

## **Building a More Sustainable Wyoming, a Primer for Residents**

### **Introduction**

The City of Wyoming has long been recognized as a leader in the region for its environmental activities. The city's 2018 "Master Plan" (<https://www.wyomingohio.gov/285/Ten-Year-Master-Plan>) devotes seven full pages to "Ecological Stewardship and Sustainability." Objective 1 focuses on "Green Initiatives: Act as a leader in the region for sustainable best practices," with a variety of specific strategies to more effectively manage waste, conserve energy, and reduce contributors to climate change.

This bulletin is brought to you by the Environmental Stewardship Commission, a group of volunteers who recommend ideas to City Council on ways to more effectively manage waste (<https://www.wyomingohio.gov/293/Environmental-Stewardship-Commission>). It is intended to help residents continue reducing the amount of waste that we send to the landfill. We're already one of the region's conservation leaders, recycling (on average) about 30% of our household and yard waste each month. But we can all do better, and we hope this information helps!

### **Rumpke**

- Recycling: All residents can get a green recycling wheeler for putting recyclable materials at the curb each week. If you don't already have one, call Rumpke at (800) 828-8171. Materials are collected by a specific truck and sorted at Rumpke's "Materials Recovery Facility" (MRF). Collected materials include paper and cardboard, glass bottles and jars, aluminum and steel cans, and plastic bottles, tubs and cups. See <https://www.rumpke.com/for-your-home/recycling/acceptable-items> for a detailed list.
- Large Items for Trash: Rumpke's contract with the City allows for one large junk item out with your trash each week. A large item could be a mattress or a single piece of furniture, etc. Mattresses, box springs, and any furniture with fabric covering must be completely wrapped in plastic before Rumpke can pick it up. Visit the City's website for more information.
- Want to see how Rumpke handles Recyclables? Check out this video – [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alVEuuhCt\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alVEuuhCt_4).

### **Oak Park Recycling Drop-offs:**

- Food Waste Composting: Last year, Wyoming launched a food waste composting drop-off program with "GoZero," a commercial composting company in Zanesfield, Ohio (<https://gozero.org>).
  - *What's collected?* Nearly any food waste (fruits, vegetables, meat, bones, fish, plus paper towels and paper napkins). See [https://drive.google.com/file/d/11FS0-INe8Ccts36\\_zxehop7E0COJCDtK/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11FS0-INe8Ccts36_zxehop7E0COJCDtK/view) for details.
  - *How do I collect and store compostables before drop-off?* Buy a five-gallon container with a lid (e.g., from Lowes or Home Depot). Line the container with a "BPI/ASTM 6400 certified" compostable plastic bag (available at Amazon) or a paper grocery

- bag. Keep it in your garage and fill it with your scraps. Drive it down to the north end of Oak Park and put it in one of the bright green bins.
- *Where does it go?* GoZero empties the containers weekly and takes it to their facility. It is shredded, mixed with other “brown” material (like leaves), and composted in a commercial scale system. Once “mature,” the compost is sold to local farms, or bagged and sold to gardeners.
  - Electronics Drop-off: Wyoming has installed a ReBOOT Electronics Reuse and Recycling (<https://www.rebootrecyclers.com>) drop-off bin for old electronics next to the GoZero bins. You can put any small electronic device there. ReBOOT periodically empties the bin and either repairs devices, or has their parts recycled.

### **Hefty Renew**

- What's It All About? The “Hefty Renew” program was started in 2018 by the makers of Hefty trash bags (Reynolds Consumer Products). Its goal is to collect plastics that are considered hard to recycle (e.g., bags, Styrofoam, bubble wrap) and convert them into new plastic products or fuel for factories. This helps keep more plastics out of the landfill. It can also reduce the amount of oil or gas used to make “virgin” plastics and reduce energy emissions.
- How Does It Work?
  - Purchase orange “Hefty Renew” bags at Kroger (found in trash bag aisle). You can also order a “starter kit” on the Hefty Renew website (<https://www.hefty.com/products/hefty-renew>).
  - Place accepted materials in the bag listed on the Renew bags box and at <https://www.hefty.com/sites/default/files/2023-11/10162023HeftyReNewWhatGoesInBag.pdf>
  - When it is stuffed full, tie up the bag and put it in your Rumpke recycle bin.
  - Rumpke pulls the bags out at their MRF, and sends them to a processor for conversion into:
    - Building products, such as roof cover boards, construction blocks, and drainage pipes.
    - Plastic “wood” products for things like park benches and decking.
    - “Pelletized” fuels that are used instead of coal, oil, or gas at factories (e.g., cement kilns).

### **UpCycle Day**

Each Spring, the ESC sponsors a day when we invite vendors to Oak Park and residents can drop off a wide variety of recyclable materials. Here's a list of the items and the vendors who collect them from recent years:

- *Building materials:* Habitat Restore, ReUse Center (see links below).
- *Electronics:* ReBOOT Electronics Reuse and Recycling (<https://www.rebootrecyclers.com>).
- *Furniture and Appliances:*
  - Habitat for Humanity ReStore (<https://www.habitatcincinnati.org/restore>).
  - New Life Furniture (<https://nlfurniture.org>).

- Goodwill (<https://www.cincinnatigoodwill.org/centers/tri-county-goodwill-store/>).
- Cincinnati ReUse Center (<https://www.reusecenters.org>).
- *Other small waste products and packaging:* Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub: (<https://www.cincinnatirecyclingandreusehub.org>).
- *Paints:* Matthew 25: Ministries (<https://m25m.org>).
- *Tires:* Hamilton County R3SOURCE (<https://hamiltoncountyr3source.org>).

You can also drop products off at many of these vendor's Cincinnati-area locations. See the links for details.

**Other Cincinnati Waste and Recycling Resources:**

- *Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub:* Offers a “one stop” drop-off location for a wide variety of materials at 911 Williams Street (<https://www.cincinnatirecyclingandreusehub.org>).
- *Hamilton County “R3Source” website:* County government site that has a searchable library of outlets for hazardous wastes disposal and other reuse and recycling programs in the region (<https://hamiltoncountyr3source.org>).

**Other ways you can contribute to sustainability:**

- Landscaping and water conservation:
  - Remove non-native plants, especially honeysuckle.
  - Buy a rainwater barrel for one of your downspouts and use it to water your garden.
  - Plant drought tolerant trees and shrubs.
  - Buy “pollinator-preferred” annual and perennial flowers – check tags and labels.
- Use “green” household products: <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products>.
- Energy conservation and climate:
  - Buy energy-efficient appliances and install programmable thermostats.
  - Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs.
  - Upgrade your attic insulation.
  - Upgrade your old gas furnace with a heat pump.
  - Consider installing solar panels.
- For more ideas, check out EPA’s “Greener Living” website: <https://www.epa.gov/environmental-topics/greener-living>