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# ***To Everything, a Trash Can***

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**By** [**Vivian S. Toy**](https://www.nytimes.com/by/vivian-s-toy)

* Sept. 28, 1997

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Theresa Hansen examined the piles of blue and green garbage containers at the recycling display at the Pergament Home Center in Long Island City, Queens. Then, with a look of utter annoyance, she latched on to a 20-gallon green one.

''Where am I supposed to put this pail?'' she mumbled under her breath. ''I'm going to have to get a whole other apartment just to fit all these cans.''

Brown for regular garbage, blue for bottles and cans, and now green for paper, she explained.

Mrs. Hansen, who shares a two-family home with her son in College Point, was just one of the thousands of homeowners in Queens and Brooklyn who have trooped to local hardware stores in recent weeks to prepare for the biggest expansion of the city's recycling program since it first became mandatory in 1989.

Starting tomorrow, 1.6 million households in Queens and Brooklyn will have to start recycling ''mixed paper'' -- paper products including junk mail, milk and juice cartons and cereal boxes. Mixed-paper recycling began in the Bronx and Staten Island in 1996 and in Manhattan six months ago.

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Recycling advocates and city officials acknowledge that the expanded recycling will require a significant change in New Yorkers' habits as residents get used to viewing traditional garbage items as recyclables. But they quickly add that the additional recycling is necessary if the city hopes to meet its deadline to shut the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island at the end of 2001.

''It's cheaper to landfill everything and it would be less trouble for people,'' John J. Doherty, the city's Commissioner of Sanitation, said. ''But is that what we really want to do with our precious land space? We can't just keep building mountains of garbage.'' Mr. Doherty said that collecting and dumping a ton of trash costs the city about $180, while processing and recycling a ton costs about $300.

Rose Dusatko, another College Point resident, dreaded the prospect of dragging yet another garbage can up and down the stoop of her two-family home. ''That's how I got arthritis in my back already,'' she said.

Despite some confusion over what constitutes mixed paper and the seemingly grudging acceptance of some Queens and Brooklyn homeowners, city sanitation officials said they expected the program to do better there than it has in the other boroughs because of the high concentration of single- and two-family homes.

''In multiple-unit dwellings, people figure nobody would know whether they recycled or not,'' Mr. Doherty said. ''But with one- and two-family homes, there's a certain amount of peer pressure because you know that people on the street will know right away if you're putting out your recycling or not.''

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Enforcement is also more direct, he said. Homeowners know that the sanitation police can poke through their trash and issue summonses for soup cans or cereal boxes left to mingle with coffee grounds and banana peels. Apartment dwellers, on the other hand, can often escape punishment, because citations are sent to apartment managers and not to tenants.

As a homeowner and landlord of a four-unit building in East Elmhurst, Nathaniel Lightburn said he was all too aware of the ticketing process for recycling violations.

''No matter how many times I tell the tenants, they still do it their way,'' he said as he shopped for new 32-gallon recycling cans. ''But when they come to give a ticket, they give me the ticket. That don't make no sense.'' Mr. Lightburn said he has resigned himself to sorting through the bins every day to make sure recyclables are where they belong.

City officials said that recycling efforts in the other boroughs, particularly in apartment buildings in Manhattan, had not yet met expectations. The city had expected the roughly 600 daily tons of paper recycled by the Bronx, Staten Island and Manhattan to increase by about 300 tons when mixed paper was added. Instead, the three boroughs have mustered only an additional 140 tons per day.

City Councilman Stanley E. Michels, chairman of the Council's Committee on Environmental Protection, said the start date for mixed paper recycling in Manhattan had come and gone unnoticed at the 600-unit Castle Village in Washington Heights, where he lives. ''It took two months to get it going in my building and I had to go to the office to complain first,'' he said.

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Mr. Doherty said that the grace period for enforcement in Manhattan was about to run out and that sanitation officials would soon start citing apartment buildings that did not have proper storage facilities or appropriate signs. Enforcement in Brooklyn and Queens is not scheduled to begin until next spring.

Eugene Moore, the district manager for Community Board 7 in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, said the more than 70 people who crowded into a meeting earlier this month to grill sanitation officials about the new recycling also had enforcement on their minds.

''It's a passion thing for them,'' he said. ''Generally people want to do this because they see the threat of the landfill, but they also want to see a stronger approach taken to those who aren't abiding by it.''

Mrs. Hansen said she had read the recycling pamphlet from the Sanitation Department ''backward and forward'' to avoid even the slightest possibility of a ticket. Then, as she reviewed the sales slip for her new recycling bin and headed toward her car, she turned to some friends and said, ''I wonder if Mayor Giuliani recycles.''

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# ***Recycling Is About to Become A Bigger Task in Manhattan***

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**By** [**Randy Kennedy**](https://www.nytimes.com/by/randy-kennedy)

* March 31, 1997

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Beginning this week, hundreds of thousands of Manhattanites will receive colorful brochures in the mail telling them that they will now be responsible for recycling a good deal of trash that they had never recycled before.

But around the city yesterday, managing agents foresaw headaches, and more than a few fines, before residents and building superintendents learned how to separate out the new recyclables -- a variety of paper products, including beverage cartons and junk mail.

''Not all residents comply as it is now with the existing rules for newspapers and bottles and foil,'' said Frederick J. Rudd, president of Eichner Rudd Management Associates, which oversees more than 70 cooperatives, condominiums and rental buildings in Manhattan. ''So the real key is going to be educating people as soon as possible, which is not easy.''

Large buildings and complexes will have the hardest time. At the Penn Station South cooperatives between Eighth and Ninth Avenues in the mid-20's, where there are 2,820 apartments in 10 high-rise buildings, residents are already responsible for separating trash before it reaches the basements.

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Arthur Gussaroff, a lawyer for the cooperative, said it would now fall to superintendents to make sure they are following the new rules. ''How effective a co-op can be in enforcing something like that in so big a place I just don't know,'' he said. ''It's going to be a nightmare. The confusion that occurs is absolutely unbelievable. It's an enormous amount of garbage we're talking about here.''

Most of the paper must be bundled or bagged with the newspapers, magazine and cardboard already collected. But milk and juice cartons and boxes are to go with the plastic, glass, metal and foil because they could contaminate the other paper products.

When told of the distinctions, Mr. Gussaroff sighed. ''I think there are only so many regulations a person can follow,'' he said.

For some building managers, the concerns are tricky. Ursula E. Dobson, who manages seven buildings with about 2,000 apartments in Manhattan, said her buildings' vestibules were already too crowded with recycling bins. ''If I have to put another recycling bin there, I'm going to obstruct the fire escape,'' Mrs. Dobson said. ''You know, where is it going to stop?''

The expansion of recycling in Manhattan comes after similar mandatory programs were begun in the Bronx and on Staten Island last April and then almost immediately put on hold because of budget cuts.

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But since the announcement that the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island was to be closed by 2001, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani restored $6 million last year that would allow the expansion of recycling in Manhattan and restore the programs in the Bronx and Staten Island, beginning tomorrow.

John J. Doherty, the city's Commissioner of Sanitation, said the city plans to add so-called mixed-paper recycling in Brooklyn and Queens by late summer or fall.

The Sanitation Department expects to collect about 350 tons of mixed paper a week from the 787,000 households in Manhattan. About 500 tons of such paper a day ends up in Fresh Kills from homes around the city.

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# ***Expansion Of Program For Recycling Is Announced***

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**By** [**Bruce Lambert**](https://www.nytimes.com/by/bruce-lambert)

* Nov. 18, 1998

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Weekly pickups of recycled waste will be extended to all of New York City by April 15, 2000, under a plan announced yesterday by the City Council. The deal ended a long battle with Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, who has opposed expanding the program any faster.

The plan allows both sides to claim victory. The Council finally succeeded in expanding weekly pickups to the entire city, and the Mayor won several more months of delay to complete the program.

''The deal is, we're going to have weekly recycling in our time,'' said Stanley E. Michels, the chairman of the Council's Environmental Protection Committee. At a City Hall news conference, the Mayor said, ''If they're willing to slow down and stretch it out, it would be foolish of me not to accept that.''

The plan was one of several issues settled yesterday in the recently resumed budget bargaining between the staff of Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone and the Mayor's administration.

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Eighteen of the city's 59 community districts already have weekly pickups of recycled bottles, cans, paper and plastic. The other districts have collections every other week, which critics say discourages recycling by making it harder for residents to remember the schedule and by causing overflowing storage rooms, odors and vermin.

Under the plan, weekly pickups will be phased in over the next 18 months for the 41 districts that have biweekly recycling service. It has not been determined which of the communities will be the first to get the added pickups.

Mr. Michels estimated the full annual cost of extending weekly pickups at $13 million to $14 million.

Recycling is a major part of the city's master plan to reduce waste, ship garbage out of state and close down the vast Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island by the end of 2001. An average of 1,700 tons a day is recycled now. The ultimate goal is 4,250 tons, a target originally set for 1994, then delayed until 1996 and pushed back again to July 1, 2001.

Although the Mayor said yesterday that ''I agree with recycling, I agree with the goal of recycling,'' in the past he has been skeptical, even hostile to the idea. He once belittled recycling as ''not the be-all and end-all of life,'' and said that proponents treated recycling like ''a religion or supernatural thing.''

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The Mayor has called some of the recycling deadlines ''absurd and irresponsible.'' He drew ridicule -- and a lawsuit -- from environmentalists when he tried to count as part of the city's recycling effort all the concrete and asphalt rubble that is used to make temporary roads for dump trucks at the Fresh Kills landfill. The courts ruled against him.

Mr. Giuliani has also maintained that weekly pickups were costly, that they did not retrieve additional refuse and that, if they did, the recycling market might be flooded.

Earlier this year, the Council approved $8.5 million to expand pickups throughout the city in this fiscal year, but Mr. Giuliani vetoed that provision. Then the Council overrode Mr. Giuliani's veto, but he still refused to spend the money.

Recycling remains politically popular, however. Some of the Mayor's critics surmised that it would be hard for him to square his continued resistance to weekly pickups with the common-sense, mainstream image he is promoting as he considers seeking higher office.

''Sometimes good politics and good policies come together,'' said Eric A. Goldstein, a senior attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental group. ''Recycling makes sense and is enormously popular,'' he said, citing one poll that showed 82 percent of New Yorkers supporting it. Calling the new plan ''great news,'' he said, ''One could quibble with the extended time period, but it signals a welcome change in the administration's position on recycling.''

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