



Christmas tree recycling program adds household collection

2009 November 25

Description

The City of Calgary is introducing house-to-house pickup of Christmas trees for recycling. This program will also include eight Christmas tree drop-off locations. The City's annual Christmas tree recycling tree program has operated since 1992 with multiple temporary drop-off depots. The new service is expected to increase the number of trees recycled and enhance customer service at no additional cost. Trees are mulched and used to improve city green spaces and parks. Over two weekends in January 2010, collectors will pick up Christmas trees from Calgary households that currently receive City residential garbage collection:

- Saturday, January 9, 2010 to Monday, January 11, 2010
- Saturday, January 16, 2010 to Monday, January 18, 2010

Eight depot locations (two in each quadrant) will also be open from December 26 to January 18, 2010.

Key Contacts

Public Inquiries

311 Operations

Phone: 3-1-1 (outside Calgary: 403-268-2489)

Email: 3-1-1 ContactUs@calgary.ca

Internal Inquiries (operations)

Lindsay Lofthouse, Waste Diversion Specialist – Waste & Recycling Services

Business Phone: 403-268-4779

Email: lindsay.lofthouse@calgary.ca

Media Contact

Nadine Nicholson, Communications Leader – Utilities & Environmental Protection

Media Phone: 403-828-2954

Email: nadine.nicholson@calgary.ca

Media Spokesperson

Lindsay Lofthouse, Waste Diversion Specialist – Waste & Recycling Services

Phone: 403-268-4779

Email: lindsay.lofthouse@calgary.ca

Current Status / Next Steps

- The City will introduce household collection of Christmas trees in 2010 January. This program will also include eight Christmas tree drop-off locations.

City Administration Key Messages

- The City is introducing household pick up of Christmas trees to increase recycling and enhance customer service.
- Over two weekends in January, The City will pick up real Christmas trees from Calgary households that currently receive City residential garbage collection. Eight depot locations will also be available.
- Residents should place their tree where they normally put their garbage by 7 a.m. on Saturday, January 9 or Saturday, January 16. Trees will be collected no later than end of day Monday following those weekends.
- Recycling Christmas trees keeps them out of the landfills and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Christmas tree recycling is part of the Council-approved 80/20 by 2020 plan to divert 80 per cent of waste from City landfills by the year 2020.

City / Stakeholder Roles

- Support Christmas tree recycling as part of the Council-approved 80/20 by 2020 waste diversion strategy.

Questions & Answers

1. Why is The City introducing household pickup of Christmas trees? Household pickup of real Christmas trees will increase recycling and enhance customer service, with no increase in cost compared to the depot-only service that existed previously.

- **More recycling** – Last year, 30,000 trees were collected from depots. Household pickup is expected to increase that amount significantly.
- **More convenient** – Residents who receive City residential garbage collection can place their trees where they put their garbage for collection. Eight depot locations will also be available for all Calgarians.
- **Better utilization of resources** – Household collection over two weekends can be provided at no additional cost compared to setting up and operating 31 seasonal drop off depots over a three-week period.

2. How will the program work? Over two weekends in January, collectors will pick up real Christmas trees from Calgary households that currently receive City residential garbage collection:

- **Saturday, January 9 - Monday, January 11**
- **Saturday, January 16 - Monday, January 18**

Residents will be expected to place their real trees where they normally put their garbage by 7 a.m. on one of these Saturdays. Trees will be picked up for recycling no later than end of day Monday following those weekends.

3. Will temporary depots still be available for residents? Yes, eight depots (including the three City landfills) will be available Saturday, December 26 through Monday, January 18:

- Fire Hall #15 – 6328 35th Ave. N.W.
- Fire Hall #22 – 7199 Temple Dr. N.E.
- Bottomlands Park – St. Georges Drive and Seventh Avenue N.E.
- South Calgary Community Association – 3130 16th Street S.W.
- Parks Compound – 10312 Sacramento Dr. S.W.
- Spyhill Landfill – 69th Street and 112th Avenue N.W.
- East Calgary Landfill – 68th Street and 17th Avenue S.E.
- Shepard Landfill – 68th Street and 114th Avenue S.E.

4. Will the trees be collected as part of regular garbage collection? No. The trees will be collected on the two designated weekends utilizing existing equipment. Any trees put out after the program ends (Monday, January 18) will be collected as garbage.

5. How should I prepare my real Christmas tree for collection? Remove all ornaments and tinsel and do not wrap or bag the tree. Place it where you normally put your garbage by 7 a.m. on Saturday, January 9 or Saturday, January 16.

6. What happens to the trees? Trees collected through the Christmas tree recycling program will be mulched for use in City green spaces to conserve water and prevent weed growth.

7. Why is it important to recycle Christmas trees? Christmas tree recycling is part of the Council-approved 80/20 by 2020 plan to divert 80 per cent of waste from City landfills by the year 2020. Recycling Christmas trees, along with the fall leaf and pumpkin composting program, helps keep plant material out of the landfills and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Background

The City's annual Christmas tree recycling program has operated since 1992 with temporary drop-off depots. In 2008, The City collected 336,000 kilograms of trees, equal to approximately 30,000 trees from 31 depot locations.

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