

2026 Recycling collection changes for industrial, commercial and institutional properties



What is changing?

The Provincial Government has passed legislation making producers of recyclable materials (e.g., paper and plastic packaging) fully responsible for the costs of managing those materials.

Starting January 1, 2026, a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) will oversee a new province-wide residential recycling system.

However, recycling collection will no longer be provided to Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (IC&I) properties, including:

- **Small businesses**
- **Churches and places of worship**
- **Municipal buildings**
- **Food banks**
- **Most not-for-profits**

The County will continue collecting garbage from small IC&I properties, but recycling will not be collected curbside.

What businesses need to know

- Recycling bins placed at the curb after January 1, 2026 will likely not be collected by recycling trucks.
- Recycling must not be placed in the garbage.
- Clean cardboard can be dropped off at Transfer Stations free of charge.

County advocacy and next steps

This change is not a decision made by the County.

Norfolk County strongly lobbied for continued service to small IC&I properties, proposing amendments to allow inclusion in the residential system.

Despite initial progress, the Province confirmed on October 1, 2025 that the PRO will not proceed with the amendment.

The County continues to work with the Province and local partners to raise awareness and support affected organizations.

Frequently asked questions on IC&I changes

What is changing on January 1, 2026?

The Provincial Government has passed legislation making producers fully responsible for the lifecycle costs of recyclable materials (e.g., paper and plastic packaging). A Producer responsibility Organization (PRO) will manage a new recycling system starting January 1, 2026.

How are businesses affected by this change?

Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (IC&I) properties will no longer receive curbside recycling collection. This includes:

- **Small businesses**
- **Churches and places of worship**
- **Municipal buildings**
- **Food banks**
- **Most not-for-profits**
- **Daycares**
- **Campgrounds without permanent households**

Will garbage still be collected?

Yes. The County will continue to collect garbage from small IC&I properties as usual.

What options do businesses have for recycling?

- Self-haul clean cardboard to Transfer Stations.
- Private recycling collection services.

What happens if a business puts out a recycling bin(s) after January 1, 2026?

Recycling bin(s) placed at the curb by non-residential properties such as a small business after this date will likely not be collected by recycling trucks.

Can recycling be placed in the garbage?

No. Recycling must not be placed in the garbage stream.

What did the County do to try to maintain service?

Norfolk County, along with other municipalities, lobbied for the Province to allow continued recycling collection for small businesses and organizations.

The Province asked the PROs to explore how recycling could continue for small IC&I services through potential agreements with municipalities.

On October 1, 2025, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks confirmed that the PROs would not be able to fulfill this direction, and the Province would not proceed with further regulatory changes.