

Waking up Monday morning with a cold, realizing holiday fun was over, and knowing I had to get ready for work but didn't feel good, I sat in my robe under a lap blanket feeling sorry for myself.

I watched what was making national news in New York City, which gave me the nudge to get up, get dressed, and make my simple little trek across the street to work, being thankful life is so simple here.

A Christmas weekend blizzard that had dumped 20 inches of snow, along with mountains of discarded holiday garbage has caused quite a stir in the Big Apple.

The situation put Mayor Michael Bloomberg and every city sanitation worker on the hot seat.

They needed to remove snow. They also need to retrieve the trash. So....the choice was made to use half of the trucks for clearing snow and half for garbage.

This obviously made for some very unhappy New Yorkers. Snow removal efforts were minimal, at best, and trash piles just kept growing.

Black mountainous piles of garbage bags are still lining the streets where they were tossed for pick up days ago.

I'm not talking a few bags here—I'm talking thousands of pounds of disgusting garbage that just keeps expanding along the streets of the city that never sleeps. Some of it remains buried under snow but most of it is big visible black humps several yards long and several feet high

How disgusting. It made me so grateful to be a resident of a small little town in mid-America where I can just traipse across my lawn, throw trash in a dumpster, and it gets hauled away.

My town also cleared the streets after it snowed and they didn't have to drive miles and miles to dump truckload upon truckload of the white stuff into a bay.

I can only imagine how disgusting it feels walking along a street in Manhattan. I know what happens after a plastic bag sits that long. It begins to weaken from weight, the rotting contents begin to ferment, it splits—and slime weeps all over the rest of the bags. Oh, gag.

I know what one 13-gallon kitchen-sized trash can smells like when it's almost full—which usually takes only 2-3 days—so I can only imagine what the foothills of trash along New York streets smell like.

What a shame. New York is a fabulous city. It's too large, too noisy, too angry, too scary, too insensitive, too crazy, too dangerous and too confining for me—but what a fantastic cultural abyss that everyone, sometime in their lifetime, should at least experience.

Between the never-ending rain leading to mudslides in California and the excessive snow and rubbish causing temper flares in New York, I couldn't be happier right here in the middle of the country—knowing if there's a calamity, everyone will join in the effort to fix it.

There is no place like midwestern rural America. It's a well kept secret that easterners don't know about yet. And I prefer to keep it that way.

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