

Garbage Pickup Changes

continued ▲ *from page 3*

with the new system, you can put items in your green yard debris roll cart that should not go in your backyard compost pile such as meat, bones, dairy and grains.

All foods can be composted, including meat, bones, poultry, seafood, dairy, eggshells, beans, bread, pasta, rice and other grains, fruits and vegetables, coffee grounds and filters, teabags, and other plate scrapings. Paper napkins and pizza delivery boxes, along with existing yard debris, can also be composted in the green roll cart.

Every household in Portland will receive a two-gallon kitchen pail as part of a tool kit for composting, which will be delivered in the coming days. The kitchen pail can be stored under the sink or on the counter for use while preparing food or cleaning up after a meal and then emptied into the green roll cart.

The city said nearly 80 percent of households who tested the new rules reported collecting food scraps regularly, dropping the amount of

garbage destined for landfills by almost 30 percent.

Of the 2,000 Portland households in the year-long pilot, 87 percent of participants reported being satisfied with the overall system.

When Jason Dumont moved in to his home off Northeast 74th and Siskiyou two years ago his backyard was covered in cement with no composting bin. One year later, when his neighborhood started the city's pilot program for curbside food composting, he was excited to participate.

Dumont, who says the three people in his household are "pretty environmentally conscious," said the transition has been "painless." However, for people with larger families or children, like his sister with two children, he said there may be more concerns about garbage pickups coming every other week instead every week.

"It depends on your lifestyle," he said, "If your garbage is full of diapers..." Your garbage cannot be composted, and it may need to be emptied more frequently.

A neighbor, Ryan Lanier, lives in a household with two boys and two roommates, and having never composted food scraps before, said the pilot program got them to start.

As for the pitfalls of a full garbage can, he said, "Sometimes the garbage is up to the rim, but we've just been more conscious about what we are putting in it." Only once has his garbage been so full that he had to dispose of it at his mom's house who lives by herself.

Lanier said that he is hopeful the curbside food composting will work. He is not alone. Another resident, Tyler Erick, who lives with his mother and uncle, said they've had no problems with an overflowing garbage can, and though the concept of composting food scraps is new, he said, "I like how the food is getting recycled."

Duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes that are owner- or tenant-occupied are included in the residential program. Buildings with five or more units are not part of the new curbside collections, but may

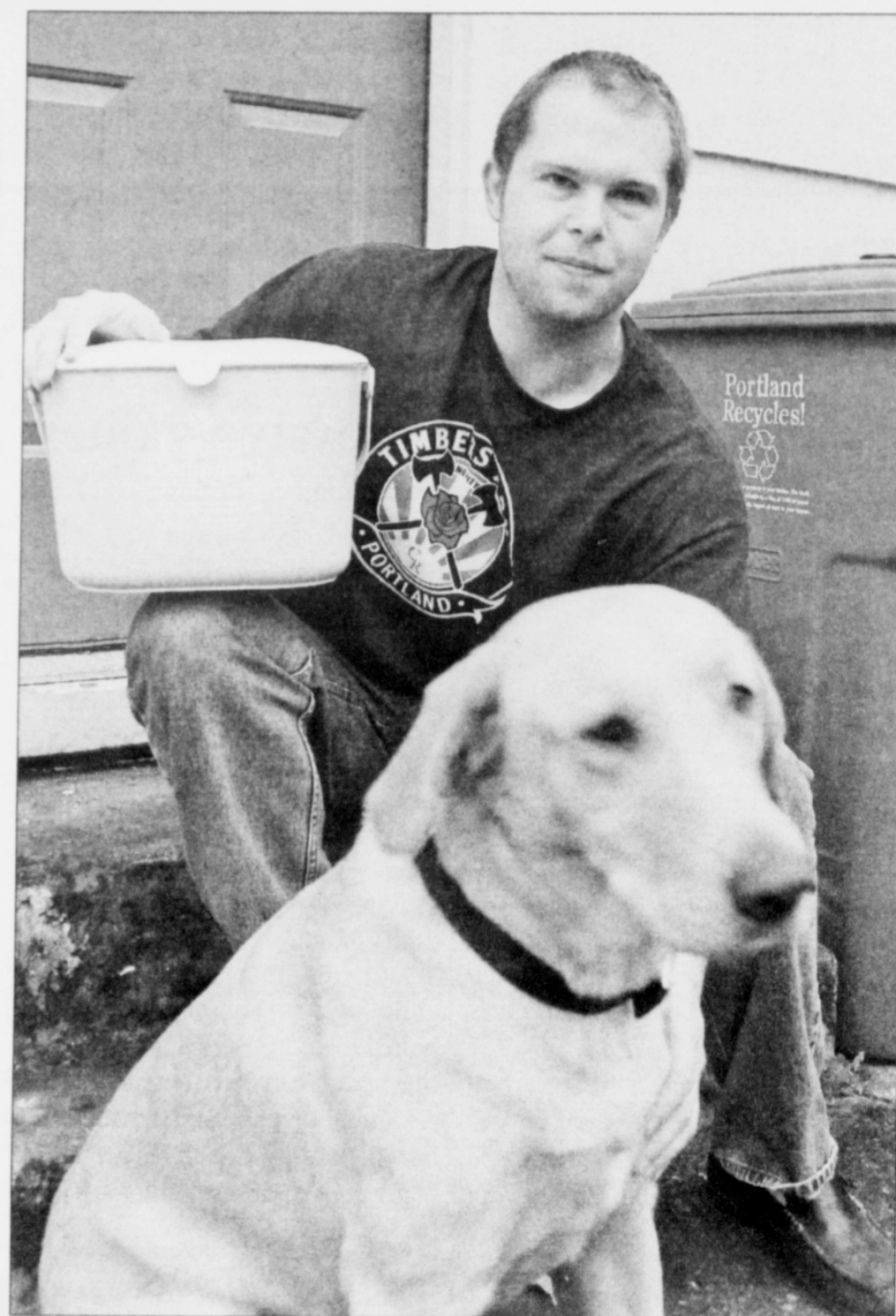


PHOTO BY CARI HACHMANN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Northeast Portland resident Ryan Lanier says he has become a more conscious recycler as a participant of the city's pilot program for curbside food composting. He composts his food scraps in the provided air-tight, plastic container (above) before disposing them in his yard-debris cart.

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come as a later phase of the program.

Residents will be able to set out extra garbage for an additional one-time fee as needed. If you find your household has extra garbage on a regular basis, or that you require less frequent collections, contact your garbage and recycling company to adjust your service.

Disposable diapers and pet waste should not be composted as they contain organisms that can be harmful to the composting process and thus, will continue to go in your garbage, securely bagged and fastened.

Most Portlanders, who stay with the same container size, including 20 and 32 gallon cans and carts, will not see an increase in their \$24.50

monthly garbage bill. Collection rates increase by \$3.50 for 60 gallon carts, \$3.80 for 90 gallon carts, and \$2.60 for once-a-month-cans and carts.

Smaller green Portland Composts! roll carts will be available for customers who would like to participate in the food scrap composting program, but don't currently have yard debris service.

The Blue Portland Recycles! roll carts for paper and metal recycling and the yellow bin services for glass recycling will not change and will continue to be collected every week.

Portland also has a commercial composting program with more than 700 businesses participating. For six years, it has kept approximately 10,000 tons of food scraps out of landfills each year.

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