

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENTAL RECYCLING PROGRAM Newsletter

2nd Quarter 2024
Roadmap to a Sustainable
Waste Management Future



Organic Waste Management at County Facilities

Organic waste covers a host of materials and products, such as food, food-soiled paper, landscaping debris, wood, textiles and manure. In 2021, the Board adopted the [Organic Waste Policy](#), which immediately came into effect establishing requirements for County departments to implement organic waste management programs. This includes excess edible food donation, organic waste diversion, and procurement of products made from organic waste such as compost and mulch.

Facilities may choose to self-haul organic waste or process small amounts generated through onsite composting. Check out this [info sheet](#) about how the Public Works Headquarters cafeteria manages food scrap collection and composting to recycle food waste and help the [Annex Garden](#) grow all sorts of plants and vegetables! County facilities may also contact their waste hauler or the Internal Services Department to set up organic waste collection service, typically at an additional cost.

To report compliance with State law and County policy, departments should use the forms at pw.lacounty.gov/epd/organics/ReportForms.cfm. One form may be used by Contract Managers to provide to their contractors for documenting organic waste diverted using County agreements other than those under FASMA. The other form is for department representatives (typically Organic Waste Liaisons) to complete monthly with aggregated information on the department's organic waste recycling, procurement of SB1383-compliant recovered organic waste products, and edible surplus food donation.

With maintained focus and creative tweaks along the way, departments can lead the County in attaining a sustainable waste-free future. For technical assistance to manage organic waste or to obtain bins for recyclables and organic materials, send an email to CDRP@dpw.lacounty.gov.

Determine an Appropriate Service Level

Be a waste-free champion and conserve County resources by regularly monitoring trash and recycling agreements. Follow these steps to avoid exceeding needed service levels. Your site may save money by a simple call to haulers and recyclers to reduce collection frequency, bin quantity or bin size.

1. Create a tracking sheet to note the location, size, collection days and service frequency for hauler bins collecting trash, recyclables and organic waste (food waste, landscaping waste, etc.). Make it easy to read and use!
2. Shortly before the bins are collected, locate the bins and look inside them. On the tracking sheet note down the level of full-ness as a percentage.
3. Determine the weight in pounds (lbs).
 - Example: A 64-gallon bin looks 75% full of cafeteria food waste.
 - For the example above: $64 \text{ gallons} \times 0.75 = 48 \text{ gallons}$
For cafeteria food waste, the conversion factor will be 3.8 lbs/gallon.
Therefore, $48 \text{ gallons} \times 3.8 \text{ lbs/gallon} = 182 \text{ lbs}$ of cafeteria food waste diverted from landfill disposal.



For questions or additional information,
email us at cdrp@pw.lacounty.gov.

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4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for at least three months before deciding to change the service level.
 - Strive to check waste bins on a regular basis and at around the same timeframe.
5. If you notice that bins are regularly half full or less, consider subscribing to a lower service level. Speak to your contract administrator and hauler for more details.

Keep in mind the different seasonal uses of the site. For example, summer may be a busier time for visitors. Contact and work with your waste hauler to obtain the most appropriate and cost-effective level of service to comply with County policy and State law.



Tips for Managing Plastic Waste

A lack of local markets for recycling recovered plastic and blended material, fabric or parts requires smartly managing plastic product waste. Following are some tips for managing these products after their useful life:

- Sell or donate materials through the County Surplus Program, such as binders, print cartridges, office chairs
- For print cartridges, use the take-back program provided by the cartridge manufacturer or send waste cartridges to a County vendor for recycling print cartridges
- For food and beverages that are no longer edible stored in plastic containers, pour water into a non-food garden, other beverages in the sink, and discard food into the compost or

food waste bin. Then rinse and recycle the plastic containers. For example, if you leave a plastic water bottle in direct sunlight or heat, the plastic may leach into the beverage making it unsafe to drink.

The following are some ways to avoid plastic use:

- Binders – Go paperless, then back up electronic files and folders to a network file system
- DVD cases/plastic cases – Stream from the internet; back up electronic files and folders to the network file system
- Print cartridges – Use remanufactured print cartridges

To achieve the County's vision for residents to thrive in a safe, clean, and sustainable environment, the

Board adopted the Reduction of Waste from Single-Use Articles and Expanded Polystyrene Products Ordinance (22-0016) in April 2022, which builds upon the November 2021 Board-adopted County Single-Use Plastic Reduction Policy. More information about the ordinance can be found at pw.lacounty.gov/epd/eps.

Besides no longer using plastic carryout bags, County facilities are to cease using plastic single-use foodware and instead use reusable foodware or certified commercially compostable single-use foodware. Retail establishments must cease selling, renting or offering expanded polystyrene products and single-use plastic carryout bags. Food facilities must provide single-use foodware accessories upon request only.

