



Food Waste Program Questions & Answers (Q&A)

Q. Why is the City of Pasadena doing this?

A. Senate Bill 1383 requires cities and counties to reduce organic waste disposal by 75% by 2025. All jurisdictions must comply with this law. SB 1383 is designed to reduce the release of global warming gasses like methane, which are the most potent and are “short-lived”. Reducing the release of this gas now, will reduce the impacts of climate change in our life time.

Q. Why do we need to bag the food waste?

A. The purpose of bagging food waste is to prevent the food and yard waste from mixing. This separation allows the same waste bin to be used for two different waste streams and allows food waste processors to easily separate the food waste from the yard waste. The food waste is recycled by feeding it to an anaerobic digester and the yard waste is composted.

Q. Why does the food waste need to be placed in plastic bags?

A. The City requires residents to place food waste in plastic bags because they are sturdy and less prone to breakage. The City encourages residents to utilize plastic bags that may already be present in the home such as bread bags, cereal bags, produce bags, etc.

Q. Can we get smaller yard waste bins for this purpose?

A. The City currently offers only the standard 100 gallon yard waste container to residential customers. Residents can request additional yard waste containers for a potential fee. Please note, food waste will still need to be placed in a plastic bag prior to depositing it in the yard waste container regardless of if the container contains yard waste. Please contact the Citizen Service Center at (626) 744-7311 to request waste service collection changes.

Q. What is the fine/penalty for residents who don't comply?

A. In accordance with California state law, SB 1383, enforcement and potential fines will not occur until January 1, 2024. In the meantime, the City will continue to educate residents on proper food waste collection and recycling practices. Resources and educational materials regarding the program can be found at the following link: <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/public-works/recycling-resources/special-waste-recycling/sb-1383-information-and-resources/>. The Citizen Service Center can also be contacted at (626) 744-7311 to answer any questions or concerns regarding the Program.

Q. Will the City offer compost pick-up for residents?

A. The City does not presently offer compost pick-up for residents.

Q. Is everyone participating?

A. Yes. All residential refuse customers 1 to 4 units will be participating.

Q. How much will this cost?

A. The program will be part of your normal refuse management bill. Refuse collect fees are unchanged but may change in the future.

Q. Will bags be supplied?

A. No. The bags must be purchased by the customer.

Q. What type of bags can be used?

A. We recommend plastic bags that are available at your local hardware store or through online vendors. Non-clear bags are also acceptable.

Q. What's the benefit in doing this?

A. Your participation in this effort will reduce methane emissions from landfills and lower your carbon footprint.

Q. I backyard compost, do I have to participate?

A. We encourage you to continue composting but all non-composted food waste items, such as meat bones, can be recycled through this program.

Q. What if the food waste bag rips?

A. Try to place the food waste inside another bag, secure it, and place it inside your green waste container.

Q. Who collects the material?

A. The food waste will be collected along with your green waste barrel.

Q. How often will you pick it up?

A. The food waste will be picked up once a week on your regular service day.

Q. When will the program be implemented?

A. January 1, 2022 is the projected start date.

Q. Where does the food waste go?

A. The food waste will be sent to an organics processing waste facility where it will be composted or used as feedstock for anaerobic digestion.

Q. Who would I contact for service questions or concerns?

A. The Citizen Service Center at (626) 744-7311 or visit our website at: www.cityofpasadena.net/PublicWorks