



# CITY OF HARRISONBURG PUBLIC WORKS

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For Immediate Release –

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## New bins, trash collection program coming Spring 2021

HARRISONBURG, Va. – An easier, cleaner way for residents to put out their trash each week will soon arrive in The Friendly City.

Toter bins are coming to Harrisonburg, as the City's Public Works Department announces a new trash collection program to begin in Spring 2021. The 96-gallon bins, named for the Toter waste collection cart manufacturer company that will provide them, will be dropped off at many residents' homes by the City prior to the program's launch.

A small number of customers will continue utilizing the current sanitation program due to their place of residence or business operation.



*(Above) Sanitation Tech 1 Tom Burnett of Harrisonburg Public Works stands with a Toter bin. These bins will be delivered to many residents before the program starts.*

The new program will offer a wide range of benefits, including:

- Improved curb appeal on “trash day” by making sure everyone has large, uniform bins instead of placing bags on the ground
- Creating progress toward the City's Environmental Action Plan goals
- Increasing employee safety by reducing the amount of lifting staff has to endure
- Cleaner streets and stormwater systems thanks to enclosed, lidded bins, leading to increased life of City infrastructure
- Improved collection operations by allowing trucks to quickly and efficiently move through neighborhoods
- Enhanced COVID-19 safety by reducing contact with trash and garbage cans
- Ease of use for citizens thanks to the wheeled design

The City will retrofit its current collection vehicles with mechanical arms to assist in dumping the new bins, alleviating the need for staff to lift individual cans or trash bags by hand. The new program will significantly decrease daily wear



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and tear on sanitation staff and reduce the risk of injury. Public Works employees physically handled more than 1 million pounds of refuse, each, in 2019.

“The added benefit of the improved safety of our employees made the decision to transition to the Toter program an easy one,” Tom Hartman, director of Harrisonburg Public Works, said.

Public Works staff will be present at Mobile Recycling Unit locations across the City from Oct. 12 to 17 with a Toter bin for residents to check out and to answer questions about the program. Staff also will be available at the Recycling Convenience Center, at 2055 Beery Road, starting Oct. 19 to answer questions. A Toter will be available so residents can give it a test pull.

In lieu of a public meeting regarding the new program, these locations were selected to meet COVID-19 safety requirements while still allowing residents to provide feedback about the program. Attendees should wear a mask and maintain social distancing.

Residents also should expect a mailer from the Toter company with additional information about the program, and a request for community feedback. A website will be created with a frequently asked questions list and ability to submit questions, and additional mailers will go out closer to the program’s launch with expected delivery date information.

“We are excited about this new program, and many of our citizens who are familiar with similar programs in other localities have expressed their excitement over the change, too,” Harrisonburg Public Works Outreach & Communications Specialist Kelly Adams said. “One City resident familiar with the program told us, ‘My daughter and her family have a big bin like this, and they think it is great. She says the single bin holds a surprising amount.’”

Questions and comments about the program can be directed to the Public Works Department at 540-434-5928 or [publicworks@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:publicworks@harrisonburgva.gov).

***The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov)***

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