Chonky Chunks

Project Zomboid has issues with garbage collection (among other things) that can lead to problems with chunks becoming too large. Literally, they take up too much disk space on the server.

A "chunk" is any 10x10 square of tiles starting at coordinates X xxx0, Y xxx0 and ending X xxx9, Y xxx9.
A "chonky chunk" has become so large it is a noticeable issue, sometimes even going above a gig!

Below are the steps you can take to reduce the speed of a chunk becoming chonk, or as we call it "chunk rot", as well as the steps we have to take once a chunk gets to that stage.

- How do chunks get chonky?
- What can players do?
- What happens when a chunk gets chonk?

How do chunks get chonky?

There are various other issues that contribute, however these ones below are the ones with the most player agency involved, i.e. the ones you can change the most by altering your behaviour.

Whenever you move items to and from your inventory into that chunk, into a container, or placed on the floor, the server stores the data of that movement. However, once the item is removed, it doesn’t delete the data afterwards.

The more times you move items to and from containers, the more this list builds up. This eventually causes performance issues. As the number of interactions per chunk increases, everyone loading that chunk will see lag, slow loading, stuttering and potentially crashes. This eventually leads to the inability to log in.

What can players do?

- **Collect less junk!** It’s ok to grab what you need, but many zomboid players are guilty of dragonhoarding. Do you really need that 25th hammer?
- **Build a burner shed**/location away from your loot storage, preferably in a chunk of its own. Using this as a staging area, you can level tailoring, turn jewelry into scrap then bullion, or adding 5000 cabbages to your biogas units, all without adding data to your major storage chunks. Later, when this chunk gets chonk, we can remove it without it affecting parts of your base that you spent hours collecting and building for.
- **Design your builds like a functional house.** The majority of the safehouses that are the biggest offenders of chonkies are builds that are just rooms of storage crates stacked on storage crates. Those spaces are not designed to live in, but to ONLY store.
- **Reduce your crate height to 1-2 crates max.** This will force you to spread your loot over a larger footprint and that in turn will spread out the interactions across more chunks, slowing this process further.

What happens when a chunk gets chonk?

We periodically run checks to determine if there are any problem chunks. This is a manual process that is only done by server admins. There is no way as a player to know if your chunk is getting chonky or not.

An admin will reach out to you or an active member of the safehouse in offense via ticket. We'll then coordinate with you to move the things you want out of the area and give guidance on preventing the problem from happening again.

If the area has no ownership tied to it, we will reset the chunk and move on.