No winter collections of garden waste
Frequently asked questions

Why are you suspending garden waste collections in winter?

The continued and unprecedented scale of cuts in government funding means that increasingly difficult decisions now have to be taken by the Council regarding delivery of services to achieve financial savings to balance the budget.

Stopping the garden waste collection service in winter is one of the Council's efficiency measures as part of its corporate efficiency programme, as the amounts of garden waste presented for collection significantly reduce at this time of year. One collection cycle of garden waste costs approximately £4,000 in fuel and it is not cost effective to operate the vehicle fleet when demand for the service falls.

It is essential for all council tax payers that the Council utilises its resources efficiently and effectively to safeguard as many other services as possible, which are important to the community we serve.

For which months are garden waste collections suspended?

Garden waste collections will stop for 3 months in December, January and February.

Why are collections suspended for three months?

While some people do produce garden waste in the winter, tonnages significantly decrease and very small amounts are collected across the District during these months.

Almost 70% of garden waste tonnages are collected between April and September, with the remaining 30% between October and March. In December, January and February volumes reduce significantly and it is simply not cost effective to operate large waste collection vehicles across a district of 575 square miles, when demand for the service reduces to this extent.

What are the benefits of suspending the service during winter months?

Reduction of carbon emissions through reduced use of large vehicles will be realised. Garden waste collection vehicles only do around 4 miles to a gallon of diesel. Using a web based mapping system the Council has been able to accurately monitor fuel use of all of its vehicles on each collection round, to give a cost benefit analysis for all months of the year. Garden waste collections in winter months showed the least benefit to Council Tax payers. During very cold winter periods, garden waste freezes in bins due to its high moisture content. When shaken against the vehicle to try to free the material, a significant number of containers split as they are very brittle. These containers are obviously expensive to replace.

I still produce garden waste over winter, what should I do with it?

You could try home composting. Containers can be purchased at a reduced price through the Council's dedicated waste management website, Let's Talk Less Rubbish, then enter your postcode to see latest offers.
Residents will still have the option to use their brown wheeled bin, as typically, smaller volumes of garden waste will compost down over winter and this will be collected again when collections begin again in March.

If you already compost at home, but still generate more garden waste than you can manage, please take it to your local Household Waste Recycling Centre. Further details can be found on North Yorkshire County Council's website.

**Will taking waste to a Household Waste Recycling Centre increase carbon emissions?**

Ideally residents should home compost where possible, or try to incorporate a visit to the HWRC in with regular routines, rather than a separate trip. Average fuel consumption for a car is around 35 mpg compared to garden waste collection vehicles, which only do about 4 mpg.

**How do I dispose of my old Christmas tree?**

Old Christmas trees can be taken to your local Household Waste Recycling Centre for recycling. If you only have small amounts of garden waste during winter months, Christmas trees can be chopped up and left in the garden waste bin until collections start again in March.

Alternatively, why not buy a Christmas tree with roots attached, which could be planted in the garden, or perhaps think about an artificial tree that could be re-used each year.