Building a Zero Waste Community

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About me
About me & how I came to zero waste
diy cleaning spray.

June 6, 2017
Litterless
Zero Waste Chicago
Three ways to grow the zero waste movement:
Three ways to grow the zero waste movement:

- Change individual behavior
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- Get businesses on board
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- Change individual behavior
- Get businesses on board
- Drive policy change
Building zero waste community
Building zero waste community

...how?
ZWC approach:
- Resources
- Events
- Outreach
Where to Shop in Chicago

Finding stores where you’re able to purchase food and household staples without packaging can be a challenge. We’ve compiled a list of every place we know of in Chicago to stock up on some of the things you might need for living zero waste - from unpackaged bar soap to our favorite tortillas which come wrapped in paper to reusable coffee thermoses, click below to browse local sources for zero waste essentials.

Find What You Need

Food & Groceries

Personal Care Products

Kitchen Gear

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Stores Near You

Zoom in on the map below to find places to shop for zero waste goods in your neighborhood.
You can click on each dot to learn more about what’s available at each place!

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Where to Compost in Chicago

Composting is central to a zero waste routine. Organic matter can't fully decompose in the anaerobic environment of a landfill and will sit there unyielding more or less forever (guacamole unearthed in a landfill 15 years later was still bright green!). Instead of throwing food scraps into the trash, letting them decompose naturally into rich soil keeps landfills smaller, greenhouse gas emissions lower, and gardens and farms healthier - it’s just a really efficient system.

**PICKUP SERVICES**

For renters and apartment or condo dwellers, compost pickup services are a great option. These services will drop off a clean, empty bucket, and retrieve your full compost bucket, on a set schedule - you can typically choose weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Because these services compost using larger-scale processes, they can often handle things that at-home composting couldn’t, like meats, oils, citrus peels, and more.

Even if you don’t have any outdoor space in which to keep them, we’ve found that these buckets don’t smell at all when kept closed. To minimize having to open and close the bucket, consider keeping your food scraps in a bowl in the fridge or freezer.

**Chicago-area pickup services:**

- Collective Resource
- Healthy Soil Compost
- WasteNot Compost
- The Urban Canopy

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Zero waste community building in Indianapolis
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