

NYC Department of Sanitation Publishes Draft Rules Formalizing Model and Timeline for First Full-District Containerization Pilot

Amid historic decline in rat sightings, West Harlem set to be first area of New York City with ALL trash in containers by June 1, 2025

NEW YORK – Making good on a [commitment made by Mayor Adams earlier this year](#), the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) today released [draft rules](#) outlining the timeline and specific model under which Manhattan Community District 9 (Morningside Heights, Manhattanville, and Hamilton Heights in West Harlem, also known as M9) will become the first New York City Community District in which 100% of the trash is off the street and in containers, as is common in world-class cities around the globe.

Under the rules announced today, larger buildings in this area – all with 31 or more residential units, and some with 10-30 residential units – will be the first in the City to place their trash out for collection in European-style stationary on-street containers, known in New York City as Empire Bins, rather than in bags directly on the sidewalk.

“The unique density and streetscape of New York City has long been used as an excuse to do nothing about our biggest infrastructural challenges – to handwave away solutions that work around the world. New York City’s exceptionalism cannot be used as an excuse to accept the status quo when the status quo is mediocrity. We can have the clean, trash-free streets that other cities have, if we are only willing to do the work. There isn’t some secret to winning the Trash Revolution; it just takes careful planning, thoughtful management, and a commitment to finally getting it done,” said **Jessica Tisch, Commissioner, NYC Department of Sanitation**.

This will replace the current on-street container pilot running on 10 blocks in Hamilton Heights. The new model is a vast improvement, both in terms of aesthetics and in terms of scalability, but the existing pilot – while imperfect – has shown fantastic results, with rat sightings reported to 311 down a staggering 60% in the pilot zone since it began.

UNDERSTANDING THE MODEL FOR CONTAINERIZATION

This program is moving forward under a model developed by the Adams Administration using a detailed volumetric analysis of trash produced across the City. Under the plan created from this analysis and being put into action by these proposed rules, buildings with 31 or more residential units will be required to use stationary on-street Empire Bins for their trash, serviced by an all-new automated side-loading truck operated by two Sanitation Workers.

Unlike in many global cities and because of the unique density of New York City, the Empire Bins will not be “shared” between buildings, but rather assigned to a specific building for use only by residents of that building. They will be locked and only openable by the Department of Sanitation and designees of the building owner.

Buildings with 10-30 units will be given a choice between using Empire Bins and using individual wheelie bins.

As previously announced, all buildings with 1-9 residential units will be required to put their trash in individual wheelie bins starting November 12, 2024, with the first-ever [official NYC bins](#) available now and required by June 2026. That is a citywide commitment, but it will also cover low-density buildings within Manhattan Community District 9.

All businesses citywide have been required to put their commercial trash in bins since March 2024.

Between each of these components – the citywide wheelie bin requirement for smaller buildings, citywide commercial containerization, and the use of Empire Bins for larger buildings – M9 will become the first part of the City that is fully containerized.

The days of bags of trash on the street are over.

THE TIMELINE

Under today's proposed rules, all trash in M9 will be required to be in containers of one kind or another by June 1, 2025. There are multiple key milestones between now and then.

- November 12, 2024: Smaller buildings (those with 1-9 residential units) will be required to put their trash in wheelie bins – either a bin they already own, provided it is 55 gallons or less and has a secure lid, or the [official NYC Bin](#), available for about one third the price of similar bins.
 - While this is a citywide requirement, one area will operate on a different timeline: the 10 blocks currently engaged in the Hamilton Heights on-street container pilot. It would be infeasible for smaller buildings on those blocks to use both the on-street containers *and* wheelie bins at the same time, so these residents will continue to use the pilot containers until June 1, 2025, switching over to wheelie bins when the Empire Bins are installed for larger buildings and the pilot containers are removed.
- December 15, 2024: A new opt-in form will go live at nyc.gov/dsny, through which buildings in M9 with 10-30 units will be able to request to use Empire Bins for their trash. Any building of this size that does not complete this form by February 1, 2025 will be required to use wheelie bins by June 1, 2025.
- Early 2025: DSNY accepts delivery of more than one dozen new automated side-loading trucks, the first of their kind in North America. These trucks, operated by two Sanitation Workers, will lift the Empire Bins.
- May 2025: Installation of the Empire Bins begins in front of all buildings in M9 with 31 or more units and buildings with 10-30 units that opted in. The pilot containers will be removed from Hamilton Heights at the same time.

- June 1, 2025: All buildings of every type in Manhattan Community District 9 will be using containers for their trash.

A timeline and process for expansion beyond Manhattan Community District 9 will be determined based upon learnings from the pilot district and an environmental review.

THE TRASH REVOLUTION THUS FAR

The containerization of a full community district is a dream decades in the making. It is the culmination of a phased process that began just over 18 months ago.

- April 1, 2023: The Adams Administration kicked off the Trash Revolution by changing set-out times for both residential and commercial waste from 4pm – one of the earliest set-out times in the country – to 8pm, while also allowing earlier set-out if the material is in a container.
- April 30, 2023: DSNY published its [Future of Trash report](#), the first meaningful attempt to study containerization models in New York City, and the playbook to get it done.
- September 1, 2023: Containerization requirements went into effect for all food-related businesses in New York City. These businesses – restaurants, delis, bodegas, bars, grocery stores, caterers, etc. – produce an outsized amount of the type of trash that attracts rats.
- September 12, 2023: Installation of the initial 10-block, 14-school Manhattan Community Board 9 pilot containers began. This pilot led to an epic 60% reduction in rat sightings reported to 311 within the pilot zone compared to the same period prior to installation.
- October 5, 2023: Commercial containerization requirements extended to chain businesses of any type with five or more locations in NYC. These chain businesses tend to produce a large total volume of trash.
- March 1, 2024: Container requirements went into effect for all businesses in NYC – of every type – to get their trash off the streets and into a secure bin.
- November 12, 2024: Container requirements will go into effect for low-density residential buildings – those with 1-9 units. At this point, approximately 70% of all trash in the City will be containerized. An official NYC bin is available for purchase at www.bins.nyc, and use of that specific low-cost bin will become required in Summer 2026.
- June 1, 2025: First fully containerized community district.

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