

Home & Garden

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Tips to reduce household waste during strike

Here are some tips to help you reduce the amount of waste your household produces during the Waste Management strike.

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Though certainly annoying at times, a garbage strike like the one affecting parts of Seattle and the surrounding area provides a green opportunity to consider how much trash your household generates, and how you can reduce it. Try these waste-prevention tips:

Recyclables

- If you need to buy a large item with lots of packaging, ask a store employee if you can leave some of the packaging there (especially if the store's garbage is getting picked up).
- Choose products with less packaging. Purchase products in bulk, but only if you know you will use up the entire contents.
- Instead of buying single-use water bottles by the case, pull out that lonely, seldom-used reusable water bottle from the cupboard and fill it from your tap.

Garbage

- For households with small children: If you use a combination of disposable diapers and washable cloth diapers, now is a great time to lean heavier on the cloth.
- If you don't want to wash your own diapers, sign up for a cloth-diaper service such as Baby Diaper Service, covering much of the Puget Sound area, or Sunflower Diaper Service, serving part of North Seattle.
- To reduce odors in the garbage cart, consider triple-bagging potentially smelly items such as pet waste. Reuse old plastic bags such as grocery-store produce bags or newspaper bags (Seattle's new plastic-bag ban does not include either of those).

Food scraps, yard waste

- Use up leftovers before they turn into science projects that you have to toss. The BigOven website (bigoven.com/recipes/leftovers) offers bountiful recipe ideas, and when you choose three leftover ingredients it provides suggestions on what you can make.
- To temporarily reduce the amount of food scraps going into your yard-waste cart, store them in the freezer or a spare refrigerator. Use compostable bags for food scraps.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn when you mow or stop watering and mowing the lawn for a

while. Grass clippings in the yard-waste cart get stinky in a hurry this time of year.

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