



12/11/2025

Year-Round Food & Yard Waste FAQ

Yard waste service now includes a once-a-month pick-up during the “winter schedule” months of January, February, and December each year. Pick up occurs the first full calendar week of the winter schedule months. Weekly pick up occurs from March to November.

Q: What if I don't want services in the winter months (January, February, and December)?

A: Based on customer feedback and in preparation for future regulations that will require expanded services, we're transitioning to a year-round service. You are charged the monthly rate for the food & yard waste service whether you put your cart out for collection or not.

Q: Will I be charged less during the winter months?

A: Instead of your monthly yard waste rate changing seasonally, you are being charged an average rate over twelve months that includes nine months of weekly collection (March–November) and three one-time per-month winter pick ups (December, January, and February). Current rates are listed on our [Utility Rates page](#)

Q: What can be placed in my green cart during winter when I don't have yard debris?

A: Food scraps, such as meats, dairy products, fruits and vegetables, bread, eggshells and nutshells, coffee grounds, tea bags, and food-soiled paper, including pizza boxes, paper towels and napkins, non-shiny paper plates and cups, paper egg cartons, paper grocery bags with food scraps, and coffee filters, can all be placed in your green cart year-round.

Additionally, by placing these items into your green cart, you are likely to reduce the amount of garbage in your garbage (brown or gray) cart. You may be able to reduce the size of your garbage cart in the coming months as you see what you can transition into your green cart.

Q: Can I leave the food & yard waste cart out longer than the first full week of the month for pick-up? If yes, what will the fee be?

A: Food & Yard waste trucks will not be operating on non-collection weeks and refuse trucks will not automatically service yard waste carts. If you need your green cart emptied on non-collection weeks, (1) business day in advance. The green cart will be billed as an extra 90-gallon garbage cart.

Q: Can the food & yard waste cart still be put on hold for vacations?

A: Yes, but all other rules still apply. Vacation holds are allowed for a minimum of fourteen days and can only be requested two times per year maximum.





Q: Can I put out extra with my green cart?

A: Yes, the same rules and fees for extras apply. Food and yard waste collection customers are eligible for a discounted fee for disposing up to three extra compostable paper bags placed next to the green cart. Please be aware that extra bags put out in the winter may be frozen to the ground and not able to be collected.

Q: Can I request an extra pick up of the green cart on a non-pick up day?

A: No. You can contact Spokane 311 at least one (1) day in advance to schedule your green cart to be emptied on your regular collection day on non-collection weeks during the winter months. It will be picked up and billed as an extra 90-gallon garbage cart.

Q: Will the food & yard waste schedule impact Christmas tree pick up?

A: No, Christmas tree pickup will continue as usual. Details are released in December.

Q: What if I missed the first week of pick up?

A: Customers can request a return trip through Spokane 311. A return trip fee will apply. Credit for not having your green cart out will not be given in this situation.



Q: What do I do if the yard waste truck missed my cart on the once a month pick up?

A: Customers have one (1) business day to report a missed collection. Requests after one (1) business day will need to wait until the next scheduled pick up or will require scheduling an extra pick up at the return trip cost. Credit will not be given in this situation.

Q: Are returned trips allowed if carts are not out?

A: Yes, customers may contact Spokane 311 to request a return trip. A return trip fee will apply.

Q: Will the food & yard waste truck be collecting on collection days, or are garbage trucks collecting?

A: Yes, the food & yard waste trucks will collect on the once-monthly collection dates during winter.

Q: What if items in the cart are frozen and not emptied or are partially emptied?

A: Solid Waste is not responsible for frozen carts. We will make every effort to empty your green cart if the contents fall freely from the container. Credit is not given for frozen carts.

Here are a few tips to prevent your green cart from freezing:

- Line the bottom of the cart with cardboard (pizza delivery boxes, etc.)
- Don't pack contents down
- Strain excess liquid from soups and sauces; only put in solid food scraps
- If possible, store in a dry, warmer area (garage, shed, etc.).

Visit Spokane311.org or call 311 to set up or change your curbside services.