

Going Green in Londonderry

Composting Made Easy

Spring is a great time to start a compost pile. It can be as simple as finding a spot in your yard and just piling up yard waste and kitchen scraps. Composting is not only great for the environment; it's good for the bottom line too. The Town of Londonderry pays its trash contractor per ton of trash that is picked up. Every four years that contract is renegotiated, and it's always possible (indeed likely given fuel prices) that the cost will go up. Offsetting the price increase with a decrease in the tonnage collected will keep the final bill steady.

How can residents help? By composting.

Composting can seem intimidating at first- what do you compost, does the compost attract animals, what does compost turn in to, and finally, how much time does it take?

There are some books and magazines that make composting seem a lot more complicated than it needs to be. First, you'll need a box about 3 feet by 3 feet that has a lid, but no bottom (if you don't make a box yourself, you could cut the bottom out of a Rubbermaid storage container).

Choose a spot in your yard and loosen up a little dirt where you plan on putting the container. Fill the bin with left over fruits, vegetables, egg shells, coffee grinds and yard waste. (Some people compost meat, but this usually attracts rodents). Other compostable items include clippings from houseplants, tea bags, stale bread, crackers, pretzels, cereals, rice, pasta, popcorn, cornhusks and fur brushed from your cat or dog. Lastly, you can also add the droppings and bedding from your hamster, rabbit or gerbil cage, droppings and newspaper from the bird cage, and rawhide dog chews.

Use a pitchfork or iron rake to 'turn' the compost once or twice a week. Always keep the bin covered. In about 6-8 weeks, the compost turns to nutrient rich soil that is great for the garden. It shouldn't take more than about 10-15 minutes weekly to keep your leftovers separate from the trash, bring it out to the compost bin and turn the compost.

Every item that is not thrown out, is not only an item that is kept out of a landfill, it is weight that is not adding on to the town's trash disposal bill.

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