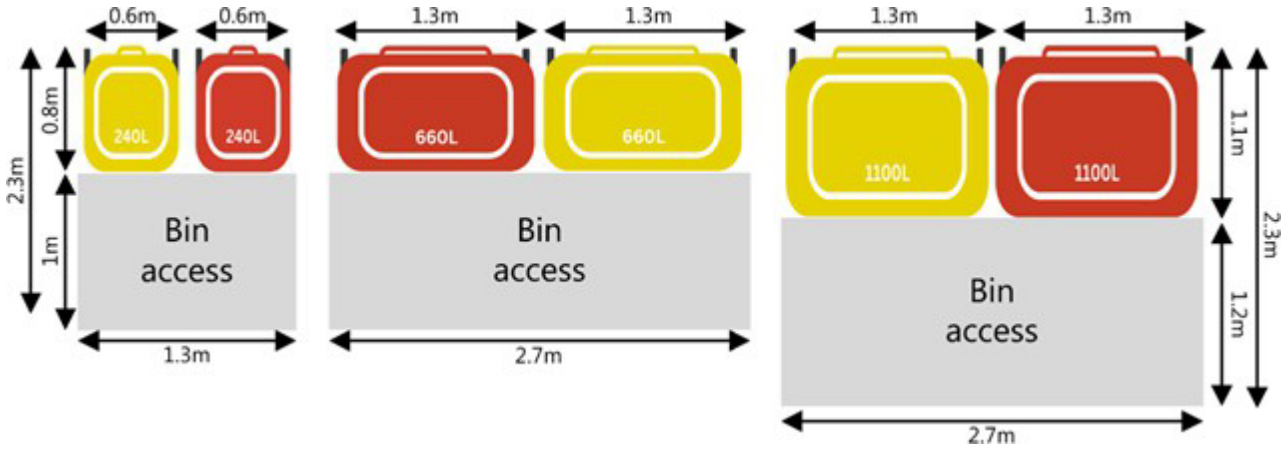


Figure 8: Approximate bin size and example layout with needed access

Bin washing

Access to a bin washing area is recommended, either within or external to the bin room:

- bin washing areas must be slip resistant, at least 2 m x 2 m, sloped to a drain connected to the sewer (not stormwater) and have an adequate water supply
- bins can be stored on top of the bin wash area and moved during washing
- line marking and bunding are not required
- bin washing services may be contracted (either on-site or off-site).

Bin collection and collection vehicles

Collection of bins should take place in the following priority:

1. On-site – collection vehicle enters and exits the property in a forward direction.
2. On-site – collection vehicle reverse entry (if safe), forward exit.
3. On-street in a designated loading zone adjacent to the development, if applicable.

Collection vehicle parking/bin loading areas must:

- provide adequate clearance for the vehicles and lifting of bins (Table 4)
- support the weight of a fully loaded collection vehicle (25 tonnes)
- be positioned to minimise amenity impact on residents, neighbours and the public arising from noise or odour during bin collection
- be inspected and signed off by the collection contractor before services will commence.

Where possible collection times should be scheduled to reduce the impact of noise and traffic on residents, neighbours, and the public.

Table 4: Collection vehicle dimensions

Vehicle type	Side lift	Rear lift	Front-lift	Pan-tech/Flatbed
Services	Kerbside collection services	Manual collection services	Private collection services	Hand waste collection services
Bins/waste collected	240 L waste and recycling bins	Collection of bins up to 1,100 L	Collection of 1.5 m^3 to 4.5 m^3 bins	At-call waste streams
Vehicle height	Minimum 4 m up to 5.7 m	Minimum 3.4 m up to 4 m	Minimum 4 m up to 4.2 m	Up to 4.5 m
Vehicle width	2.5 m	2.5 m	2.5 m	2.5 m
Vehicle length	Minimum 9.7 m up to 10.6 m	Minimum 8.8 m up to 11 m	Minimum 10 m up to 12 m	Minimum 8.8 m
Rear loading space	-	2 m	Approximately 3 m in front of the vehicle	–
Clearance heights	Minimum 4.5 m	Minimum 4 m	Up to 9 m	Up to 4.8 m
Vehicle turning circle	8-25 m	18-25 m	20-25 m	18-25 m

Note: Vehicle width dimensions are based on Australian Medium Rigid Vehicle (MRV) standard specifications – AS 2890.2-2002. Vehicle length and heights are based on common waste and recycling collection vehicles operating in the Darwin region. Collection vehicles are custom-designed and may differ from these specifications.

Appendix 3: Waste management plan checklist

Developers and the City of Darwin can use this checklist to determine if a development has considered the City of Darwin's recommended waste/recycling design needs and included the information in its development application.

Applicant/property details		
Applicant/Proponent:		
Phone:		
Email:		
Development address:		
Development ID:		
Signature of Applicant/Proponent:		
Date:		
Development details		
Resident/tenant details:		*Supporting comments*
No. single dwellings	(insert no.)	
No. multi-unit dwellings	(insert no.)	
Is the development mixed-use?	☐ Y ☐ N	
If yes, detail other land uses (type, m^3):		
Waste management plan:		
Has a waste management plan been developed?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Who developed the waste management plan?		
Proposed bin collection services		
Kerbside service		
Are the City of Darwin kerbside services requested?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Requested no. kerbside service bins (based on entitlement):		
240 L general waste bins:	(insert no.)	
240 L recycling waste bins:	(insert no.)	
Manual service		*Supporting comments*
Are the City of Darwin manual services requested?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Requested no. manual service bins (based on entitlement):		
• 240 L general waste bins:	(insert no.)	
• 660 L general waste bins:	(insert no.)	
• 1,100 L general waste bins:	(insert no.)	
• 240 L recycling bins:	(insert no.)	
• 660 L recycling bins:	(insert no.)	
• 1,100 L recycling bins:	(insert no.)	
Other service		
Details other waste/recycling collection services proposed for the development (for example, private collection, other recycling services):		

Waste system checklist		
Bin storage area:		*Supporting comments*
Shown on plans?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Screened from public view?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Sufficiently sized for bins and access needs?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Accessible by all residents, including those with a disability?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Minimum 3 m away from windows/doors?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Maximum 30 m from bin presentation/collection area?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Separate from commercial tenant bin storage areas (if a mixed-use development)?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Bin signage position shown on plan?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Bin recycling signage content included?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Is space for additional/other recycling streams included?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Provide other details/comments		
Chute system		*Comments*
Is the development greater than 4 stories in height?	☐ Y ☐ N	
If yes:		
• Is a general waste chute(s) proposed?	☐ Y ☐ N	
• Is a recycling chute(s) proposed?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Are chute access points provided on each level (excluding ground level)?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Area clearly shown on the site plans?	☐ Y ☐ N	
If the development is greater than 4 stories and chutes are not proposed, provide the reason:		
Bin transfer pathway:		*Comments*
Minimum 1.4 m wide?	☐ Y ☐ N	
No steps, obstructions, or slope >1:10?	☐ Y ☐ N	
External to living areas?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Path clearly shown on the site plans?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Bin presentation area (kerbside services)		*Comments*
Are bins accessible from a public road without obstruction?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Is there enough space for all bins without obstruction, driveways, parked cars, etc.?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Are presented bins clearly shown on the site plans (including collection vehicle)?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Bin collection (manual services)		*Comments*
Can the roadway accommodate collection vehicles (operating width, height, and weight)? *(Attach evidence to application)*	☐ Y ☐ N	
Can collection vehicles park on-site to collect bins?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Can collection vehicles enter/exit in a forward direction?	☐ Y ☐ N	

If collection vehicles cannot park on-site for bin collection, is a suitable alternative proposed?	☐ Y ☐ N	
City of Darwin review		
City of Darwin review outcomes		*Comments*
Development meets the City of Darwin service requirements?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Is a Waste Management Plan required?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Further information required?	☐ Y ☐ N	
Additional input required:		
Waste Management Officer	☐ Y ☐ N	
Traffic	☐ Y ☐ N	
Other	☐ Y ☐ N	
Recommendation:		
Further information required?	☐	
Approve	☐	
Approve with conditions *(detail below)*	☐	
Refuse (detail)	☐	

Approval conditions	
1.	
2.	
3.	