



## Baltimore City Department of Public Works

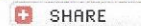
# PRESS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

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## **DPW Announces Modifications to Recycling Collections**

*Department Shifts to Bi-Weekly Collections, Effective Jan. 18*

Today, Baltimore City Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Jason W. Mitchell announced modifications to the City's recycling collection operations designed to bring stability and predictability to routes impacted by delays in recent weeks.

Beginning next week, January 18, 2022, DPW will move to bi-weekly collections for recycling, using an alternating A and B cycle system for curbside collection services:

**Northeast and Northwest** (north of North Avenue) neighborhoods will be on Week A of the alternating schedule, which will start on January 18 - 21. Their following collection will be the week of February 1 - 4.

**Southeast and Southwest** (south of North Avenue) will be on Week B of the alternating schedule, which will start on January 25 - 28. Their following collection will be the week of February 8 - 11.

Residents' recycling day will not change with these modifications. For example, if a resident's typical recycling collection day is Thursday, it will remain on Thursday with this new schedule, and collections will occur bi-weekly. This modified collection schedule will remain in effect until further notice. To help navigate the recycling modifications, residents can visit DPW's new online [map](#) that shows their recycling day and whether the address is on the A or B cycle. It

is critically important to note that these modifications do not impact trash collections and only pertain to recycling collections.

### **Stabilizing Collection Process**

“I want to thank Baltimore City residents for their patience as we have had to make hard choices while trying to navigate staffing challenges made worse by this recent spike in COVID-19 cases,” **said Director Jason W. Mitchell.** “This change to bi-weekly recycling collections will help the Department manage for the long-term. These modifications are essential to stabilize operations and ensure consistent, predictable, and sustainable services for residents.”

Over the last month, DPW has experienced severe staffing shortages due to the recent rise in positive COVID-19 cases. Solid Waste operations across the country in large and small municipalities are experiencing similar challenges. Many of these jurisdictions have shut down their curbside recycling collections completely.

Even before the pandemic, DPW’s Bureau of Solid Waste struggled to fill vacancies, as this work is labor-intensive. The onslaught of COVID-19 cases has substantially impacted solid waste operations and made the exposure risks of the job very clear. Over a 7-day period during the holidays, the Department averaged 228 employees out of work, with a peak of 340 employees out during that period. This type of staffing shortage makes it difficult to sustain routine operations.

The recent winter weather conditions in the Baltimore area further stressed Solid Waste operations. DPW also supports Baltimore City snow operations by completing 22 snowplow routes. This support requires pulling staff from routine collection services to ensure that roadways are safe for residents and visitors.

The Department has persevered and been extremely agile in prioritizing trash collections, reallocating resources from non-essential services, and supporting emergency operations while managing these severe staff shortages. DPW understands how important recycling is to waste diversion and is committed to doing everything possible to retain curbside recycling collection. While many municipalities have completely suspended recycling collections, DPW has chosen to maintain the service in an effort to further Mayor Scott’s vision of moving Baltimore City towards a zero-waste initiative. The changes to the recycling collection schedule are critical for DPW to ensure curbside recycling services are reliable and sustainable for residents.

### **Maintaining Capacity**

DPW remains committed to bringing equitable recycling options to Baltimore households. Today, DPW has delivered over 131,000 recycling carts (65-gallon) to City households. These carts have wheels for easy movement and lids to

secure recycling. There is no limit on how much recycling residents can put out on their bi-weekly collections.

As the Department transitions to the new recycling schedules, DPW encourages residents to use DPW's five Residential Drop-Off Centers that are open Monday through Saturday:

- Northwest Transfer Station, 5030 Reisterstown Road
- Quarantine Road Landfill, 6100 Quarantine Road
- Northwest Residential Drop-off Center, 2840 Sisson Street
- Southwestern Residential Drop-off Center, 701 Reedbird Avenue
- Eastern Residential Drop-off Center, 6101 Bowleys Lane

DPW will continue to provide collection updates on its [website](#). If residents still have questions about the modified recycling schedule, they can visit our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs) page.