



The Daily Gleaner

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Spring 'Green-up' Tips

The snow banks are finally gone, the spring floodwaters are receding, and now many Frederictonians are cleaning up from the consequences of both. And on top of that, is the usual springtime home de-cluttering, and yard clean up of old fall leaves and tree limbs. As you know, all of this activity culminates with an incredible amount of waste deposited curbside. To minimize this, there are several things you may want to consider as you make your way through your clean up work in the coming weeks.

Take a moment to consider if any of the items you are getting rid of can be **reused**. If so, have a yard sale or donate them to church rummage sales, school fundraising yard sales, or community organizations that help out those in need, such as Fredericton Anti-Poverty Association (FAPO). And if you have old magazines - before you toss them into your recycling bin, consider giving them to your doctor or dentist's office, the hospital or nursing homes, a daycare for crafts, or a local gym.

If items cannot be reused, then perhaps they can be **recycled** – such as any plastics that can go in your blue box. Check all bottles and bags for the recycling symbol and the numbers 1 through 7. Remember that even the bags from your purchased topsoil, compost, and grass seed are often recyclable. As well, any metal cans that do not contain hazardous waste can be recycled. Collect your hazardous waste items, cans of paint, thinners, gas or oil products, pesticides, chemicals, cleaners, etc. and drop them off no charge on 'Household Hazardous Waste Day' at the Fredericton Region Solid Waste Commission (FRSWC) at 1775 Allison Blvd. every second and fourth Wednesday and Saturday of the month. For the full list of hazardous waste, check the FRSWC website at www.frswc.ca. It is very important that you never dump these products down your drain or put them into the storm drain on your street!

Now for grey box recycling: as you de-clutter your house of catalogues, newsprint, old phone books, paper and envelopes, and old paperback books and magazines that cannot be donated, make sure they end up in your recycling bin and not in your garbage!

The next waste reduction strategy is **composting**. If you want to start backyard composting or expand your composting activity by getting a second composter – today is the annual 'Earth Machine' composter sale by the Fredericton Backyard Composters. Go to 100 Two Nations Crossing (Parks & Trees Depot across from the new Walmart) and for \$30 (cash or debit) you can purchase an 'Earth Machine' which comes with directions for set-up and use. They sell out fast and the sale starts at 7:30am so once you read this column – don't delay!

You can compost all leaves and other organic clippings/debris from your yard and garden – referred to as 'browns' by compost experts. So create an area beside your composter to pile the 'browns' (where you will eventually throw your grass clippings in the summer), and each time you dump your kitchen food waste (referred to as 'greens') in the composter then put a layer of 'browns' from your pile in on top.

This combination ensures the best composting activity, as long as you turn the compost regularly and keep it as moist as a damp sponge. It sounds complicated, but once you get started it really is simple. And the result is impressive – at least one-third less garbage at the curbside; and chemical-free, nutrient-rich black compost for your lawn and garden.

Thank you for considering some of these environmentally friendly tips this spring. Small changes in your home and yard really do matter as we work together to make Fredericton a ‘green’ leader!

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Please note: for residents impacted by the flood, the City’s no-charge ‘Flood Debris Pick-up Program’ began on Monday, May 6 (call 460-2996 to register for the program). And for all residents, the City’s ‘Annual Spring Yard Cleanup’ schedule has begun and will continue through the month, with pick up on your regular garbage day.