

Los Angeles County Public Works Food Waste Recycling Initiative

In an effort to reduce food waste, Los Angeles County Public Works implemented several programs and projects under its Food Waste Recycling Initiative.

Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383) will go into effect on January 1, 2022. In preparation, the County and every city will be required to enforce food waste recycling on businesses and residents in their jurisdiction. The County is in the process of drafting an organics generator enforcement ordinance for the Board of Supervisors' consideration.

The County initiated default organics collection and recycling service through new or renewed residential contracts authorized in August 2020. Preparations are underway for Republic Services to provide organics collection service for three Garbage Disposal Districts: Athens, Firestone and Walnut. Republic Services will collect food waste in the residents' existing yard waste container and process the organic material at their composting facility in Kettleman City, CA. Adding the default organics collection service resulted in an estimated price increase of approximately 25% to a customer's monthly bill.

In 2021, Public Works expects to amend its remaining 24 Garbage Disposal District and Residential Franchise contracts to include default organic waste collection service. Additional efforts by the County will include developing the scope of work for a new commercial franchise system with default organics collection and recycling service to be implemented by January 1, 2022. Current assessments indicate that there is a lack of organic waste processing infrastructure and capacity for the entire County's organic waste stream; however, a trend of increasing infrastructure is emerging as jurisdictions are requiring the service so that many waste haulers are either investing in new or expanded organic waste processing infrastructure. Unfortunately, jurisdictions that have not begun planning or securing food waste recycling capacity may not find an outlet for their food waste by January 1, 2022. . Ultimately, only after all the contracts and ordinances are in place will we be able to determine what infrastructure and capacity will look like.

Under the current County system, nearly every commercial hauler offers food waste collection and recycling service at a cost. There has been some success in subscribing businesses to organic service because it is required under AB 1826 Mandatory Commercial Organics Recycling.. Some larger food waste generators such as grocery stores backhaul their unused food to their distribution center and work directly with a facility to recycle their food waste. Additional food waste reduction efforts targeting the commercial sector include the continuance of Public Works' Commercial Food Waste Recycling pilot program. The pilot program provides eligible commercial customers food waste recycling services at no additional cost and is a collaborative effort with the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. In 2020, the program successfully collected an average of 48 tons per month that may have otherwise been disposed.

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Public Works' Food Waste Recycling Initiative is comprised of several projects and programs constantly evolving and adapting to meet its goals and upcoming compliance with SB 1383. To overcome existing challenges such as infrastructure, participation, resources or uncontrollable circumstances, the County broadens its efforts by executing multifaceted programs and projects capable of acting independently from one another while working towards the same goal .

For more information, please visit BusinessRecycling.com or email us at businessrecycling@pw.lacounty.gov



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