

Winter trash and recycling collections present a unique set of challenges not only for residents, but also for the companies and municipalities that provide these services.

When winter storms invariably hit, there are a few simple steps that every resident can take to make trash collection easier, more efficient and assure that collection workers return home safely.

Preparing materials for collection:

- **TRASH** – *use trash bags*. Bagging trash prevents items from becoming frozen inside the cart. Additionally, if the cans are blown over, this keeps trash from becoming litter.
- **RECYCLING** – *Keep the lid CLOSED. Materials MUST BE LOOSE* in the toter. See <https://www.monroecounty.gov/files/DES/recyclopedia.pdf> for a complete list of acceptable items.

Collection:

- **KEEP BINS OUT OF THE STREET** – set trash and recycling bins off the roadway. Toters placed in the road can be in the way of plows, where they may be pushed aside and damaged.
- **DO NOT PLACE TOTERS OR BINS ON TOP OF SNOW PILES** as they may tip over. *Pro tip:* If you shovel, clear a small area for your containers. Ask your plow driver to do the same – your hauler will appreciate it!
- **RETRIEVE YOUR BINS ASAP** – Winter winds can blow empty bins into the street where they present a danger to vehicles. If you are not at home, ask a neighbor to retrieve your containers.

Additional reminders:

- **TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS AROUND TRASH VEHICLES** – they are big, stop frequently and may have blind spots. Garbage trucks weigh between 20 and 30 tons and take twice as long to stop as the average family vehicle.
- **SLOW DOWN** when navigating garbage trucks! Use extra caution - one to two additional minutes spent safely navigating around a truck could prevent an accident or an injury.
- **ALLOW ADEQUATE SPACE** between you and collection vehicles so if the need arises, you both have time to react.

Upstate New York winters provide additional challenges for everyone. By practicing these simple reminders and working together, the essential services of trash and recycling collections can be accomplished efficiently – and safely.