

Trash Chute & Compactor Odor Audit Checklist

A 12-point walkthrough for NYC property managers, resident managers, and building engineers. Use it before your next board meeting, tenant complaint cycle, or vendor RFP.

For Class-A multifamily, hotels, healthcare, commercial	Time to complete ~20 minutes on-site	What you get A defensible odor scorecard by area
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1. Chute intake doors (each floor)

- Gaskets intact, no visible tears or compression damage
- Self-close working — door shuts fully within 3 seconds
- No odor detectable within 12 inches of the closed door
- Signage present (what tenants can/can't dispose)

2. Chute shaft & discharge

- Fusible link and sprinkler head clear of debris
- No standing liquid or grease residue at discharge
- Deodorant dispenser installed at top of chute (gravity-fed) and functioning
- Chute wiped/scrubbed within the last 90 days (log verified)

3. Compactor room / trash room

- Room negatively pressurized (smoke pencil test — air flows IN under door)
- Exhaust fan running, ducted to exterior, damper working
- Floor drain trap primed — no dry P-trap gassing H₂S back into room
- Automated odor-neutralizer installed and dispensing on schedule (not fragrance-only)
- Walls, ceiling, and compactor exterior free of grease bloom or biofilm
- Wash-down schedule posted; last cleaning within 7 days

4. Outdoor pad / dumpster / roll-off

- Pad slopes to drain, no puddling under compactor
- Lids close fully; hydraulic seals intact
- Perimeter treated (dog-park chemistry or equivalent) if within 25 ft of building intake

<input type="checkbox"/>	Pickup frequency matches occupancy — no overflow between pickups
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5. Tenant & complaint signal

<input type="checkbox"/>	311 complaint history pulled for the address (last 12 months)
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Front-desk / super log reviewed — recurring floors or times of day identified
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Board or ownership briefed on findings and remediation cost
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Scoring

Each unchecked item is a probable odor source. Tally by section:

Section	Items	Checked	Priority if failing
1. Chute intake doors	4	_____	High — every floor smells it
2. Chute shaft & discharge	4	_____	High — odor rises the whole shaft
3. Compactor / trash room	6	_____	Critical — this is the source
4. Outdoor pad	4	_____	Medium — but a lobby-visible issue
5. Complaint signal	3	_____	Documentation for board / RFP

Common root causes we find in NYC buildings

- **Fragrance-only programs.** Perfume masks for 30 minutes, then bacteria wins. You need chemistry that binds the odor molecule.
- **Dry floor drains.** The #1 unglamorous source of sewer gas in trash rooms. Prime weekly.
- **Positive-pressure trash rooms.** If the exhaust fan is undersized or off, odor pushes into corridors every time the door opens.
- **Gravity dispensing missing at the top of the chute.** Treating only the compactor room ignores 20+ floors of shaft.
- **Compactor gasket wear.** Hydraulic seals fail quietly. Complaints spike, cause is invisible.

Want a Luften engineer to run this audit on your building?

Same-week walkthroughs across all five boroughs, Jersey City, Hoboken, Newark, LIC, and Westchester. No fee, no obligation — you keep the scorecard.

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