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## **New Law on Yard and Organic Waste Collection**

It's time to prepare for another Minnesota winter. Now is the time to start moving or covering plants, to mow the lawn that last time, and prepare for cold temperatures and snow cover.

If your end-of-fall routine has you buying more traditional black plastic bags for your yard waste—take note! Beginning January 1, 2010, residents in the Twin Cities area who bag their yard and organic waste will be required to put their waste out for pickup in compostable bags – either paper bags or compostable plastic bags. This will affect residents in the following counties: Anoka, Carver, Hennepin (excluding the City of Minneapolis), Ramsey, Scott, and Washington.


Yard waste carts and paper bags have been around for years, and the technology of compostable plastic bags isn't new -- just this rule is (except for Dakota County, which has been requiring compostable bags for years). Using paper and compostable plastic bags rather than traditional black plastic bags will greatly reduce the amount of plastic being sent to local composting facilities. Because local composters will have less plastic to screen out of their finished compost, processing costs will be reduced and the quality of the finished compost will be enhanced.


Compostable plastic bags are distinct from regular plastic bags because they are usually clear or a green-tinted opaque color. Most home improvement, grocery, and hardware stores now carry them. If you don't see them at your local store, ask an employee; many store owners are just learning of this requirement also and may appreciate the customer request.

So, if you need new bags for your yard work this fall, why not get a head start and buy the compostable ones. Once January 1, 2010 passes your yard waste pick-up service will no longer take the non-compostable plastic bags that you worked so hard to fill – and it's illegal to place yard waste in the trash.

For more information on the new compostable plastic bag requirements and how they will affect you (or to chat with us about it on our new blog!), visit [RethinkRecycling.com](http://RethinkRecycling.com).

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