

HOUSTON COUNTY SANITATION DEPARTMENT

HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE & TRASH COLLECTION POLICY

Approved: August 2026, Effective October 1, 2026

I. DEFINITIONS

Definition of Garbage

Garbage is defined as all debris accumulated within the household that requires disposal. Garbage does not include household furnishings, carpet, construction debris, remodeling debris, appliances, batteries, tires, or propane tanks.

Definition of Trash

Trash is defined as large cardboard boxes, toys, household furnishings, and appliances generated by the homeowner, not by a contractor.

Definition of Yard Debris

Yard debris is defined as any of the following: trees, tree limbs, shrubbery, grass clippings, leaves, and pine straw generated by the homeowner, not by a contractor.

Definition of Construction and Remodeling Debris

Construction and remodeling debris is defined as any of the following: wood, metal, sheetrock, drywall, insulation, cabinetry, tile, light fixtures, doors, windows, and similar materials generated by the homeowner, not by a contractor.

Please see **Section VIII** for the procedures for scheduling Trash and Yard Debris pickup and the applicable charges.

Please note that Houston County will **not** collect batteries, tires, or propane tanks. Disposal of these items is the responsibility of the resident.

II. CONTAINERS

All garbage shall be placed in heavy-duty plastic bags and then placed loosely inside the assigned Houston County garbage container. The Houston County Sanitation Department is not responsible for garbage that is spilled due to stray animals or because containers are improperly placed on the county right-of-way. Garbage bags that are not placed in the assigned container, or that are placed in unauthorized containers, will not be collected.

1. Contents

- A. Containers shall contain only garbage.
- B. All garbage must be bagged to prevent wind-blown litter.
- C. Needles of any kind must be placed in a bottle or other rigid plastic container before being placed in the garbage.
- D. Do not place hot ashes, liquids, paint, tires, animal carcasses, household hazardous waste, or automobile parts in the garbage container.
- E. Animal waste must be double-bagged.

2. Capacity

- A. All garbage must be placed loosely in the container and shall not be compacted.
 - B. The container lid must be completely closed, with no items placed on top of the container.
 - C. The total weight of the contents shall not exceed **250 pounds**.
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III. FEES

Alabama law (Ala. Code §§ 22-27-1, et seq.), which establishes mandatory participation in and subscription to the Houston County solid waste collection system, provides that every person, household, business, industry, or property owner is responsible for paying the monthly fee for solid waste collection services made available to the property generating solid waste or garbage.

1. Monthly Fee

The fee for garbage collection is currently **\$20.00 per month**.

A late fee of **\$5.00 per month** will be assessed on any account that is not paid in full by the billing due date.

Please note: All payments made by ACH or credit/debit card are subject to a **processing fee**. This fee will be added to your total at the time of payment.

Any customer whose sanitation account is **60 days delinquent** will receive written notice that the garbage container will be removed if payment is not received within 30 days. If the account becomes **90 days or more delinquent**, the garbage container will be removed.

If a garbage container is removed for nonpayment, a **\$50.00 retrieval fee** will be assessed and added to the customer's outstanding balance.

Customers who fail to pay their sanitation fees may also be subject to civil and criminal enforcement as provided by law.

2. Replacement Cost of Garbage Containers

If a garbage container is damaged beyond normal use by the resident, or if the container is lost or damaged because it was not removed from the county right-of-way by the close of business on the day following collection, the resident shall pay **\$150.00** for a replacement container.

If the container becomes damaged through normal wear and tear, Houston County will repair or replace the container at no charge.

If a container is lost or stolen, the customer must notify the Houston County Sanitation Department immediately.

3. Additional Garbage Containers

Sanitation customers may request additional garbage containers.

The monthly fee for each additional container is **\$10.00**.

All garbage containers are assigned to the service address, not to the customer or resident. Containers must be transferred to a new address only by the Houston County Sanitation Department. Residents shall not take assigned garbage containers with them when they move.

4. Mobile Home Parks, RV Parks and Multi-Unit Residential Properties

The owner of any mobile home park, RV park, or multi-unit residential property shall be responsible for providing and maintaining solid waste collection service for all tenants residing on the property.

Each occupied dwelling unit or space shall be treated as a primary residence and shall be subject to the standard monthly sanitation service charge of **\$20.00 per month**.

The property owner shall establish and maintain a sanitation account with Houston County, pay all applicable fees, and provide and maintain an adequate number of garbage containers to serve the occupancy of the property.

Individual tenants residing within a mobile home park, RV park, or multi-unit residential property shall not be required to establish separate sanitation accounts unless otherwise approved by Houston County.

IV. LOCATION

All garbage containers shall be placed on the Houston County right-of-way on the scheduled collection day and positioned within **three (3) feet** of the edge of the roadway.

Containers that are beyond the reach of the sanitation trucks or are placed in an improper location will not be collected. Once the container is properly placed on the county right-of-way, the garbage will be collected on the next regularly scheduled collection day.

If the County Engineer determines that a non-county-maintained road could be damaged by sanitation trucks, could cause damage to sanitation equipment, or is otherwise unsafe for sanitation vehicles to travel, an alternate collection location shall be designated, such as the nearest county-maintained road right-of-way.

V. COLLECTION TIME

Household garbage containers shall be placed on the county right-of-way by **6:00 a.m.** on the customer's regularly scheduled collection day.

Garbage will be collected **once each week** on the assigned collection day.

Garbage that is not placed on the right-of-way by **6:00 a.m.** on the scheduled collection day will not be collected until the next scheduled collection day.

VI. EMPTY CONTAINERS

Residents are responsible for removing garbage containers from the county right-of-way after collection.

Empty containers must be removed from the right-of-way by the close of business on the day following collection.

If a container is not removed by that time, it will be tagged with a warning, and the violation will be documented by Houston County Sanitation personnel.

If a container remains on the county right-of-way for **two (2) days or longer** after collection, it will be considered no longer in use and may be removed by the Sanitation Department.

If a garbage container is removed for being left on the county right-of-way, a **\$50.00 retrieval fee** will be assessed and added to the customer's outstanding balance.

VII. HOLIDAYS

The Houston County Sanitation Department observes **thirteen (13) holidays** each calendar year.

Some holidays are designated as **non-collection holidays**, during which no garbage collection will occur. Other holidays are designated as **working holidays**, during which garbage collection will continue on the normal schedule.

The County Engineer and the Houston County Commission establish the annual County Holiday Schedule and the Sanitation Holiday Schedule. The schedule is distributed to all sanitation customers during November or December for the following calendar year.

The holiday schedule is also available on the Houston County website under **Departments → Sanitation Pickup → Holiday Pickup Schedule**.

Houston County holidays include, but are not limited to:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day / Robert E. Lee's Birthday
- Presidents Day
- Confederate Memorial Day
- Memorial Day
- Jefferson Davis Birthday
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Holiday observances are subject to change at the discretion of the Houston County Commission.

VIII. TRASH, CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS, AND YARD DEBRIS COLLECTION

Trash and construction or remodeling debris (as defined in Section I) that is determined to be eligible for collection will be collected from a residence unless the quantity is determined to be excessive. Excessive quantities will be subject to the applicable charges listed below.

Yard debris (as defined in Section I) shall consist of limbs no greater than **five (5) feet** in length. Yard debris must be separated from all other materials. All yard debris collections are subject to a collection fee.

Any trash or debris determined to have been generated by a contractor, or placed on the county right-of-way using heavy equipment, will be assessed a **minimum charge of \$400.00**.

Residents requesting pickup of trash, construction debris, or yard debris must contact the Houston County Sanitation Department at **(334) 793-5442, Extension 2**, to submit a work order.

This service is provided by appointment only, and no specific pickup date or time is guaranteed.

A Sanitation Supervisor will inspect the debris and provide a price quote, if applicable.

Regular office hours are **Monday through Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Charges for Bulk Trash Pickup

(For quantities exceeding a 10-foot by 10-foot area)

- Minimum Load — **\$75.00**
- Half Truck Load — **\$150.00**
- Full Truck Load — **\$225.00**

Charges for Yard Debris Pickup

(Applies to all quantities of limbs, trees, shrubbery, and similar materials)

- Minimum Load — **\$75.00**
- Half Truck Load — **\$150.00**
- Full Truck Load — **\$225.00**

After the debris has been inspected, residents shall have **seven (7) business days** to pay the quoted fee.

If payment is not received within seven (7) business days, the resident will receive written notice providing an additional **seven (7) days** either to pay the fee or remove the debris from the county right-of-way.

Failure to comply may result in the debris being moved from the county right-of-way back onto the resident's property.

Additional Provisions

- Contractor-generated debris is subject to a **minimum charge of \$400.00.**
- All quoted charges must be paid **in full before collection** is scheduled.
- The County may make exceptions to these requirements during declared natural disasters or other emergencies.

Placement Guidelines

When placing trash or debris on the county right-of-way for collection, residents shall observe the following:

1. Do not place trash in the roadway where it creates a traffic hazard.
2. Do not block gutters, ditches, or any portion of the county drainage system.
3. Do not place debris around fire hydrants, signposts, guy wires, utility poles, water meters, masonry structures, or against fences.
4. Do not place debris beneath low-hanging power lines, telephone lines, cable lines, tree limbs, or near mailboxes.
5. The County will not collect tree stumps or debris resulting from land clearing or lot clearing.
6. The County will not collect batteries, tires, or propane tanks.
7. Burning on county rights-of-way is prohibited. Burned debris will not be collected by the Sanitation Department.