



Portage County Trash & Recycling Online

Portage County Recycling, Drop-Offs & Trash Service

————— **An Extended Guide · No. 1785** —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Here is the whole guide in a nutshell. Portage County has a Solid Waste Management District that runs recycling. Its official page lives on the county website, portagecounty-oh.gov, and you should type that address yourself. There you can find recycling drop-offs that are open around the clock, a printable pick-up calendar, collection events for electronics, paint and tires, and ideas for spring cleaning with old furniture, appliances and batteries. The county does not usually pick up your regular curbside trash. That is arranged by your city, village or township, or by a private hauler you pay directly. So recycling questions go to the county district, and trash questions go to your local government or hauler. The county never needs a password from you, and no real office asks for gift cards. If any of this feels tangled, that is exactly the kind of thing I help neighbors with, so give me a call.

1. What This Guide Covers

Recycling, drop-offs and hazardous waste, found online.

Taking out the trash sounds like the simplest chore there is, yet finding out where to take an old paint can or a broken television can leave a person stuck. I wrote this guide so you can answer those questions calmly from your own chair, using the official Portage County website.

The county runs a Solid Waste Management District. Its job is recycling. Online, that district's pages can show you recycling drop-off locations, collection events for things like electronics, paint and tires, ideas for getting rid of bulky household items, and a printable pick-up calendar for recycling.

What the county does not do is pick up your regular curbside trash in most places. That is arranged by your city, village or township, or by a private hauler. The next chapter explains the difference, because it is the most common point of confusion.

- The official county website is portagecounty-oh.gov.
- Recycling and special collections come from the county district.
- Regular trash service comes from your city, township or hauler.
- Everything here is free to read and nothing needs an account.

GOOD TO KNOW

Take this guide one chapter at a time. You do not need to read it in order, and you can skip to the chapter that matches your question.

2. The Big Picture: Who Does What

County recycling on one side, trash service on the other.

Think of two separate helpers. The first is the county's Solid Waste Management District. It handles recycling, community drop-off sites, special collection events, and information about disposing of tricky household items.

The second helper is whoever collects the regular trash at the end of your driveway. In Portage County, that is arranged by each city, village or township, or by a private hauling company that you hire directly. It is not the county district.

This matters because the right website or phone number depends on your question. A question about where to recycle goes to the county. A question about a missed trash pickup, a trash bill or a trash cart goes to your local government or your hauler.

- Where can I recycle this? Ask the county district.
- What can go in the recycling bin? Ask the county district.
- My trash was not picked up. Ask your city, township or hauler.
- I need to start or stop trash service. Ask your city, township or hauler.

TIP

If you are unsure who handles a question, start with the county district's phone number, (330) 678-8808. They can often point you to the right place.

3. Before You Start

A few things to have handy.

You do not need much to use the county's recycling information online. A phone, tablet or computer with a web browser is enough, along with a few minutes and a cup of coffee if you like.

It helps to know your street address and which community you live in, such as a city, village or township. Many answers, especially about trash and pick-up days, depend on exactly where you live. If you are not sure whether you are inside a city limit, your property tax bill or a neighbor can often tell you.

- A device with internet access.
- Your full street address.
- The name of your city, village or township.
- A pen and paper for writing down dates and phone numbers.
- A trash or utility bill, if you have one, to see who your hauler is.

None of this costs anything to look up. Reading the county's pages is free, and you will not be asked to create an account just to see a recycling list or an events calendar.

TIP

Keep a notepad beside the computer. Writing down a date or a phone number is often easier than hoping to find the same page again later.

4. Getting to the Real County Website

Type the address yourself.

The most important habit is starting at the genuine address. The county's official website is portagecounty-oh.gov. Type that into the address bar at the top of your browser yourself instead of clicking a link in an email or text message.

Government sites in the United States often end in dot gov, an ending reserved for real government bodies. Copycat sites tend to end in dot com or dot net, or use a small misspelling. If you see a different ending, close the page and type the address again slowly.

- 1 Open your web browser.
- 2 Click once in the long address bar at the top.
- 3 Type portagecounty-oh.gov and press Enter.
- 4 Check that the address still shows portagecounty-oh.gov once the page loads.

You will see a county home page with a search box and menus along the top. You can look for Departments, which lists the county offices, including Solid Waste Management.

If the page you land on looks unfamiliar, do not worry. Simply close it and begin again from the address bar.

WATCH OUT

Search results sometimes show paid ads above the real site. Look past anything marked Ad and choose the result whose address ends in portagecounty-oh.gov, or simply type the address yourself.

5. Finding the Solid Waste Management Page

The county's recycling home.

Once you are on the county site, there are two easy ways to reach the recycling district's page. You can use the Departments menu, or you can go straight to the page by typing its address.

- 1 On the county home page, find the Departments menu near the top.
- 2 Choose Departments to see the list of county offices.
- 3 Look down the list for Solid Waste Management and click it.
- 4 Or type portagecounty-oh.gov/solid-waste-management into the address bar.

When I checked, the page offered links to set up service if you are new to Portage County, to print your pick-up calendar, to find out how to dispose of old furniture, appliances, batteries and paint, and to see community recycling events. Wording and layout can change, so look for the same ideas even if the labels differ.

Near the top you will also see the office hours for today and a note that the recycling drop-offs are open around the clock. The county's Departments page lists the office address in Kent.

GOOD TO KNOW

The Departments page also shows the district's street address and its phone number, so it is a handy place to confirm contact details.

6. Recycling Drop-Offs Open All Day and Night

Self-serve sites you can use on your schedule.

One of the most useful things the county offers is its network of recycling drop-offs. The district's page states that the recycling drop-offs are open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. That means you can go early in the morning or after supper, whenever it suits you.

A drop-off is a place where you bring your sorted recyclables yourself and place them in the containers provided. It is useful if you live somewhere without curbside recycling, if you have extra, or if you simply prefer to take things in on your own time.

To find the nearest one, look on the district's page or search the county site for recycling drop-off locations. A list or map will show where the sites are and what each one accepts.

- Look for the drop-off location list on the district's page.
- Write down the address of the one closest to you.

- Check what that site accepts before you load the car.
- Plan to go in daylight if that feels more comfortable.

TIP

Because the sites are open all the time, staff are not usually standing by. Bring a friend if lifting heavy items is difficult, and keep to the posted rules.

7. Reading the What-Goes-Where List

Which item belongs in which container.

Recycling rules can feel fussy. The district publishes information about what is accepted, and reading it before you go saves a wasted trip. Look on the district's pages for a list that tells you what goes where.

These lists are usually organized by material, such as paper, cardboard, plastics, glass and metal cans. They also tell you which things do not belong, because one wrong item can spoil a whole container.

- 1 Open the Solid Waste Management page.
- 2 Look for a recycling guide, accepted-items list, or what-goes-where information.
- 3 Scan the list for the item in your hand.
- 4 If it is not listed, set it aside and call the district before you guess.

When a list says an item is not accepted, that does not always mean it must be thrown away. Some items have their own collection events, which later chapters describe.

I find it helpful to keep the list open while I gather items in the kitchen. A printed copy on the pantry door answers most questions without turning on a computer.

WATCH OUT

Putting the wrong item in a recycling container, even with good intentions, can cause trouble for the people sorting it. When in doubt, ask rather than guess.

8. Getting Recyclables Ready

A little preparation goes a long way.

Clean, dry, properly sorted recyclables are far more useful than a jumble. You do not need to scrub anything until it shines, but a few simple habits help.

- Empty containers completely.
- Give them a quick rinse if food or drink is left behind.

- Flatten cardboard boxes so they take less room.
- Keep items loose unless the district's list says otherwise.
- Leave out anything the list says is not accepted.

Check the district's page for any rules about bags. Some programs ask you to place recyclables in the container loose, and plastic bags are often a problem. I do not want to promise a rule that your program may handle differently, so confirm it on the official list.

A sturdy box or laundry basket in the garage makes a good collecting spot. When it is full, you can take it to the drop-off or set it out for pick-up, depending on where you live.

Sorting takes less time than most people expect. After a week or two the habit becomes automatic, and a household of any size can do it in a few minutes a day without any fuss at all.

TIP

Keep one container for recycling near the kitchen and another near the trash can. When the choice is easy, people sort without thinking about it.

9. Curbside Recycling Collection Days

Finding the day your recycling is picked up.

Some homes in Portage County have recycling picked up at the curb. The county site lists a link for curbside recycling collection days, and the district's page offers a way to print your pick-up calendar.

The pick-up day depends on where you live, so you will need to choose your community or give the page your address. Pick-up days can differ from one neighbor to the next, so it is best to look it up rather than guess.

- 1 Open the district page at portagecounty-oh.gov/solid-waste-management.
- 2 Look for the link about pick-up days or the pick-up calendar.
- 3 Follow the prompts to choose your community or enter your address.
- 4 Read the day and any special notes shown for your area.

If you cannot find your area, or you are not sure whether your street has curbside recycling, call the district at (330) 678-8808. They are the right people to ask.

Write the day on your wall calendar as well, and set the container out the evening before so you are not rushing in the morning.

GOOD TO KNOW

Curbside recycling is not the same as curbside trash. Your recycling schedule may be set by the county district, while your trash schedule comes from your city, township or hauler.

10. Printing Your Pick-Up Calendar

A paper copy for the refrigerator.

The district's page includes a link to print your pick-up calendar. A paper calendar is a wonderful thing to have. It does not need batteries, and you can mark it with a pen.

- 1 Open the district page and find the link for printing your pick-up calendar.
- 2 Choose your area if the page asks you to.
- 3 When the calendar appears, look for a Print button, or use your browser's print option.
- 4 In the print window, choose your printer and press Print.
- 5 Hang the page on the refrigerator or a cabinet door.

If you do not have a printer, choose Save as PDF in the print window and keep the file on your computer. Or write the pick-up day on your kitchen calendar by hand. Either way works well.

If you cannot print at home, a library will often print pages for a small fee, or a family member can print it for you. Ask before you start so there are no surprises.

A printed calendar is also easy to hand to a neighbor, a house sitter or a relative who helps you, so everyone knows which day the recycling goes out.

TIP

Circle your regular pick-up day in a bright color. Then you only need to glance at the calendar to spot holiday changes.

11. If You Are New to Portage County

Setting up service when you move in.

Moving is busy enough without hunting for recycling information. The district's page has a note for people new to Portage County that says to give them a call to set up service.

That tells us the first step for a newcomer is a phone call, not a long online form. The district's phone number is (330) 678-8808, and it is listed on the county's Departments page.

- Tell them your new street address.

- Ask what recycling service your home receives.
- Ask which day your recycling is collected.
- Ask where the nearest drop-off is.
- Ask for the print or online calendar for your area.

Separately, you will need trash service. That is arranged with your city, village or township, or with a private hauler, not the county. A neighbor can tell you who they use, and your local government office can explain how it works in your community.

Do not feel you must handle everything in one day. Moving brings plenty of tasks, and recycling can wait until the boxes are unpacked. When you are ready, the phone call is short, and the person on the other end has answered the same questions many times before.

TIP

Write down the name of the person you speak with and the date. If a question comes up later, a quick note saves everyone time.

12. Holidays and Changed Pick-Up Days

When a holiday moves your schedule.

Holidays can shift collection days. The district's page says that its office is closed on all federal holidays and asks residents to check their recycling schedule for affected pick-up days.

That is a reminder to look at the calendar before a holiday week rather than assume the usual day. If your normal pick-up falls on or near a holiday, check whether it moves.

- Check your printed calendar for holiday notes.
- Look at the district's page for announcements.
- Call the district if the calendar is unclear.
- Ask your trash hauler separately, because their holiday rules may differ.

The drop-off sites are described as open at all times, but the office and staff follow the holiday closings. If you need to talk with someone, plan your call for a regular working day.

Winter weather can also change things. Look for announcements on the district's page or ask your hauler whether collection is delayed, and keep the phone numbers on your calendar.

WATCH OUT

Your recycling day and your trash day may not move the same way. A holiday can change one without changing the other, so check each schedule.

13. Finding Your Trash Hauler

Who actually picks up your garbage.

Because the county does not arrange regular curbside trash, the next question is who does. The answer depends on where you live in Portage County.

In some places, the city, village or township contracts with one company for all homes. In others, each household chooses and pays a private hauler directly. Both are normal.

- 1 Look at an older trash or utility bill for a company name.
- 2 Ask a neighbor on your street who collects their trash.
- 3 Visit your city, village or township website and look for trash, refuse or sanitation.
- 4 Call the local government office and ask who handles trash for your address.

The county site has a page that lists the cities, villages and townships in Portage County, which can help you find the right local website. Local sites differ, so take your time looking for a services or public works area.

Once you know the company, write its name and phone number on your calendar or in your folder. Then the answer is always one glance away, and you will not need to search again.

TIP

If a hauler's truck passes your house, jot down the name on the side. It is often the quickest way to find out who serves your street.

14. Signing Up With Your City, Village or Township

Start service with the people who run it.

When your trash is arranged locally, you sign up with the city, village or township, or with the hauler it names. The county district does not take those sign-ups.

Each community handles this in its own way. Some post a form on their website. Others prefer a phone call or a visit to the municipal building. Some simply bill you on a utility bill.

- Find the correct local website or phone number.
- Ask how to start trash service at your address.

- Ask what size or kind of container is provided.
- Ask about the pick-up day and where to place the container.
- Ask how to stop or change service if you move.

If you are told to contact a private hauler instead, do the same with that company. Get the answers in writing if you can, or write them down during the call.

Take a moment to ask about extras such as senior discounts or help for residents who cannot carry containers to the curb. Many communities have simple arrangements, and the only way to learn about them is to ask politely.

WATCH OUT

Only sign up through a company you found yourself, by looking up your local government or by asking a neighbor. A stranger who knocks on your door or phones you about trash service deserves caution.

15. Paying Your Trash Bill

Pay your city or hauler, not the county.

Trash charges are paid to whoever provides the service. That might appear on a city or township bill, or it might come directly from a private hauler. It is not paid to the county recycling district.

Many local governments and haulers let you pay online, by mail or in person. The cost depends on the provider, and I cannot list it here, since it varies. Look at your bill for the amount and the due date.

- 1 Find your latest bill and check who sent it.
- 2 Look for a website address or phone number printed on it.
- 3 Type that address yourself into your browser, rather than following a link in a message.
- 4 Look for a payment or billing section and follow the screens.
- 5 Save or print the confirmation when you finish.

If paying online feels uncomfortable, mailing a check or paying in person is perfectly acceptable.

Keep each paid bill in a folder so you can see what you paid and when.

WATCH OUT

A text or email saying your trash bill is overdue and demanding payment by gift card is a scam. Real bills do not demand gift cards. Check with your city, township or hauler using the number on your own bill.

16. Bulky Items and Large Trash

Couches, mattresses and the like.

Big items do not always go out with regular trash. Rules about couches, mattresses and similar bulky things differ from place to place, and some haulers ask you to arrange a special pick-up.

The district's page includes a spring cleaning link that explains how to dispose of old furniture, appliances, batteries, paint and more. That is a good first stop to learn what options exist.

- Check the district's spring cleaning information first.
- Ask your trash hauler or local government whether they take bulky items.
- Ask whether a special pick-up must be scheduled in advance.
- Consider whether a charity could use the item if it is still in good shape.

Do not leave large items at the curb or at a drop-off site unless the rules say you may.

Items left in the wrong place can bring a notice from the community.

If you have only one or two items, ask a neighbor with a truck, or ask a family member to help. Some charities pick up furniture that is still in good condition, and that spares you the haul. Call them to ask what they accept before you promise anything to anyone.

GOOD TO KNOW

Moving a heavy piece by yourself can hurt your back. Ask a family member or neighbor to help, or ask the hauler about pick-up from the house.

17. Spring Cleaning Made Easier

Old furniture, appliances, batteries and paint.

Cleaning out the garage or basement often turns up things you are not sure how to throw away. The district's page has a link for exactly that, described as help for spring cleaning with old furniture, appliances, batteries, paint and more.

I like this because it answers the question many people have, which is where something goes when it does not fit in the trash or the recycling bin. Items like batteries and paint may have special handling, so do not toss them in the garbage out of habit.

- 1 Make a short list of what you want to get rid of.
- 2 Open the district's page and find the spring cleaning link.
- 3 Look up each item on the list, one at a time.

4 Note whether it has a drop-off, an event or a hauler option.

5 Set a date for each trip and write it on your calendar.

You do not have to finish in a day. A little each weekend is easier on your back and your patience.

WATCH OUT

Keep unwanted paint, batteries and similar items in a sturdy box in a cool, dry place until you can take them. Do not mix products together.

18. Household Hazardous Waste

Things too risky for the trash.

Household hazardous waste means products from around the house that can be harmful if handled the wrong way. Examples often include certain cleaners, paints, pesticides and automotive products. Because they can hurt people and the environment, they need special handling.

The Portage County district offers hazardous waste collection, and its online pages are the place to learn how it works. Because details like dates, locations, rules about appointments and what is accepted can change, I will not list them here. Check the district's pages or call (330) 678-8808.

- Keep products in their original containers.
- Never mix different chemicals.
- Do not pour them down a drain or onto the ground.
- Keep them away from children and pets until disposal.
- Ask the district before you transport large amounts.

When you read the page, look for words like household hazardous waste, collection day, appointment or registration.

Write down what you have and where it is stored, so you are ready when the district's information tells you how to bring it. A short list on a sticky note works fine.

WATCH OUT

Never put hazardous products out with ordinary trash. Haulers and workers can be hurt, and many items are not allowed in regular trash.

19. CHaRM: A One-Stop Collection Site

Hazardous waste and recycling together.

On the district's page you will see a link to CHaRM opening dates. CHaRM stands for community hazardous waste and recycling, and the idea is a place where residents can bring items that regular recycling and trash cannot take.

Because opening dates are posted separately, the first job is to read the schedule. The link is on the district's page, together with a link for community recycling events. If you are not certain what to bring, read the accepted-items information before you go.

- 1 Open the district page and find the CHaRM opening dates link.
- 2 Read the list of dates and any notes about hours.
- 3 Check what the site accepts and what it does not.
- 4 Pack items safely, upright and not mixed together.
- 5 Bring identification only if the page says to.

I cannot say who qualifies or whether an appointment is needed, so rely on the official page. When unsure, call the district.

Remember that this kind of site is not open every day, which is why reading the schedule first matters so much. A little planning keeps you from arriving to find the gate closed.

TIP

Plan the trip for a day when you are rested. Loading and unloading is the hardest part, and a helper makes it easy.

20. Electronics and E-Waste Events

Old televisions, computers and more.

Electronics are a special case. Old computers, monitors and televisions should not go in the regular trash. The district's page lists community recycling events for electronics, paint, tires and similar items.

There is a separate Bill's Home Tech guide about electronics recycling across Ohio. This chapter is just about the Portage County side, which means finding your local event on the district's calendar.

- Look for community recycling events on the district's page.
- Find an event that lists electronics.
- Note the date, time and address.
- Read what the event does and does not accept.

- Ask about any limits before bringing large items.

Before you give up a computer or phone, take steps to protect what is on it. Move photos and documents you want to keep, and sign out of your accounts. If you would like help backing up your files, that is something I do.

If you are not ready to part with a device, ask a family member or me about donating or reselling it, since sometimes older equipment still has useful life. For anything broken or truly obsolete, an electronics event is the right choice.

WATCH OUT

Old devices can hold personal information. Erase or reset them, or ask me to help, before you hand them over.

21. Getting Rid of Old Tires

Tires have their own rules.

Tires are another item that does not belong in the regular trash. The district's page lists community recycling events for tires, along with electronics and paint.

Because tire rules, limits and any fees are set by the event, I will not state them here. The district's page is the right place to read what is allowed, how many you may bring and what condition a tire must be in to be accepted.

- 1 Open the district page and look for community recycling events.
- 2 Find an event that includes tires.
- 3 Read the details for limits or special instructions.
- 4 Write down the date, time and address.
- 5 Load the tires carefully and drive straight there.

If a repair shop replaced your tires, ask them whether they will take the old ones. Many do, and it saves you a trip.

The same event may also accept other items, and so you might be able to combine two chores into one trip. Read the whole entry before you decide, and plan your route so you are not driving back and forth. A little forethought on a quiet morning makes the whole job easier, and your garage will thank you once it is empty.

GOOD TO KNOW

Never dump tires in a field or ditch. Illegal dumping hurts neighbors and can bring a penalty.

22. Shredding Events

A safe way to get rid of old paperwork.

Old bank statements, tax papers and medical bills can contain private information. Throwing them out whole is risky. A community shredding event lets you hand over a box of paper to be destroyed safely.

The county district has offered shredding events, so watch for them on its calendar and events pages. Dates and rules can change, so I will not name any here. Check the official page for shredding events and what they accept.

- Gather papers into a box or paper bag.
- Remove binders, large metal clips and anything not paper, if the event asks.
- Keep papers you must save, such as tax records you still need.
- Check the date, time and place on the district's page.
- Ask whether there is a limit on the amount.

If you cannot make an event, a home shredder is a good option for small amounts.

Putting papers in a clearly marked box makes handing them over faster. It is also wise to carry the box in the trunk rather than the back seat, out of sight, while you drive.

TIP

Not sure how long to keep a document? Ask your tax preparer or bank before you shred. Throw away only what you are certain you will not need.

23. Yard Waste and Compost

Leaves, branches and garden scraps.

Yard waste, such as grass clippings, leaves and branches, is often handled differently from household trash. The district's online information includes yard waste and compost guidance, so it is a good place to start.

Rules also depend on where you live. Some communities have special yard waste pick-ups, some allow you to bring it to a local site, and some haulers collect it only in certain seasons. Check your city, village or township as well as the county pages.

- Read the county district's yard waste or compost information.
- Ask your local government or hauler about yard waste collection.
- Consider composting at home if you have the space.
- Never mix yard waste with chemicals or trash.

Home composting turns kitchen scraps and leaves into rich soil for your garden. It is optional, but many people enjoy it, and the county's information can get you started.

If you hire a landscaper, ask who takes the clippings and where they go. Some contractors haul everything away as part of the job, and some leave it for you to manage. Knowing this beforehand avoids surprises, and the county's yard waste information can help you ask good questions.

GOOD TO KNOW

Burning leaves or brush may be restricted where you live. Ask your local fire department or township before lighting anything.

24. Reading the Community Events Calendar

Dates for special collection days.

A lot of what the district offers happens on particular days. That is why the events link on its page matters. It gathers community recycling events for electronics, paint, tires and more.

A calendar entry will usually give a date, a time and a location. It may also say what is accepted and what is not. Read it all the way through, because the details are what keep your trip from being wasted.

- 1 Open the district page and choose the community events link.
- 2 Scroll through the entries slowly.
- 3 Find an event that fits the item you need to dispose of.
- 4 Write down the date, time and address on paper.
- 5 Look for any notes about limits, ID or registration.

The county also offers E-Alerts, a subscription that sends email notices from the county. You can look for the subscribe link on the county's home page, which saves checking by hand.

If an event is canceled or changed, the district's page is the place that should show it. Look again the day before you go, in case something shifted, and keep the phone number handy just in case.

TIP

Mark event dates on your wall calendar the moment you find them, and add a reminder a day ahead.

25. Calling the District

Sometimes a voice is faster.

The internet is wonderful, but a phone call is sometimes quickest. The county's Departments page lists the Solid Waste Management District phone number as (330) 678-8808.

When you call, have your question ready and your address nearby. Speak slowly. The person on the line is used to questions from residents and will not mind one more.

- Say your name and community.
- Describe the item or the question in simple words.
- Ask them to repeat anything you did not catch.
- Write down the answer, the date and the name of the person.
- Ask if there is a page on the website with the same information.

If you leave a message, give your name and a number where you can be reached. State the reason for your call briefly.

Be patient if you reach a voicemail, and call again later in the day if you do not hear back. Phone lines can be busy on days after holidays and around big collection events. Trying early in the morning or midafternoon often works well. If you speak with someone, thank them. A friendly tone makes everything go more smoothly for both sides, and a simple thank you is always welcome.

GOOD TO KNOW

The office is closed on federal holidays. For other days, the district's page shows the hours for today, so check before you call.

26. Visiting the Office in Kent

Where the district is located.

The Portage County District Recycling Center, where the Solid Waste Management District is based, is at 3588 Mogadore Road in Kent, Ohio 44240. That is the address the county lists on its Departments page.

If you plan to visit in person, call first to ask whether you need an appointment and what hours apply. Because the drop-off sites are open at all hours but the office keeps set hours, do not assume staff are available any time of day.

- Confirm the hours before you leave home.
- Enter the address in your phone's map app or ask a family member to help.

- Bring any questions you wrote down.
- Ask about accessible parking and entrances if you need them.
- Bring your pick-up calendar or papers if you have questions about them.

Most residents will never need to visit the office. The website and the phone usually cover everything.

The county's Departments page also lists the other county offices if you need something different, such as the Health District or the Water Resources Department. Each has its own address and number, so look up the one you need rather than assuming they share a building.

TIP

Typing the address into a map app on your phone gives step-by-step driving directions. I am happy to show you how.

27. Phone, Tablet or Computer

Use whatever feels comfortable.

The county's pages work on a phone, a tablet or a computer. The layout may look a little different on a small screen, with menus tucked behind a small button, but the information is the same.

On a phone, the menu is often hidden behind three small lines in a corner. Tap them to open the list of choices. On a computer, the menu usually sits along the top of the page.

- A computer gives you more room to read.
- A tablet is a good middle choice, with a larger screen than a phone.
- A phone is handy for looking up a drop-off while you are out.
- You can switch devices at any time.

If a page seems confusing on one device, try another. Sometimes a page that was hard to read on a phone is easier on a tablet, and sometimes the reverse is true.

Whichever you choose, keep the screen brightness comfortable and sit in good light. Small comforts like a cushion and a cup of tea make a surprising difference when you are reading for a while.

TIP

Save the district's page as a bookmark so you can return in one tap without having to type the address again.

28. Making the Text Bigger

Easier reading for tired eyes.

If the print on a web page is too small, you do not have to squint. Every browser can enlarge the page, and nothing about the site changes except the size.

- On a computer, hold Ctrl (or Command on a Mac) and press the plus key to zoom in.
- Press Ctrl and zero to return to normal size.
- On a phone or tablet, spread two fingers apart on the screen to enlarge.
- Your device's accessibility settings can make text larger everywhere.

A bigger page may mean more scrolling, but that is a fair trade. Take your time and use the scroll bar or swipe up with your finger.

You can also print a page and read it on paper. Printing a recycling list or a calendar in large type is a wonderful way to keep the information handy.

If you use reading glasses, keep a pair next to the computer, and take a break every so often to rest your eyes. Looking out the window for a minute helps more than you would think. Nothing here is a race, and no website will mind how long you take to read it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Making text larger will not break anything and it is never wrong. Set it wherever your eyes are happiest.

29. Using a Library or Public Computer

No computer at home? No problem.

If you do not have a computer or internet at home, a public library is a good place to look up recycling information. Staff can help you get started and may be able to print a calendar for you.

- Type the county address yourself: portagecounty-oh.gov.
- Do not sign in to personal accounts unless you must.
- Close the browser window when you finish.
- Take any printouts with you.
- Do not let the computer save passwords.

For this guide, you should not need to type any passwords at all. Reading the county's recycling pages does not require an account, which makes a public computer an easy choice.

Library staff are usually glad to help with questions, though they may be busy at certain times. Ask which hours are quietest.

Many libraries also offer classes or one-on-one help with computers. Ask at the desk whether anything like that is available, and bring a notebook for what you learn. You may also find a friendly volunteer who enjoys showing newcomers how to search for information.

TIP

If you print a page at the library, ask first how printing is handled. Tell the staff what you need and they will point the way.

30. Scams to Watch For

Trash and recycling scams exist.

Scammers go where people are, and that includes everyday topics like trash and recycling. The tricks are old ones with a new coat of paint.

- A text saying your trash bill is overdue, with a link to pay.
- A caller who says your service will stop unless you pay today.
- A door-to-door seller offering cheap trash service up front.
- A website that looks like the county's but ends in dot com.
- Anyone asking for gift cards, wire transfers or your password.

The common thread is pressure. Real local governments and haulers send bills through the mail or through the channel you already use, and they give you time. They do not demand payment in gift cards, and they never ask for a password or a one-time code by phone.

When in doubt, stop. Look up the real phone number on your own bill or on portagecounty-oh.gov, and call it yourself.

Keep a note by the phone with the district's real number so you can check any claim quickly.

WATCH OUT

If you gave out a password, code or card number to someone who contacted you, call your bank right away and then call me. Acting fast helps.

31. Helping a Parent or Neighbor

Do it with them, not for them.

Many families help an older parent or neighbor sort out trash and recycling. That is a kind thing to do. The most useful help is the kind that leaves the person feeling more in charge, not less.

Sit together and look at the district's page on their device or yours. Let them hold the mouse, or the phone, and read the steps aloud. Write down their pick-up day and put the printout on their refrigerator.

- Find out who picks up their trash, and when.
- Print the recycling calendar.
- Identify the nearest drop-off.
- Make a short list of items that need special disposal.
- Offer to drive or lift on event days.

If a person has trouble with stairs or lifting, ask the hauler about pick-up options rather than risk a fall.

It also helps to talk about scams together. Share the warning signs from the previous chapter, and agree that neither of you will pay anyone who calls or texts without checking first. A short, friendly rule like call each other before paying anyone protects both of you. Seniors are targeted often, and there is no shame in pausing to ask a question. Being careful is a strength.

TIP

Add the district's phone number, (330) 678-8808, to their phone's contacts with the name Recycling Office.

32. Privacy and Cookies

What the website says about data.

When you open the district's page, you may see a banner explaining that the site uses cookies. Cookies are tiny files that websites use to count visitors and remember settings.

The county's note says it uses them to analyze website traffic, and that your data is combined with all other user data. You can accept it or read more. Reading the recycling information does not require you to type any personal details.

- Read the banner calmly. It is not a warning.
- Accept if you are comfortable with it.

- You never need to type your Social Security number to read a recycling page.
- Never type a card number into a page that only lists recycling information.

Looking up a pick-up day or a list of accepted items asks for very little information. If a page demands more than your address or community, stop and think.

If you would rather not accept cookies, you can usually close the banner or read the choices it offers. The recycling information is public, so there is nothing to sign in to and nothing private to protect here. Still, the habit of looking before you type is a good one for every website you ever visit.

GOOD TO KNOW

If a pop-up claims your computer is infected or asks you to call a number, close it. The county's recycling pages do not do that.

33. When Something Does Not Match

Calmly checking what you see.

Sometimes a page will not match what you expected. A link may not open, a date may seem old, or a neighbor tells you something different. This is normal and usually has a simple explanation.

- Check that you are on portagecounty-oh.gov.
- Refresh the page by pressing the circular arrow in your browser.
- Try a different browser or device.
- Look for a newer version of the calendar or event list.
- Call the district at (330) 678-8808 to confirm.

Websites are updated from time to time, and a printed calendar can fall behind. If your printout and the page disagree, trust the page, and confirm by phone if the answer matters.

Remember that trash and recycling are handled by different offices. If your recycling day looks right but your trash was missed, the problem belongs to your hauler or local government, not the county.

If you still cannot sort it out, take a photo of the screen with your phone, or write down what you see. That makes it much easier for me, or for the district's staff, to understand and help.

TIP

Write down the exact words of any error message before you call anyone. It makes the problem much quicker to solve.

34. Plain Questions and Answers

What neighbors ask most.

Q: Does the county pick up my regular trash? A: Not usually. Regular curbside trash is arranged by your city, village or township, or by a private hauler. The county district handles recycling and special collections. Q: When can I use the recycling drop-offs? A: The district's page says they are open twenty-four hours a day, every day. Check the page for locations and what each accepts.

Q: Who do I call about a missed trash pick-up? A: Your hauler or local government. For recycling questions, call the district at (330) 678-8808. Q: Where do I find my recycling day? A: The district's page has a link for pick-up days and a printable calendar.

Q: Where do paint, batteries and old appliances go? A: The district's spring cleaning information is the place to start, and its events and CHaRM pages list special collections.

Q: Do I need an account to use these pages? A: No. Reading them is free and needs no sign-in. Q: Who do I ask if the answer is not on the website? A: Call the district at (330) 678-8808 or call me.

TIP

If the answer to your question is not here, that is a perfect reason to call me. I am happy to look it up with you.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this by the computer. I want to... Reach the real site: type portagecounty-oh.gov yourself. Find recycling help: open Departments, then Solid Waste Management. Print my recycling calendar: use the pick-up calendar link on that page. Find a drop-off: look for the drop-off locations; they are open day and night. Dispose of paint, tires or electronics: check the community events link. Ask the district: call (330) 678-8808. Fix a trash problem: call your city, township or hauler. Check holiday changes: look at the calendar and the district page before a holiday week. Get help: call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

Finding Recycling Help

From the county site to your answer.



Start at the county site and write down what you find.

Illustration - details vary by device, plan, and provider. Always check your own setup.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

Who Handles What

Two helpers, two sets of questions.

County District	City or Hauler
- Recycling help - Drop-off sites - Pick-up calendar - Special events	- Regular trash - Trash bills - Missed pickup - Start service

Recycling goes to the county; trash goes local.

Illustration - details vary by device, plan, and provider. Always check your own setup.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: **billshometech.com/book** · **bill@billshometech.com**

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.