

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is the clear bag program?**

A: The clear bag program is a mandatory waste management program that requires everyone in Mount Pearl to properly sort their waste, using transparent blue bags for recyclables and clear bags for garbage.

**Q: When will the program begin?**

A: The program begins in March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, at which time residents of Mount Pearl are required to sort their waste by using transparent blue bags for recyclables and clear bags for garbage. Residents will receive more specific information in the mail prior to the program launch.

**Q: Will household collection schedules change with the launch of this program?**

A: Recyclables and garbage will continue to be collected weekly, with no changes to the current collection schedule.

**Q: What is the benefit of clear garbage bags?**

A: Our clear bag program will help us achieve our goal of diverting waste from our landfill by ensuring that residents recycle and dispose of hazardous materials properly. When everyone does their part to reduce, reuse and recycle, we generate less garbage. This reduces operating costs for managing waste and also extends the life of the landfill. In addition, by using a product to its fullest extent, we reduce the need to both harvest new raw materials and manufacture new products. This, in turn, conserves natural resources, saves energy and reduces pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Q: Why are clear bags mandatory for garbage?**

A: The City of Mount Pearl will soon require mandatory use of clear bags for garbage disposal to help increase diversion of recyclables and hazardous materials from the landfill. Clear bags also improve safety for our collectors by enabling them to see contents in the bag, such as broken glass, needles and other sharp items that can potentially cause injuries. We are proud to take part in a progressive and sustainable waste management program that requires everyone do their part to protect the environment by properly sorting their waste using clear garbage bags and transparent blue recycling bags.

**Q: Are there other Canadian provinces or regions with similar clear bag programs in place?**

A: Yes. Central Newfoundland Waste Management implemented a clear bag program in 2015. In addition, several cities and towns throughout Canada use clear garbage bags, such as Markham and the City of Guelph in Ontario, and the majority of communities in Nova Scotia.

**Q: Why do we have to use clear bags for garbage when other areas of the province continue to use black bags?**

A: As demonstrated in other jurisdictions of the country where the use of clear garbage bags is mandatory, implementation of clear garbage bags in Mount Pearl will help us divert recyclables and environmentally hazardous waste from the landfill. We are proud to take part in a progressive and sustainable waste management program that requires everyone to do their part

to help protect the environment by properly sorting their waste using clear garbage bags and transparent blue recycling bags.

**Q: Where do I get clear garbage bags?**

A: Local retailers throughout Mount Pearl supply clear bags.

**Q: How will privacy issues be addressed?**

A: To accommodate privacy needs, residents are allowed to use two small non-transparent bags, of any colour, per collection day. The privacy bags must be no larger than 54.9 cm x 58.4 cm (21.6 in x 23 in), such as a grocery bag. You can use bags that are larger in size, but the volume must not exceed a bag size of 54.9 cm x 58.4 cm. This may address concerns from people who have green/black garbage bags on hand. These bags can be used as privacy bags, as long as the volume restriction is met. The privacy bag must be placed inside the garbage cart. Any personal paper documents with addresses or other identifying information should always be shredded and then placed in a transparent blue bag with recyclables.

**Q: Can I still use white grocery or kitchen catcher type bags?**

A: Two small non-transparent bags of any colour, such as grocery or kitchen catcher bags, that measure no larger than 54.9 cm x 58.4 cm (21.6 in x 23 in) can be used as privacy bags. Two privacy bags are allowed per cart on your collection day. You can use bags that are larger in size, but the volume must not exceed a bag size of 54.9 cm x 58.4 cm. This may address concerns from people who have green/black garbage bags on hand. These bags can be used as privacy bags, as long as the volume restriction is met.

**Q: What happens to residents who don't participate in the clear garbage bag program?**

A: Overtime, households that are not compliant with the use of clear garbage bags will have their waste rejected and may be fined. A sticker will be placed on rejected material to identify the issue, which must be remedied by the resident, before placing at the curb for pick up during the next weekly collection period.

**Q: Have retailers been given notice of the clear bag requirement?**

A: Yes. The City of Mount Pearl has been working together with retailers to prepare for the launch of mandatory clear bags. In doing so, we have provided them with detailed information around the program and the clear bag requirements so they can stock their stores accordingly.

**Q: What do I do with the black/green bags that I have now?**

A: We recommend using leftover black and green bags for storage or when returning your beverage containers to the local Green Depot. They can also be donated to local charities, non-profit groups and churches that will have opportunities to reuse them (clothing storage and shipping, etc.). You can also use these bags as privacy bags; however, the volume must not exceed a bag size of 54.9 cm x 58.4 cm.

**Q: How restrictive will this program be?**

A: This is a mandatory program; however, we understand that there will be a period of transition as the program launches. We know that public education is critical to achieving success and we have developed a comprehensive plan to ensure everyone is educated about the change.

**Q: Will retailers have enough bags to supply residents? What happens if they don't? What do we use then?**

A: Yes, retailers will have enough bags to supply residents. Retailers have been notified and will stock an appropriate supply of bags for this program.

**Q: Will the City audit the clear bags?**

A: We understand that there will be a period of transition as the program launches. There will be a grace period for residents.