

Republic Strike FAQs

Question: Why is our trash, recycling and yard waste not being picked up this week?

Answer: The City of Watertown contracts with Republic Services to pick up trash, recycling and yard waste. Republic also runs the facility where our recycling is dropped off for processing. Republic does not run the facility that accepts our trash. At this time, the unionized workers of Teamsters Local 25 that are employed by Republic are on strike. Republic had informed us through Monday that they expected that this would not occur, and therefore did not have replacement crews ready to work in Watertown. When their employees went on strike, they were not immediately ready to provide service to Watertown.

Question: What is the strike about?

Answer: This is a private work action between a vendor and their employees. The City administration respects the rights of workers to bargain collectively but has no knowledge of the specific requests of the Teamsters or proposals from Republic. We do hope that the two sides can come to an amicable agreement in the immediate future.

Why can't the city pick up trash and recycling?

Answer: The city does not have the trucks or the non-union workforce to fill in during this work action.

Question: When will trash and recycling curbside pickups resume?

Answer: Republic Services has informed us in writing that pickups will resume on Monday, July 7, 2025.

Question: Will trash AND recycling be picked up starting on Monday?

Answer: Yes. Republic Services has informed us in writing that they will be able to do recycling pickup as well as trash pickup beginning again on Monday. Republic will likely be using back-up crews to do this work, so pickups may be later and take longer than usual. Please put out barrels as usual next week but be patient as pickups may run later in the day than usual.

Question: Is yard waste collection expected to resume on July 7 as well?

Answer: No. Republic Services informed us that they are unable to complete their yard waste collection during the strike. We are working with them to identify alternate weeks for yard waste pickup and will share more information when it is available.

Question: Recycling pickup happens every two weeks - Whose recycling will be picked up starting on Monday, July 7, 2025?

Answer: Republic Services has informed the City they will resume curbside recycling service as previously scheduled (B Week will be picked up during the week of July 7th). For residents whose recycling service was cancelled on the week of June 30 – July 5, 2025 (A Week), please hold your recycling until the week of July 14, 2025 and put out your bin on the normal recycling day. We understand that some A Week residents may find they have too much recycling. The City is exploring opportunities to alleviate excessive recycling pile-up prior to the next scheduled pickup date on the week of July 14, 2025, but we don't have that in place yet. Until then, you can hold this extra recycling, or ask a neighbor if they have some extra recycling bin space.

Question: Will the Recycling Center be open?

Answer: No. The Recycling Center, as well as the site that accepts our recycled materials delivered from the center, are operated by our contractor, Republic Services, and they have informed the City that they are unable to staff the center and manage pickups from the center at this time.

Question: What if I need to report a missed pickup?

Answer: If you feel your trash or recycling curbside pickup has been missed, please contact the [City's 311 Service Center](#) for assistance. You can also input a missed pickup request via [SeeClickFix](#) or the Watertown MA App.

Question: Will Republic Services collect overflow trash and recycling?

Answer: Republic will only pick up trash and recycling that is inside of approved containers that can be picked up from their trucks. If you have bags of trash or excess recycling that does not fit in the truck, you can ask a neighbor who might have extra bin space if they can help out. If you still have overflow trash caused by the missed pick-ups during this week, consider the drop-off option outlined below.

Question: What can I do if I have a significant overflow of trash?

Answer: The City of Watertown has developed a temporary solution for residents experiencing significant hardship due to their trash overflow from this strike. On Thursday, July 3 and Monday, July 7, 2025, the City of Watertown is making available very limited dumpster space for bagged household trash only, to residents experiencing significant hardship due to trash overflow at 148 Waltham Street, the former Sterritt Lumber site. This location will be open from 7:30 am – 3:30 pm.

We request only residents experiencing this significant hardship to utilize this remedy, as space is very limited. Residents will be required to show a license or utility bill to the officer at the opening gate verifying their Watertown residency.

Residents will be limited to disposing a **maximum of 3 bags** of household trash due to the limitation of space. On average, Republic Services collects 32.5 tons of trash in a single day in Watertown, and the temporary dumpsters being provided by the City are only able to handle 5 tons each. We greatly appreciate your support and cooperation to make this option a success.

Please see below additional information regarding items you cannot throw away.

Question: What can I and what can I not throw away at this temporary, emergency site?

Answer: This location is only available for bagged household trash and will not have available recycling dumpsters or space of bulk items. The following items are prohibited and the officers at the gate will turn back cars seeking to dispose of any of the following:

- Mattress
- Box Spring
- Televisions
- Computer monitors
- Sleeper Sofas
- Tires
- Car style batteries
- Appliances
- Appliances with freon (such as any sized refrigerator)
- Air conditioners
- Propane tanks
- Bulky furniture items

Please be aware that illegally dumping household furniture, trash, recycling, or yard waste at 148 Waltham Street, or anywhere in the City, is prohibited by law and will be strictly monitored and enforced by law enforcement.

Question: What are ways I can alleviate my trash or recycling build up?

Answer: Given the limited space available at the temporary drop-off site, we do ask our residents to also consider other potential options for alleviating buildup of trash when possible. If you find your trash or recycling is only partially full, the City encourages all to “Be Neighborly” and possibly offer space to your neighbor for a bag in your bin prior to upcoming pick-up starting again on Monday, July 7, 2025.

Question: How can I sign up for composting?

Answer: You can [sign up](#) for Black Earth Compost collection and pick up your container at the Department of Public Works during regular business hours (7:30 AM to 3:30 PM Monday through Friday). Compost collection remains unaffected and will continue your scheduled trash day.

Question: Will commercial dumpster pickup resume the week of July 7, 2025?

Answer: Republic has informed us that dumpsters in Watertown that receive service from Republic through the City contract will be serviced starting on Monday, July 7, 2025.

Question: When will the public bins around the City be emptied?

Answer: Republic Services collected all City bins on Monday, June 30, 2025. These bins will be serviced again on Monday, July 7, 2025, when service resumes.

Question: All this is costing the taxpayers extra money – who’s going to pay for it?

Answer: The City has informed Republic Services that, under their contract with the City, we expect Republic to reimburse us for costs to the city due to this work action.