

Condominium Waste Diversion Results in Lower Common Expenses

The [Toronto Star recently reported](#) about a residential condominium in Scarborough that had significantly reduced its waste removal costs by recycling and composting 80% of the waste generated from the condominium.

Several changes were implemented:

- the garbage chute in the building was converted to an organics chute;
- residents delivered recyclables (i.e. cardboard and paper, plastic and glass containers) and garbage to a room on the ground floor;
- used cooking oil was collected by residents, using containers supplied by the condominium corporation and delivered to a designated area.

As a result of these changes, the garbage generated from the condominium went from one dumpster every week to one dumpster every two months. In addition, instead of paying \$7,000 to \$10,000 a year to clean cooking grease from the drains, the corporation now sells the used cooking oil.

In order to successfully implement these changes, 100% buy-in from the residents was crucial. To get this buy-in, communication with the residents was key – educating them about how to separate waste and where to put it and convincing them that not only would this be good for the environment, but everyone would benefit by a reduction in common expenses. No doubt the financial incentive was a major factor in persuading residents. The City of Toronto assisted in this endeavour by providing education materials, including multilingual signs.

This is a good example of the proper way for a condominium corporation to reduce common expenses: implementing efficiencies, rather than neglecting needed maintenance and repair work.