

Large Item Collection and Electronic Waste Recycling Policy of the City of Madison

Approved on July 16, 2024¹

Background

In the City of Madison (the “City”), large item collection has historically been handled by the City’s Streets Division through a combination of dedicated collection routes, a sticker program, and drop-off sites open to City residents. Due to inherent inefficiencies in that arrangement, the Streets Division no longer operates dedicated large item collection routes and instead uses a work order system to manage its large item collection program. The Streets Division is also tasked with providing large item pick up during student moving days and in response to nuisance complaints. In order to continue to effectively provide this service to its core customer base, and to ensure that non-customers are effectively managing their own waste and recycling needs, it is necessary to create and implement this large item collection policy.

Wis. Stat. § 287.07(5) and § 287.17, and regulations and guidelines adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, prohibit the disposal of certain electronic waste, including televisions, computers, printers, monitors, computer accessories, video players, and cell phones. Such items must be recycled at authorized recycling sites and cannot be placed or kept on any terrace or curbside for collection by the City. The City does offer public recycling sites for this purpose, and has historically charged for this e-recycling service, when necessary, through sticker fees.

The purpose of this Large Item Collection and Electronic Recycling Policy (the “Policy”) is to define the large item collection services of the City of Madison Streets Division (what items are covered, what properties are eligible, who has to pay fees), as well as the general guidelines users of the large item collection service must follow in order to use this service. Under this Policy, Customers will be provided large item collection services through the work order system. Non-Customers will need to arrange for large item collections separately, similarly to how their refuse and recycling is already handled. Non-Customers may not use the work order system. Prior to January 1, 2025, or at such later date as determined by the Streets Superintendent, multi-family buildings with more than 8 units that are not refuse or recycling customers will be considered Customers. This Policy also addresses electronic waste recycling.

Defining Properties to Be Provided Large Item Collection Services

Under City Resolution ([RES-10-00362, Legistar File No. 17693](#)) and the adopted Resource Recovery Special Charge Policy ([RES-22-00399, Legistar File No. 71186](#)), the Streets Division’s collection of refuse and recycling is generally restricted to multi-family buildings of 8 units and fewer, although some small commercial properties and larger residential properties are provided refuse and recycling services as well.

For the purposes of this Policy, properties provided curbside refuse and/or recycling services by the Streets Division, single or two-family residential properties on private drives or carriage lanes, or other properties as determined by the Streets Superintendent, are “Customers”, while properties that are not

¹ Policy was approved by the Common Council by RES-24-00482, File No. 83634, on July 16, 2024.

serviced by the Streets Division with refuse or recycling collection carts are “Non-Customers”. However, prior to January 1, 2025, multi-family buildings with more than 8 units that are not refuse or recycling customers will be considered Customers. As of January 1, 2025, or at such later date as determined by the Streets Superintendent, these buildings will be Non-Customers. In addition, properties that otherwise qualify as Customers may be removed from the large item customer base and considered Non-Customers if the Superintendent determines that the property imposes unreasonable or disproportionate demands on the large item collection program.

Defining “Large Item”

A large item is considered to be an item meant for disposal, either as waste or for recycling, that is too large to be placed into a collection cart, or otherwise cannot be placed into one due to certain handling restrictions or the items may require a fee for disposal.

Large items can include furniture, lumber, bicycles, pianos, carpeting, fencing, mattresses, appliances, and many other items.

Large items do not include:

- bundles of excess cardboard;
- brush;
- electronics waste such as televisions, computers, printers, gaming systems, and similar electronics items that are required to be recycled by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources;
- overflow bags of trash that do not fit into a full curbside collection cart; and,
- loose debris/trash small enough to be placed into a collection cart for proper disposal.

Large Item Collection Process

Work Orders Required

In order to effectively manage the collection of large items across the City, Customers seeking large item collection services must first fill out a work order that provides the Streets Division with the list of items that need collection and the address and location of the items. The form also asks for contact information regarding who is completing the form.

The form can be completed online at www.cityofmadison.com/LargeItemWorkOrder or by following the link at www.cityofmadison.com/LargeItem.

Customers can also contact the Streets Divisions offices over the phone or in person for assistance in setting up the collection.

Customers choose the items that need collecting from the options in the work order form.

Work orders should reasonably account for the items placed at the curb for Streets Division crews to collect. Items may be left behind at the curb if they do not match the work order.

Some large items, like appliances, may have an additional charge Customers will need to pay. Items requiring a fee from must be on the work order without exception.

More details regarding large item fees can be found later in this policy document. The work order system handles the payment of these fees.

Importance of Work Orders

The Streets Division uses the work orders for two important functions in performing large item collection:

- Items in the work order determine which collection vehicle responds to the property to collect the material. Large item collection is actually performed by two separate crews. One to collect items destined for landfill disposal and a second to collect items for recycling, such as metal and appliances.
- The number of work orders received in a given week also helps determine staffing levels.

Non-Customers

Non-Customers cannot use the work order system for large item collection as curbside large item collection service will not be provided to these properties. Instead, Non-Customers are required to arrange for large item collections separately, similarly to how their refuse and recycling is handled. A Non-Customer may temporarily use the terrace area adjacent to the property to store large-items for private collection purposes, but such items shall not be placed in the terrace area adjacent to the property for longer than 24 hours for this purpose.

Streets Division Large Item Collection Guidelines

When items subject to a work order are set out for collection, Customers are expected to follow the below guidelines in order to receive service from the Streets Division.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the items not being collected.

- Items must be stacked neatly on the right of way space in front of the home in the work order.
 - *Exception:* Some addresses may place items in locations other than directly in front of their homes, such as a home is on a corner or in those accessed only by private drives that cannot be used by the Streets Division. In these situations, the work order must clearly indicate where the items will be placed so crews will know where to collect them.
- Metals, appliances, and other recyclable large items must be placed out for collection separate from non-recyclable items such as furniture or carpeting.
- Items must be placed at least four feet away from obstructions such as utility poles, electrical boxes, street signs, fire hydrants, and other objects that can interfere with collection.
 - Items should not be placed underneath low wires or low branches
- Items longer than 8 feet in length will not be collected as they cannot be reasonably expected to fit into the collection trucks.
- All previously defined guidelines must also be followed. These include:
 - Items out for pickup must meet the definition of large item;
 - Work orders must reasonably represent what is placed out for collection; and,
 - The items must be placed out for collection on the set out date selected.

Large Item and Electronics Fees

The Streets Division Superintendent may set fees and their rates for certain large items and electronics in accordance with MGO 10.18.

The Streets Division will keep current a list of all items requiring a fee on the Streets Division's large item website (www.cityofmadison.com/LargeItem).

The items requiring a fee may fall into of the following conditions:

- Items causing the Streets Division to incur additional costs to process items for recycling due to special handling requirements (i.e., air conditioners, dehumidifiers, refrigerators, fluorescent light fixtures, tanning beds, microwaves, computers, televisions, etc.);
- Items requiring special collection consideration (i.e., hot tubs, boats, large medical devices, etc.);
- Items previously charged in the large item collection program (lawnmowers, gas grills, etc.).

Paying for Large Item Collection and Electronics Recycling Fees

Currently, large item collection fees can be paid online via the large item work order system, over the phone by contacting the Streets Division offices, in person at the Streets Division offices, or by mailing in a check made payable to the City Treasurer's office.

As payment technology with the City changes, the ability to pay the necessary fees in different ways may also change.

The Streets Division will keep the payment options current on the Streets Division's large item website.

Drop-off Site Fees vs. Curbside Collection Fees

If a fee is required for a large item, curbside collection fees are paid when a large item work order is scheduled via the work order system.

Before an item that requires a fee is taken to drop-off site, the resident must first pay the necessary fee, receive a fee sticker, and then affix the sticker to the item.

Information regarding the process for paying fees will be kept current on the large item website and the drop-off site pages.

Refund Policy

There are no refunds for curbside collection fees.

Refunds can be granted when a fee sticker is returned unused to a Streets Division office.

Fees for Recycling Large Items and Electronics

Definitions

Customers who receive recycling collection services from the City of Madison Streets Division pay the Resource Recovery Special Charge (RRSC), which charge is imposed to collect the City's costs to provide recycling services to the property. For the purposes of this Policy, Customers who pay the

RRSC are “Ratepayers”, and any other property or resident that does not pay the RRSC is a “Non-Ratepayer”.

Ratepayers

If the RRSC rate includes sufficient funding to cover costs associated with the recycling of certain large items or electronics, Ratepayers will not be required to pay additional fees to cover said costs for the recycling of these recyclable large items or electronics.

For example, if the RRSC rate includes covering the costs for appliance or electronics recycling, Ratepayers would not be required to pay any additional fee, such as a fee sticker, to recycle a washing machine through curb side collection, or to bring a television, computer, or similar device to a City public recycling site.

Should the RRSC stop providing the funding to cover certain recycling costs of large items or electronics items, then the Ratepayers may need to pay the necessary fees to recycle these items unless these costs are recovered elsewhere in the budgeting process.

Non-Ratepayers

Non-Ratepayers do not provide funding for recycling services through the RRSC. Since they do not contribute to the RRSC, they cannot receive benefits provided by RRSC funding.

Thus, if a Non-Ratepayer is eligible for large item collection under this Policy, or if they bring a large item or electronic waste to a drop-off site, the Non-Ratepayer is required to pay any applicable fee for the item which would otherwise be covered by RRSC funding.

August Student Moving Days

The August Moving Days will not be affected by this Policy.

The annual services provided in response to the significant number of Madison residents moving simultaneously in the beginning weeks of August will continue within the Student Move Out Area as it has in years prior.

During the first weeks of August, the Streets Division will perform extra collection of materials in the defined Student Move Out Area. The Streets Division will empty trash and recycling carts, and they will collect large items, without the need for work orders.

Student Move Out Area

This area has been traditionally defined as ranging from the Yahara River to neighborhoods near the Camp Randall football stadium.

A map defining the boundaries of the Student Move Out Area will be kept current on the Moving Days website, www.cityofmadison.com/MovingDays.

Unscheduled Collections in Areas Served by Neighborhood Resource Teams

The Streets Division has a service level goal of providing weekly unscheduled collections in neighborhoods served by Neighborhood Resource Teams in approximately 75% of the weeks of the year.

Why Provide Elevated Level to NRT-Served Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods served by NRTs tend to see high turnover rates from residents. As a result, large items are frequently at the curb. In an effort to keep these neighborhoods welcoming and uncluttered, regular unscheduled collection is a service level goal.

Weekly Collection Not Guaranteed in the NRT Area

Due to a variety of reasons, from shortened holiday weeks to severe winter weather to equipment availability issues, the Streets Division may not be able to provide weekly collections.

Work Orders Encouraged in NRT Areas

Residents in NRT areas should still create large item work orders for material that needs collection. The unscheduled sweeps are a supplementary service designed to help these traditionally challenged neighborhoods.

Enforcement and Non-Customer Services

Unauthorized placement of large items in the terrace contrary to this Policy is a property maintenance issue under MGO Sec. 27.05(2)(dd). The Streets Division will work with Building Inspection to encourage compliance with this Policy.

Customers

If large items are placed at the terrace adjacent to a Customer's property contrary to this Policy, the Streets Division will work with Building Inspection on trying to get the Customer to properly complete a work order for the items. The Streets Division may collect large items from the terrace adjoining a Customer's property without a work order, although the Customer may be subject to the issuance of a citation for this service.

Non-Customers

Non-Customers are required to provide their own private large-item collection services to meet their property's needs, and the work order process for large item collection is not available to Non-Customers. Building Inspection will work with Non-Customers to ensure compliance with this Policy and effective and timely private collection of large items. Except as noted above for work associated with student moving days and within NRT-served neighborhoods, if the Streets Division collects large-items from the terrace adjoining a Non-Customer's property, the Non-Customer will be subject to the issuance of a citation for this service and a special charge to recover the City's cost to provide this service.