metrovancouver | SOLID WASTE

# Metro Vancouver Disposal Ban Program

## MANUAL

2026

## Indigenous Territorial Acknowledgement

Metro Vancouver acknowledges that the region's residents live, work, and learn on the shared territories of many Indigenous peoples, including 10 local First Nations: q̓i,c̓əy̓ (Katzie), q̓ʷɑ:ƛ̓ən̓ (Kwantlen), kʷikʷəƛ̓əm (Kwikwetlem), máthxwi (Matsqui), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), qiqéyt (Qayqayt), Semiahmoo, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), scəw̓aθən məsteyəxʷ (Tsawwassen), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh).

Metro Vancouver respects the diverse and distinct histories, languages and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, which collectively enrich our lives and the region.

## About Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver is a diverse organization that plans for and delivers regional utility services, including water, sewers and wastewater treatment, and solid waste management. It also monitors and regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system, provides affordable rental housing, and serves as a regional federation. The organization is a federation of 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation located in the region of the same name. The organization is made up of four separate legal entities, each governed by its own Board of Directors. Board directors are elected officials from member jurisdictions.

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# Introduction

## Overview and History

The Metro Vancouver Disposal Ban Program is an important element of the region's Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan. Disposal bans help keep recyclable materials, as well as materials that pose operational risks and other hazards, out of the landfill, Waste-to-Energy Facility and regional solid waste facilities.

Banned materials are specified in the *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Tipping Fee and Solid Waste Disposal Regulation* (Tipping Fee Bylaw). Loads received at Metro Vancouver and City of Vancouver solid waste facilities are visually inspected for banned materials, and surcharges are levied if banned materials are present in the loads, at levels beyond thresholds defined in the Tipping Fee Bylaw.

Disposal bans were first introduced in 1997, with a cardboard ban and the hiring of the first disposal ban inspector to monitor the program. Bans on office paper and newspaper were introduced the following year. Between 2008 and 2018, the program expanded significantly with the addition of a range of materials including those identified in the Province of British Columbia's *Recycling Regulation* and recent additions such as organics, clean wood and expanded polystyrene.

Today, over 50 materials are included in the program with inspections occurring regularly at all Metro Vancouver and City of Vancouver facilities. An annual report provided to the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Board (Board) contains inspection rates, surcharged materials, surcharge rates by company/municipality and other program information.

## Why we have Disposal Bans

The disposal ban program is a key tool for Metro Vancouver to encourage waste reduction and recycling. One recent year inspectors were able to work with customers and provide alternative recycling options to prevent more than 20,000 loads containing banned materials from being disposed as garbage.

By keeping recyclable and hazardous materials out of the waste stream, disposal bans contribute to the waste reduction and recycling goals of Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions.

# About this Manual

This document is a procedural manual for all personnel involved in administering the Disposal Ban Program and is publicly available on the Metro Vancouver website. This manual details procedures for:

- Metro Vancouver and City of Vancouver staff and contracted facility operators working onsite at all solid waste facilities who play a role in the Disposal Ban Program. Specifically, site supervisors, scale-house operators and tipping floor staff;
- Disposal ban inspectors; and
- Metro Vancouver Solid Waste staff working at head office who are responsible for overseeing the Disposal Ban Program, determining what materials to include, processing and tracking surcharges and responding to inquiries, disputes and appeals.

**This manual is for information purposes only. The Tipping Fee Bylaw takes precedent if conflicts exist.**

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver is responsible for waste reduction and recycling planning and operates a series of solid waste facilities serving residents and businesses in the region. Regional solid waste management planning is guided by overarching principles of sustainability. Specific strategies and waste reduction and recycling targets are outlined in Metro Vancouver's *Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan*.

The regional district's key roles in the Disposal Ban Program are to:

- Oversee and administer the program;
- Research and identify which materials should be added to the program (i.e., materials for which reuse and recycling opportunities exist, or pose operational, environmental and public health and safety hazards);
- Train regional, municipal and contracted employees involved in the program;
- Provide educational resources and information about the program for regional solid waste facility customers; and,
- Respond to and resolve program inquiries, disputes and appeals.

Detailed Disposal Ban Program results are reported annually to the Board. In addition, Metro Vancouver monitors and reports on the waste and recycling quantities in its "Annual Recycling Report" and *Biennial Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan Progress Report*.

The Tipping Fee Bylaw identifies banned materials, surcharge thresholds and surcharge rates, in addition to tipping fees for garbage and recyclables. The Bylaw is amended or replaced on a periodic basis by the Board.

The Board is made up of elected representatives of local government appointed by their councils to the Board. The voting structure of the Board is weighted by population.

## City of Vancouver

As the operator of two of the nine solid waste facilities within the region (the Vancouver Landfill and the Vancouver South Transfer Station), the City of Vancouver plays a key role in administering and educating customers about the Disposal Ban Program. Specifically:

- Scale operators on site at the City's two facilities are responsible for pre-screening loads and processing surcharges.
- Site employees on the tipping floor of the Vancouver South Transfer Station and the active face of the landfill assist disposal ban inspectors with the process, by determining if it is safe for customers to reload banned materials to their cars for recycling.

Requirements for the Disposal Ban Program for City of Vancouver facilities are included in the *City of Vancouver Solid Waste Bylaw*. City of Vancouver Disposal Ban Program requirements are generally consistent with Metro Vancouver requirements with some minor variations.

## The Province of British Columbia

Under the provisions of the Provincial *Environmental Management Act*, regional districts prepare and submit solid waste management plans to the Province. Plans are approved by the Minister of Environment and Parks after public and stakeholder consultation has taken place.

The Province issues a guide for regional districts to follow in completing their solid waste management planning process. Entitled *A Guide to Solid Waste Management Planning*, the most recent version of this guide was published in 2016 and can be found online here.

The *Recycling Regulation* under authority of the *Environmental Management Act* sets out the requirements for extended producer responsibility in BC and includes product categories of materials that are included in take-back programs. The regulation can be found online here. Metro Vancouver has traditionally included most materials covered under the *Recycling Regulation* in its Disposal Ban Program.

## Inspections Contractor

Metro Vancouver hires an independent contractor to conduct disposal ban inspections at the regional solid waste facilities. The contractor is responsible for providing its employees with safety and job training and ensuring that inspectors follow the Tipping Fee Bylaw and comply with the Metro Vancouver disposal bans inspection process.

# Solid Waste Facilities

### 1. Vancouver South Transfer Station
### 377 West Kent Avenue North, Vancouver

The Vancouver South Transfer Station is operated by the City of Vancouver and serves customers arriving in both small and large vehicles. The transfer station has a tipping floor with a central pit. Customers unload garbage materials onto the tipping floor or directly into the pit. A wide range of recyclables are accepted for free at the Zero Waste Centre, located adjacent to the facility.

### 2. Vancouver Landfill
### 5400 72nd Street, Delta

The Vancouver Landfill is located in Delta near Highways 99 and 17, and is operated by the City of Vancouver. The landfill serves small and large vehicles including some tractor trailer units typically delivering construction and demolition waste. Small vehicles are unloaded separately in the residential drop-off area, and large vehicles are unloaded on the active face of the landfill. A recycling area is located within the small vehicle area.

### 3. North Shore Recycling and Waste Centre
### 30 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver

The North Shore Recycling and Waste Centre accepts garbage from both small and large vehicles. It has both automated and attended scales. Typically only account customers with mechanically unloaded vehicles use the automated scales. Unloading is done onto a tipping floor. A recycling area where customers can drop off recyclable materials for free is located ahead of the scales.

### 4. Waste-to-Energy Facility
### 5150 Riverbend Drive, Burnaby

Metro Vancouver's Waste-to-Energy Facility accepts waste delivered in large mechanically unloading vehicles. Garbage is unloaded directly into a pit and inspectors monitor for banned materials by CCTV.

### 5. United Boulevard and Waste Centre
### 995 United Boulevard, Coquitlam

United Boulevard Recycling and Waste Centre serves both small and large vehicles. Unloading is done onto a tipping floor. It has both automated and attended scales. A recycling area where customers can drop off recyclable materials for free is located ahead of the scales.

### 6. North Surrey Recycling and Waste Centre 9770 192 Street, Surrey

North Surrey Recycling and Waste Centre serves small and large vehicles. It has both automated and attended scales. Unloading is done directly into a pit for mechanically unloading vehicles and onto the tipping floor for small vehicles. Limited recycling services are available for a fee.

### 7. Maple Ridge Recycling and Waste Centre 10092 236 Street, Maple Ridge

The Maple Ridge Recycling and Waste Centre serves customers in small manually-unloaded vehicles only. Garbage is manually-unloaded into trailers located below the tipping floor. A recycling area operated by Ridge Meadows Recycling Society where customers can drop off recyclable materials for free is located adjacent to the recycling and waste centre.

### 8. Langley Recycling and Waste Centre 1070 - 272 Street, Aldergrove

The Langley Recycling and Waste Centre serves customers in small manually-unloaded vehicles only. Garbage is unloaded onto a walking floor and is then loaded into a compactor container. Limited recycling services are provided for a fee.

### 9. Central Surrey Recycling and Waste Centre 6711 - 154 Street, Surrey

The Central Surrey Recycling and Waste Centre serves customers in manually-unloaded vehicles only. Garbage is manually-unloaded onto a tipping floor. It has a free recycling depot that offers recycling options for a wide variety of items.

# Banned Materials

## Banned Recyclable Materials

Banned Recyclable Materials are identified in the Tipping Fee Bylaw. As of the date of this program manual, the following have been identified:

- Beverage containers (all except milk product containers)
- Containers made of glass, metal, recyclable plastic or composite materials
- Corrugated cardboard
- Recyclable paper
- Yard trimmings
- Food waste
- Clean wood
- Expanded polystyrene packaging

The Tipping Fee Bylaw specifies a maximum threshold that is permitted in the garbage before a load is surcharged. Inspectors visually and methodically determine the quantity of the banned material in the load and whether the quantity exceeds the threshold prescribed in the Tipping Fee Bylaw. Most materials have a threshold of 5% with a combination of all banned materials in a load not to exceed 5%. Food waste and expanded polystyrene currently have thresholds of 25% and 20%, respectively. When calculating the combination of materials, food waste and expanded polystyrene amounts are excluded.

## Banned Hazardous and Operational Impact Materials

Banned materials that are hazardous to the environment or workers or have high operational impacts are identified in the Tipping Fee Bylaw, including

- Agricultural waste
- Automobile bodies and parts
- Refuse that is on fire, smoldering, odourous, dusty, flammable or explosive
- Hazardous waste as defined in the Hazardous Waste Regulation, BC Reg. 63/88
- Propane tanks
- Liquids and sludge
- Wire, hosing, rope & cable over 1 metre in length
- Dead animals
- Inert fill material including soil, sod, gravel, concrete and asphalt exceeding 0.5 cubic metres per load
- Excrement, other than amounts of pet excrement that are double bagged and discarded with Municipal Solid Waste and that do not exceed either 5% of the total weight of the load or 5% of the total volume of the load
- Personal hygiene products over 10% of the load not properly contained

- Liquid containers 205 L or bigger
- Single objects over 100 kg, 2.5 metres long or 1.2 metres wide (except at the Waste-to-Energy Facility where a single object must not exceed 1.0 metre in length.
- Gypsum
- Mattresses
- Railroad ties or creosote-treated wood
- Toxic plants (giant hogweed, daphne/spurge laurel, and devil's club)*
- Refuse that would cause undue risk of injury or occupational disease to any person at the Disposal Site or that would otherwise contravene the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* BC Reg 296/27 enacted pursuant to the *Workers Compensation Act*, as amended or replaced from time to time; and
- Any other refuse that the Manager considers unsuitable for handling at the Disposal Site.

**Loads are surcharged if a single banned hazardous and operational impact material is observed in the load.**

**Accepted exclusively at the Waste-to-Energy Facility.*

## Banned Product Stewardship Materials

Banned Product Stewardship Materials are identified in the Tipping Fee Bylaw and are defined in the provincial *Recycling Regulation*. As of the date of this program manual, the following have been identified:

- Solvents and flammable liquids
- Pesticides
- Gasoline
- Pharmaceutical products and medications
- Oil, oil filters and oil containers
- Lubricating oils and lubricating oil containers
- Paint and paint containers
- Lead acid batteries
- Antifreeze and containers
- Electronic and electrical products including metal household or commercial appliances, as identified in Schedule 3 – Electronics and Electrical Products Category to the *Recycling Regulations*
- Tires

**These materials are surcharged if a single item is observed in the load.**

For Banned Hazardous and Operational Impact Materials or Product Stewardship Materials, in addition to a surcharge, customers may be subject to remediation and clean-up costs depending on the nature of the discarded material.

# Surcharges and Thresholds

Surcharges apply to banned materials found in customers' garbage unloaded at all Metro Vancouver and City of Vancouver solid waste facilities. As described in the Tipping Fee Bylaw, some materials have allowable thresholds (maximum percent of the load by volume or weight). Other materials are surcharged if a single item is identified in the load.

Surcharge amounts are currently as follows:

| MATERIAL(S) | SURCHARGE LEVEL | APPLIES TO |
|---|---|---|
| Banned hazardous and operational impact materials<br><br>Banned product stewardship program materials | Fixed fee surcharge, plus any remediation or clean-up costs. See Disposal Ban Program webpage for current rate | Loads containing one or more banned item(s). No threshold (i.e., any quantity) |
| Banned recyclable materials, except for expanded polystyrene packaging | 50% of Tipping Fee surcharge payable | Loads containing 5% or more by weight or volume of one or a combination of recyclable materials<br><br>Loads containing 25% or more by weight or volume of food waste |
| Expanded polystyrene packaging | 100% of Tipping Fee surcharge payable | Loads containing 20% or more by weight or volume |

# Introducing New Materials

As part of the region's overall waste management, Metro Vancouver monitors recycling opportunities for materials found in the waste stream by engaging with public and private sector waste and recycling market participants.

As new disposal ban materials are identified, Metro Vancouver engages with interested parties, and brings recommendations to the Board to incorporate into the Tipping Fee Bylaw. Any new ban requirements are communicated to solid waste system participants through a variety of channels.

When a ban is introduced, thresholds typically start high, to give the recycling industry time to adjust capacity. Thresholds decrease over time and this phased-in approach allows Metro Vancouver, municipalities, solid waste facility scale operators and disposal ban inspectors time to educate customers. It also provides time for Metro Vancouver's residents and businesses to obtain new services to manage the banned materials or items.

# Prescreening

The first step of the inspection process is usually a prescreening that happens at the inbound scale. Prescreening enables banned materials to be identified through visual inspection before they enter the facility. It also functions as a way of educating customers about disposal options for banned materials or items and the Disposal Ban Program. Prescreening is only carried out for loads processed over attended scales.

Typical activities may include:

- Scale operators ask customers what materials are in their loads.
- Where possible, scale operators visually inspect loads to scan for banned materials.
- If the scale operator sees a banned item, or if the customer advises that the load contains a banned item, the scale operator informs the customer about the ban and gives them information about where and how the item(s) can be recycled, reused or disposed of properly.
- Flyers about banned materials are kept on hand in the scale house and are distributed as appropriate.

# The Inspection Process

**Who's involved: Disposal ban inspectors**

The on-site inspection process varies from site to site, depending on the operational set up of each solid waste facility.

Some typical steps that may be included in the on-site inspection process are as follows:

## 1. Prior to Unloading

- The inspector scans vehicles entering the facility for the presence of banned materials.
- If banned item(s) are spotted, the inspector focuses solely on the specific vehicle in which the items appear and conducts an inspection.
- The inspector identifies the vehicle licence plate number and enters this information into a tablet that contains the digital surcharge application.
- Once the vehicle is parked, the inspector moves closer to the vehicle, to a distance of about three metres, where he/she can observe the part of the vehicle from which garbage will be unloaded.
- If visible, the inspector observes the vehicle's garbage prior to unloading. If the load contains banned materials the inspector informs the customer that those materials will result in a surcharge if disposed. If it is safe to do so, the inspector advises the customer that they can remove the banned materials from the load to avoid a surcharge.

## 2. During Unloading

- The inspector visually observes garbage while it is being unloaded from the vehicle. If there are banned materials in the load, and if safe to do so, the inspector takes photographs of the banned materials.
- Photographs of banned materials are not required for issuing a surcharge notice.

## 3. Once Unloaded

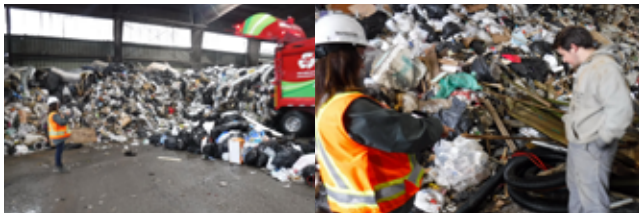
- Once the vehicle has unloaded its entire load, the inspector visually inspects the garbage for any banned materials.
- The inspector takes photographs showing the banned materials where possible.
- For banned materials with thresholds restrictions, the inspector visually gauges the proportions that are present in the load.
- If the inspector identifies a banned material that exceeds the threshold or a banned material with no threshold, the inspector informs the customer of the pending surcharge where practical.
- If practical, the inspector offers options for recycling, reuse or safe disposal of banned items.

# 4. Option to Reload Material

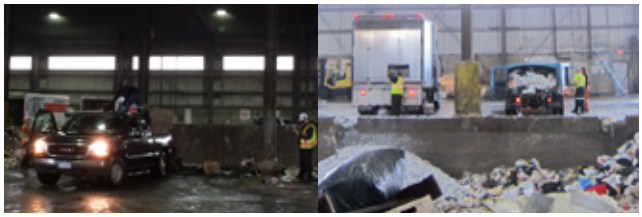
- If deemed safe by the facility operator, customers may be advised of the opportunity to reload the banned material(s).
- The option to reload is more practical at facilities where the material is unloaded onto a tipping floor. There is no option to reload at the Waste-to-Energy Facility due to the depth of the bunker.

  At North Surrey Recycling and Waste Centre and the Vancouver South Transfer Station, there is typically no option to reload because material is deposited in a pit.
- If the customer is able to reload and remove the banned materials, a surcharge notice is not issued.

**Inspector monitoring TV screen at the Waste-to-Energy Facility**
At the Waste-to-Energy Facility, the inspector is stationed near the drop-off area with a computer and CCTV monitor. The inspector monitors live footage on a screen as materials are being unloaded. Screen shots of banned materials can be captured from the video footage.



**Tipping floor facilities**
Customers may be given the option to reload banned materials from the tipping floor if deemed safe by the site supervisor.



**Pit style facilities**
No reloads.

**Active face at the Vancouver Landfill**
The active face at Vancouver Landfill. Option to reload is subject to the discretion of the site supervisor.

# Issuing Surcharges

A digital surcharge process was implemented in 2019 at Metro Vancouver facilities. Disposal ban inspectors are provided with tablets that run a disposal ban application that interfaces with the weigh scale payment system and can digitally notify account customers of surcharges. Below are the key steps involved in issuing surcharges:

- If the inspector identifies a banned material and the customer declines to reload banned materials, or it is deemed unsafe for them to do so, the inspector issues a surcharge notice.
- When there are multiple banned materials present in a single load, the inspector only issues the surcharge for the material with the highest fee.
- Photographs of banned materials are not required for issuing a surcharge notice. The inspectors visually observing the banned material being unloaded and left on the tipping floor or pit/bunker is sufficient support.
- The inspector completes a surcharge notice on the tablet and the surcharge information is automatically loaded to the weigh scale system used by staff at the inbound and outbound scales.
- At City of Vancouver facilities (Vancouver South Transfer Station and Vancouver Landfill) where the digital surcharge application is not in place, the inspector accompanies the customer to the scale house on the way out to ensure that the scale house operator is aware of the surcharge.
- The inspector will issue a digital surcharge to account customers as illustrated on the next page.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Inspection Number** | SC-NSHO-102000 |
| **Transaction Number** | NSHO-00001400 |
| **Site** | NSHO |
| **Date and Time** | 2026-01-02 11:11 AM |
| **Inspector** | AA |
| **Hauler** | AAA |
| **License Plate** | AC1234 |
| **Vehicle ID** | AAA-1001 |
| **Banned Material** | Corrugated Cardboard > 5% |
| **Fee** | 50% of Tipping Fee |
| **Bylaw** | 379 |
| **Section** | 7.15 |
| **Schedule** | E2 |
| **Additional Banned Material(s)** | Paint & Container(s) |
| **Comments** | End of load |
| **Options Discussed with Driver** | Yes |
| **Ticket Comments** | Corrugated Cardboard >5% |

# Processing Surcharges at the Scale House

## Non-Account Customers

Non-account customers pay for the surcharge on the outbound scale along with the tipping fees. The weigh scale ticket contains the surcharge information.

## Account Customers

Account customers have the surcharge added to their weigh scale ticket at the site when their vehicles weigh out. A digital surcharge notification, including photographs if available, is sent to the email address on file at the time the surcharge is applied.

## Account Customers with Vehicles with Stored Tares (i.e., no weigh out necessary)

Account customers with stored tares receive a weigh scale ticket on the inbound scale. If a surcharge is applied to their load, a digital surcharge email is sent to the account customer at the time the surcharge is applied. Metro Vancouver staff edit the weigh scale ticket to include the surcharge and email the revised weigh scale ticket along with the surcharge email previously sent to the account customer.

# Appeals and Disputes

The process by which customers may dispute a surcharge notice is as follows:

- Customers may dispute the surcharge within 30 days of it being issued by completing a dispute form.
- Metro Vancouver staff review the surcharge dispute form and any related information.
- Metro Vancouver typically provides a written response within 7 to 10 working days outlining the decision and the rationale for the decision.
- Statistics on appeals and disputes are included in the annual Disposal Ban Program Report to the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Board.

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