



"We Have Tomorrow – Bright Before Us, Like A Flame." *Langston Hughes*



HEADING TO EARTH DAY? LAWRENCE TRANSIT OFFERS FREE AND EARTH-FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION!

With a fleet of electric buses, Lawrence Transit is an earth-friendly way to get to this year's Earth Day celebration in South Park!

Did you know: Lawrence Transit competed for and was awarded three consecutive federal Low-No Emissions Program grants for electric buses in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The first grant secured five buses to be deployed in 2022, the second grant secured two buses to be deployed in 2023, and the third grant secured four buses to be deployed in 2024.

Lawrence Transit plans to transition its entire bus fleet (50 buses) to zero-emissions by 2035!



Celebrate Earth Month this April!

Join us throughout April as the community commemorates Earth Month with educational activities, volunteer events and more fun for the whole family to enjoy!

Every year on April 22, our global community comes together to advance sustainability and climate action in commemoration of Earth Day. In recent years, our community has begun expanding the Earth Day celebration to include events and activities throughout the month of April.

As part of our Strategic Plan, our organization's commitment to Environmental Sustainability outlines a deep respect for our place in relationship with the planet and environment. We consider this commitment in our work every day, and Earth Day reminds us to raise awareness of the need to protect Earth's resources for future generations.

United together, we'll harness our energy and enthusiasm toward a commitment to a sustainable and equitable future for our planet. You can visit our Earth Day webpage for a list of Earth Month tips, activities and events: lawrenceks.org/earth-day.

Two events happening April 19!

[Kansas River Cleanup](#)

Celebrate Earth Month by giving back to the Kansas River! Join the Friends of the Kaw and the City of Lawrence at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 19, at 2nd and Locust Street to pick up trash along the riverbank.

[Lawrence Earth Day Fair](#)

Celebrate our beautiful planet with the Watkins Museum of History and the City of Lawrence! The free Earth Day Fair will be in South Park from 1-4 p.m. on Saturday, April 19. Local organizations will set up tables throughout the park, providing information, learning materials, activities, crafts and more— all themed around Earth Day and protecting the environment.

Bring your family to this festive environmental celebration and learn how to include sustainability in your day-to-day life.

OUR MISSION
We create a
community where
all enjoy life and
feel at home.

City information is available at lawrenceks.org and on cable Channel 25.

The Flame is published by the City of Lawrence, 785-832-3000



Help City Recycling get back on track!

In response to increased levels of contamination in City recycling, we are stepping up our efforts to better educate our community and reduce contamination in our City's recycling stream.

Recycling contamination is when non-recyclable or improperly prepared items end up in the blue recycling carts – and it's becoming a growing challenge for Lawrence.

Every year, the City's recycling materials are audited to ensure compliance with contamination limits set by our recycling partner, HAMM, which operates the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) that processes Lawrence's recyclables.

In November 2023, the City's contamination rate was 10.7%. However, by October 2024, that number had risen to 17.3%, exceeding the acceptable threshold and triggering additional fees.

"This increase in contamination means we're not only facing higher costs but also more risks for our solid waste staff," said Ron Green, General Manager of Solid Waste.

"We're seeing too many prohibited items, such as batteries, electronics, cellphones, sharp metals, and even vaporizers and vape pens, entering the recycling stream. These items can cause fires, serious injuries, and equipment damage at our facilities."

With contamination levels rising and posing significant financial and safety risks, the City is encouraging residents to recycle smarter and help protect both the environment and the hardworking teams managing waste and recycling.

Efforts to Improve Recycling

To help residents recycle correctly and reduce contamination, the City has been actively working on several initiatives, including:

- Updated Cart Labels: Recycling carts across Lawrence are being updated with new cart inlays that clearly outline recycling guidelines and include a QR code linking to the City's Recyclable Materials Database. This tool provides information on how to properly dispose of items that don't go in the blue bin.
- Social Media Education Campaign: We will feature engaging and informative posts with recycling tips, highlighting common contaminants like batteries and electronics, and offering advice on how to prepare recyclables correctly.
- Continued Community Engagement:

Residents can access educational resources, including a celebratory video marking 10 years of curbside recycling, and find information on accepted materials online at: lawrenceks.org/recycling.

How You Can Help

Every Lawrence resident can play a crucial role in keeping recycling clean and efficient! Simply follow these tips:

1. Batteries DO NOT belong in your recycling cart. They should be taken to the Lawrence/Douglas County Household Hazardous Waste Facility.
2. Keep the cart clear. Make sure your recycling and solid waste carts are at least three feet away from all obstacles, including vehicles, other trash carts, and mailboxes.
3. Keep it clean. Empty, rinse, and dry recyclables before placing them in your bin.
4. When in doubt, check it out! Use the City's Recyclable Materials Database to ensure items are acceptable before recycling them.

By working together, the City and our residents can lower contamination rates, reduce costs, and ensure the long-term success of Lawrence's recycling program. We can do it!

For more information about recycling guidelines, visit lawrenceks.org/recycling, and stay tuned to the City's Facebook page for updates and tips: facebook.com/CityOfLawrence.

Compost Facility opens for 2025 season

As one of our most popular environmental services, the Compost Facility provides our residents with an opportunity to drop off yard waste and pick up nutrient-rich compost and woodchips.

The Compost Facility will be open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Both drop off and self-load events will be open to Lawrence residents only, with proof of residency required.

City-Load Events are scheduled for the first Saturdays of April, May, June, and October (pending material availability). There will be no drop-off available during City-Load events. The April event will be for Lawrence residents only, with the other City-Load events open to the public.

Important Reminders for Visitors:

- The Compost Facility operates on a cash-only basis; please do not bring large bills. **Please note: There is a new pay structure this year.** Visit our website for more information.
- Personal motorized loading equipment (e.g., skid steers) is not allowed.
- Residents must bring their own tools for self-loading.
- The facility may close or adjust hours due to weather-related issues, with advance notice provided whenever possible.
- Customers should avoid stopping on the railroad tracks while waiting to enter the facility.

For more information, visit lawrenceks.org/swm/compost or follow the City of Lawrence on Facebook for updates.



DID YOU KNOW?

Batteries of all types are **NOT** Recyclable.

You'll get us all **FIRED UP** 🔥

