



Merri-bek
City Council

Fortnightly rubbish trial outcomes



We've been trialling fortnightly rubbish collections in parts of Merri-bek

Since July 2025, 3,000 households and businesses in parts of Hadfield, Brunswick and Brunswick West have had their rubbish bins collected every 2 weeks.

The trial is helping us design the best way to introduce fortnightly rubbish collections to the rest of Merri-bek.

Six months into the trial, we have seen great results.

Though some have found the change challenging, others have adjusted quickly. Overall, we are seeing trial households reduce waste sent to landfill by putting more food waste into weekly food and garden organics (FOGO) bins.



What we have learnt after 6 months of the trial

Positive results

More food waste is going into FOGO bins

The proportion of food waste in FOGO bins has almost doubled, from:

29%
(pre-trial)



56%
(after 6 months)



“It has made us more careful about what we put in the [rubbish] bin, and encourages us to make sure all food waste goes in the green [FOGO] bin”

Most households adjusted successfully to the change

While some found it challenging, others adjusted quickly to fortnightly rubbish collections. Despite mixed views, most households were able to successfully manage the change.



“Overall, I thought it would be impossible, but was somewhat pleasantly surprised as we put focus on the green [FOGO] bin usage”

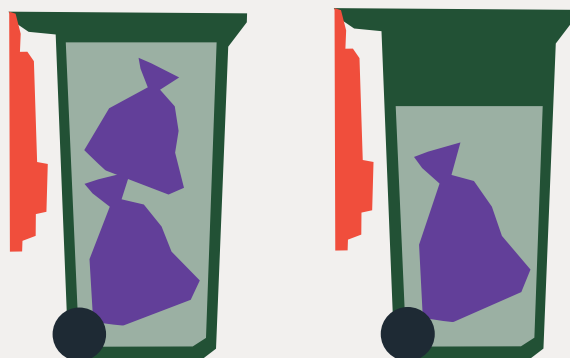
Less waste is being sent to landfill

Waste sent to landfill reduced by 19% – that’s a reduction of 3kg per household each fortnight.

14.1kg
(pre-trial)



11.4kg
(after 6 months)



“I want to help reduce waste and this is a great way to focus on sorting and reducing waste”

“There was some concern in my house before the trial started but it has helped us naturally recycle and use the organic bin more, reducing our waste”

Ratepayers are paying less

Property owners paid a lower waste charge compared to households with weekly rubbish collections.



What we have learnt after 6 months of the trial

No change

Contamination remained stable

Despite the experience of other councils, contamination did not increase during the trial. Contamination is when you put incorrect items in your bin. For example, a plastic bag in your FOGO bin is contamination.

- “If you recycle correctly it’s easy”
- “Helps me to be better aware of how to separate rubbish”

No change to dumped rubbish

Despite community concerns, there was no change to public bin use and dumped rubbish because of the trial.



Room for improvement

Some households didn’t know they could get a larger bin

- “The rubbish [bin] is not big enough”
- “Bins provided for a household of 5 is too small for fortnightly collection. If we had a bigger bin capacity it would be better”

Households had more rubbish after long weekends, holidays or special occasions

- “I think the fortnightly change is better for the environment and economically, however there are some weeks where it can be challenging. I wonder if maybe on occasion there could be extra pick ups”

Some households were concerned about smell and cleanliness of their bins, others needed more support to separate food waste

- “Not allowing for compost/organic material to be put into bags meant it was a choice of either not using the green bin, or having the green bin get very smelly and dirty”
- “Having baby nappies sit in the bin for a fortnight makes it very smelly”



Thank
you

Thank you and well done to our Hadfield, Brunswick and Brunswick West trial participants for their great work. Your efforts have resulted in sending less to landfill and creating more compost to help grow the food we eat.

How we supported trial participants



We increased the size of standard rubbish bins from 80 litres to **120 litres**

Most trial households (**85%**) used the standard size 120 litre bin



We gave options for small or larger bins to suit different **household needs**

- **145** trial households kept the small 80 litre bin
- **207** trial households used a larger 240 litre bin

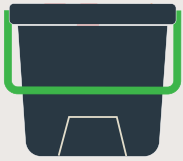
We provided **larger bins** at no extra cost for eligible households including:

- large families
- those with 2 or more children in nappies
- those with medical conditions that create extra waste



138 trial households accessed a larger bin at no extra cost (a concession), including:

- **46 households** with children in nappies
- **20** large families
- **13 people** with a medical condition that creates extra waste



We provided **kitchen caddies** to help separate food waste for the food and garden organics (FOGO) bin

... *"I was surprised by how easy it has been.
The kitchen caddy has been the key"*



We provided **information & support**, including waste calendars, tips for using the FOGO bin and text message reminders

... *"Each week, I get a text, telling me which colour bin (to put out). It's just brilliant"*



To find out more scan the QR code or visit conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/rubbish-trial

Speak with us in your language



For more information visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/your-language

Per maggiori informazioni nella tua lingua, chiama il numero **9280 1911**

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پر کال کریں۔ **9280 1917**

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