

Sustainable Backyards Program: COMPOST BINS

**50% off
Rebate
Inside**

Also available: Rebates for [Trees](#), [Rain Barrels](#), and [Native Plants](#)

Why Compost at Home?

- Helps your garden and house plants grow by improving soil fertility.
- Saves you money by replacing store-bought soil conditioners.
- Saves water by helping the soil hold moisture and reduce runoff.
- Benefits the environment by recycling valuable organic resources, reducing air and water pollution from garbage trucks and runoff, and extending the life of our landfills.

Compost Works for You!

Composting helps the environment and it can help your garden, lawn and house plants too! When your compost looks like soil and smells sweet and earthy, it is ready to use. You can use it...

- In New Garden Beds: Mix a 4" to 8" layer of compost into newly reclaimed or poor soils.
- In Existing Beds: Mix a 1" to 3" layer of compost into annual garden beds at least once a year.
- On the Lawn: Spread a thin layer of mulch evenly across lawn as needed, instead of fertilizer.
- As a Mulch: Spread a 1" to 3" layer of coarse compost on soil as a mulch any time during the growing season to improve soil fertility and reduce watering needs. Do not pile mulch on the stems of plants or the trunk of trees.
- On House Plants: Sprinkle a thin layer of sifted compost on top of the soil to provide nutrients.



DID YOU KNOW?

In a typical Chicago home, kitchen scraps account for nearly 20% of the garbage produced!

We can help!

Rebates

We want to give you 50% off (up to \$50) any locally-purchased compost bin! All you have to do is fill out the attached rebate form and send it in with your original purchase receipt. See rebate form (attached) for more details.

Workshops

Attend a free Sustainable Backyards Workshop! The City of Chicago, along with its Sustainable Backyards partners, will be hosting a series of free informative workshops across the city. You'll learn the basics of installing and maintaining rain barrels, compost bins, trees and native plants, and can share stories of backyard challenges and successes with fellow attendees.

For more details, visit: www.cityofchicago.org/rainbarrel

Resources

On the web: www.chicagohomecomposting.org

On the phone: Recycling Hotline: 312.744.1614 or the Compost "Rotline": 773.265.9587

In person (Compost Education Centers):

- Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N Central Park Ave., 773.638.1766, www.garfieldconservatory.org
- Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, 3807 W 111th Street, 773.233.0476. www.chicagoagr.org
- North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N Pulaski Road, 312.744.5478, www.chicagoparkdistrict.com
- Eden Place Nature Center, 43rd Place and Shields Ave., 773.624.8686, www.fullerpark.com
- Chicago Center for Green Technology, 445 N Sacramento Boulevard, 312-746-9642, www.cityofchicago.org/Environment/GreenTech



COMPOST BINS: how it works ...

What do you need to compost in your backyard?

1. Compost Bin: A compost bin that does not have any holes larger than ¼ inch, including a base for the ground — this will help keep pests out of your compost bin.
2. "Greens": food scraps, green grass clippings, young weeds
3. "Browns": dried leaves, straw, newspaper
4. Pitch fork or turning fork
5. Water source: rain barrel, watering can, or hose to keep the compost pile as moist as wrung-out sponge



What to Throw in Your Compost Bin?

Keep your compost bin from becoming a nuisance by limiting odor, litter, or dust **and by only adding the "right" things to your compost bin.**

Here are some DOs and DON'Ts:

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fallen leaves - Wood prunings, chopped - Untreated wood sawdust - Black & white newspaper - Dried lawn clippings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meat, bones, or fish - Dairy products or grease - Grains, breads or beans - Dog, cat or bird feces - Plywood or treated wood sawdust - Diseased plants - Weeds that went to seed - Invasive plants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fruit & vegetable scraps - Young weeds - Coffee grounds & filters - Egg shells - Citrus rinds - Tea bags - Fresh lawn clippings 	

Follow the Basic Compost 1-2-3

1. Feed yard trimmings to your bin as you generate them by chopping them first into pieces 6" or smaller. Food scraps and grass clippings need to be buried or mixed into the center of the pile (never "dump and run" or else you will have animals and flies attracted to the smells in your bin). Be sure to mix enough browns to evenly balance your greens.

2. Maintain compost by turning it or mixing it each time you add material, or about once a week. As it gets full you only need to turn or mix the top layers. Keep it moist as a wrung out sponge.

3. Harvest the rich, brown, finished compost after 4-12 months. It can be found at the bottom and center of the pile. Use the harvest door if your bin has one, or remove the top layers of the pile to access the bottom layers. If you need a fine textured compost, sift out coarse, unfinished materials and return these to the pile.



1. Chop materials if you want them to break down more quickly.

2. Mix Browns & Greens (dry, woody materials with moist, green materials).

3. Maintain Air & Water Balance by keeping compost as moist as a wrung-out sponge.

City of Chicago Rebate Form: COMPOST BIN

Thank you for purchasing a compost bin and taking part in Chicago's effort to reduce waste while creating healthier landscapes. Please provide the following information and original itemized receipt to receive your rebate. **Illegible or incomplete forms will not be accepted.**

Personal Information

(please print clearly to receive your rebate):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: Chicago Zip: 606

Phone: () _____

Email Address: _____

Compost Bin installed at: same address as above

Address: _____

City: Chicago Zip: 606

Where did you hear about this program?

Where did you get this rebate form?

I pledge the information I have provided is accurate and that I have read and understand the attached information. Signature: _____

(Sign here)

Date: _____

Compost Bin Information

Where did you purchase your compost bin?

Date of Purchase: _____

Brand/Model: _____

Do you have a garden? _____

If no, what will you do with your compost? _____

Would you have purchased this item if a rebate was not available? Yes No

Total Spent: \$ _____

Total Rebate Requested (50%, up to \$50): \$ _____

CUT HERE - Below This Line is for Your Records

Rebate Information

- Original receipt (be sure receipt clearly indicates purchase) and completed Rebate Form must be post-marked by December 31, 2012. The City of Chicago reserves the right to deny rebate forms with unclear receipts.
- Rebate checks may take up to 3 months to process.
- Rebate amount: 50% off original purchase price, up to \$50 rebate, per household, per year.
- If you have any questions on the rebate process, please call 312.743.9283 or email rainbarrel@cityofchicago.org.
- Maximum rebates: Rain Barrels \$40, Compost Bins \$50, Native Plants \$60, Trees \$100.

To receive your rebate, please complete the top of this form and submit it along with the original receipt by December 31, 2012, to:

Chicago Sustainable Backyards Program

Chicago Department of Transportation

30 N. LaSalle, 11th Floor

Chicago, IL 60602

Rebate Rules/Restrictions

- Rebates are only available to City of Chicago residents and compost bins must be installed at a Chicago residence. Limit one of each rebate type (rain barrel, compost bin, tree, native plants) per installation address, per year.
- Compost bin must be purchased between September 1, 2010 and December 31, 2012.
- Rebates only apply to outdoor composting systems. Rebates will not be offered for indoor systems such as vermicomposting or Bokashi composting and rebates will not be offered for compost bins purchased online (except online pre-orders from local vendors) or outside the state of Illinois. Rebates are only available for the cost of compost bins. Other materials, taxes and individual costs will not be applied to rebates.



Rahm Emanuel
Mayor



Sustainable Backyards Program: LANDSCAPING TIPS

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SITE

LAYOUT

Take a good look at your site. Note the placement of existing plants and trees, paved areas, buildings and power lines. Take a few days to monitor which areas get full or partial sunlight and take note of low spots that tend to collect water during rain storms.

SOIL

Determine your soil type before you purchase new plants or trees and check with your local garden center for species adapted to your soil type. If you are planning to grow vegetables, build a raised bed or have your soil tested to ensure it is safe for growing vegetables.

SUN

Before you buy new plants or trees, be sure to note the sunny and shady areas of your yard. Each species has its own sunlight requirement and should be planted accordingly. Look for opportunities to use trees for shading a seating area or the windows of your home.

CONVENTIONAL LANDSCAPING

- Generates stormwater runoff and puts stress on our sewers while wasting treated water.
- Can be expensive to maintain, requires new planting annually.
- Sometimes includes exotic and invasive species.
- Can require the use of fertilizers and pesticides.
- Yearly planting, fertilizing and maintenance generates excess waste.
- Does not promote energy efficiency.
- Often promotes materials shipped from far away at great cost.

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

- Minimizes stormwater runoff and utilizes valuable rainwater for irrigation.
- Minimizes maintenance costs by utilizing perennials & long-term landscape planning.
- Designed with native species that have adapted to survive in our climate and do not require fertilizers or pesticides.
- Native plants maintain 4-season appeal by attracting and sustaining our native birds and other wildlife year-round.
- Low-maintenance means low-waste. The waste generated is composted and reused throughout the landscape.
- Promotes home energy efficiency.
- Supports our local businesses.

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING TIPS

- Use locally-sourced and recycled materials where possible.
- Avoid impermeable surfaces. Utilize permeable materials where possible.
- Use homemade compost instead of store-bought fertilizers. See www.chicagohomecomposting.org for more information.
- Practice Integrated Pest Management instead of applying pesticides.*
- If you choose to keep a lawn, utilize natural lawncare practices.
*See www.spcweb.org/yards for more information.
- To maximize energy savings, strategically plant trees to serve as wind-blocks in the winter and shade your home in the summer. See www.landscapeforlife.org for more information.

50% Off!

To promote the many ways residents can create more environmentally-friendly landscapes in their yards, the City is offering rebates to Chicago residents for up to 50% off their next local purchase of:

TREES (up to \$100 back)

NATIVE PLANTS (up to \$60 back)

COMPOST BIN (up to \$50 back)

RAIN BARREL (up to \$40 back)

