City of Cambridge
Department of Public Works

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City of Cambridge Refuse & Litter Ordinance Compliance Checklist

Effective February 3, 2027 the changes to the Cambridge Refuse & Litter Ordinance (Municipal Code 8.24) will impact all buildings in Cambridge. Violations are subject to a fine up to $300 each. Each day is a separate violation. Building owners and property managers can use this checklist to comply with new and current policies:

- ☐ Establish a program to separate food waste from the trash.
- ☐ Ensure that recycling and yard waste are diverted, including gathering leaves on the sidewalk and curb in front of your property.
- ☐ Keep textiles, mattresses, appliances, TVs, batteries**, and other materials out of the trash. Use the Get Rid of It Right tool to look-up how info on specific items.
- ☐ Keep lids of carts and dumpsters closed at all times to reduce rodent access,
- ☐ Properties on the City's trash, recycling or food waste programs must:
  - Use City-issued carts for weekly trash, recycling, and food waste.
    - For yard waste, resident must provide their own barrel or bags. Barrel must be 45 gallons or less.
  - Label carts with building's address,
  - Replace broken or lost carts within 15 days,
    - There is a $50 charge to replace lost carts or carts chewed-through by rodents.
  - If you have excess trash, visit www.CambridgeMA.Gov/Trash for info on managing excess trash.
- ☐ If you own/manage a large residential (>13 units) or commercial building (>25,000 square feet), you must submit an annual Zero Waste Plan.
- ☐ If you have a dumpster, you must get an annual dumpster license. Visit here to get a license.

** All batteries except alkaline required to be kept out of the trash.

Other Ordinance requirements:

- ☐ To maintain sidewalk accessibility, please follow these rules for placing carts out for collection.
  - Carts can't be placed at the curb until after 6pm the evening before your collection day.
  - Carts must be removed from the curb by 6pm on collection day.
  - If your collection day is delayed due to a holiday, you must adjust set-out times. For example, if your trash collection day is Monday but there is a delay

due to a Monday holiday, you may not place carts at the curb until Monday at 6pm for Tuesday collection.

- □ Items designated as Household Hazardous Waste are prohibited in the trash.
- □ Buildings with 3 or more units, in which the owner does not reside, shall post contact information for the owner (or property manager) in a location visible from the outside entrance.
- □ For buildings with City trash collection:
  - Bulky waste: Items that don't require a permit but don't fit into a cart are considered a bulky waste item. Examples include a couch, table, or chair that is not a metal item. Each household is permitted one piece of bulky waste for trash collection each week.
  - Other non-appliance metal items such as bed frames, filing cabinets, bicycles, and grills are not accepted in the trash.

Recommended, but not required, guidance:

- □ Educate tenants on specific rules for your building.
- □ Post signage about recycling and food waste separation next to carts, and distribute the Zero Waste Guide to tenants. Request them at: www.CambridgeMA.Gov/RecycleSupplies.
- □ Join the City's monthly Recycling email newsletter to stay up-to-date on waste management and recycling programs, policies and timely information.
- □ Visit the City's main waste collection webpage for up-to-date information, including our Zero Waste Guide, the Get Rid of It Right tool, programs such as Recycle Center, Household Hazardous Waste, and other info and programs to assist with day-to-day waste management.

Email DPW at recycle@cambridgema.gov with any questions or requests for assistance.