



CURBSIDE COMPOSTING PILOT PROGRAM



zerowaste.dc.gov/curbsidecomposting



curbsidecomposting@dc.gov



GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

WELCOME LETTER FROM DPW DIRECTOR TIMOTHY SPRIGGS



I am very pleased to welcome you to the Curbside Composting Pilot Program, a new collection service provided by the Department of Public Works (DPW) that will increase access to food waste diversion opportunities across the District and advance our progress toward meeting Mayor Bowser's Zero Waste Goal of 80% waste diversion.

The Curbside Composting Pilot Program is a convenient and easy way for households to divert food waste from the landfill, where it can produce harmful greenhouse gases. Instead, the food waste you put in your curbside compost collection container will be composted into nutrient-rich soil that can be used to nourish our gardens, parks, and green spaces, creating a more beautiful and thriving city.

I believe that every resident plays a crucial role in creating a cleaner and healthier environment for ourselves and future generations. By joining this pilot program, you are not only taking a step to reduce your waste, but also assisting DPW in its effort to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of providing curbside food waste collection services to all households that receive DPW trash and recycling services.

I am inspired by the enthusiasm and dedication that our community has shown for this pilot program and I am confident that together, we can make a real difference. Thank you for your participation and commitment to building a Zero Waste DC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy W. Spriggs".

Timothy Spriggs
Director, Department of Public Works

WELCOME!

The Curbside Composting Pilot Program is a new initiative that will provide up to 12,000 single-family households with a convenient and easy way to divert food waste away from landfill and incineration.

A goal of this year-long pilot program is to identify opportunities for improvement as DPW assesses the feasibility of offering curbside compost collection service to all DPW-serviced households. Over the course of the pilot year, participating households will be asked to complete surveys and provide feedback to help DPW understand their experience and address any issues that may arise.

To ensure the success of the pilot program, please adhere to the following steps and best practices.

Steps to Success:

Step 1: Receive Your Starter Kit

Your starter kit will be delivered to your home one week before collection begins. Your starter kit will include:

- One 5-gallon screw-top curbside collection container
- One 1.9-gallon kitchen caddy
- 100 Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certified compostable bags



Step 2: Line Your Kitchen Caddy

Line your kitchen caddy with a BPI-certified compostable bag provided in your starter kit to keep it clean and make it easier to empty food scraps into your curbside collection container. Once full of food scraps, tie off the compostable bag and place it in your curbside collection container. If you do not want to use compostable bags to line your kitchen caddy, you can line your kitchen caddy or curbside collection container with a paper bag. Please do not use plastic bags to line either container. If you line your kitchen caddy, you do not need to also line your curbside collection container.

Step 3: Start Collecting Food Scraps

Avoid contamination by only putting acceptable compostable materials in your containers. See a full list of accepted and unaccepted materials on page 4 of this welcome packet. When in doubt, find out, or leave it out! Curbside collection containers with unacceptable materials will not be collected.

Step 4: Set Out Your Collection For Pickup

Place your curbside collection container where your household typically places your trash and recycling containers for collection – either at the front, back, or side of your home – no earlier than 6:30 p.m. the night before collection and no later than 6:00 a.m. on your collection day. You are required to remove your collection containers from public space by 8:00 p.m. on your collection day. You will be notified of your assigned collection day via email and in the materials provided with your starter kit that will be delivered to your home.

Repeat Steps 2-4 Each Week!

Composting your food scraps reduces the amount of waste sent to landfill and incineration. It also helps the environment by enriching soil, giving new plants nutrients to grow. At the end of the pilot program year, five pounds of bagged finished compost will be delivered to your household. DPW will also allow District residents to fill up to five 32-gallon bags (bring your own bags and shovel) of free compost Tuesday – Friday 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. and Saturday 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., at the Ft. Totten Transfer Station, 4900 John F. McCormack Road NE.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Simplified steps to success:



Line Kitchen Caddy

Line your kitchen caddy with a BPI-certified compostable bag included in your starter kit or paper bags, if preferred.



Collect Food Scraps

Only place acceptable materials (shown below) in your kitchen caddy and curbside collection container.



Place Bagged Food Scraps In Collection Container

Once it's full with food scraps, tie off the compostable bag, place it in your curbside collection container, and screw the lid on to prevent rodents.



Set Out Collection Container For Weekly Collection

Set out your curbside collection container at your collection point (front, back alley, or side alley) on a once-weekly basis.

WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

See below for the materials you can and cannot put in your curbside collection container.

YES ✓

- Fruit and vegetable scraps and trimmings
- Cut or dried flowers and plants
- Coffee grounds, loose tea, and paper tea bags and filters
- Meat, bones, eggs, and dairy
- Egg shells, nut shells, and corn cobs
- Bread, grains, cereals, rice, and pasta
- Nuts, beans, flour, and spices
- Food-soiled napkins and paper towels
- BPI-certified compostable bags

NO ✗

- Yard waste (Call 311 or visit 311.dc.gov to schedule a yard waste pick up)
- Fat, oils, and grease
- Plastic, metals, foil, glass, foam, and coated or waxed paper
- Plastic bags, wraps, or film
- Compostable cups, straws, takeout containers, and utensils
- Animal waste
- Diapers
- Diseased, or insect-infested houseplants, invasive plants, or contaminated soil

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the Curbside Composting Pilot Program?

A: The Curbside Composting Pilot Program will provide curbside food waste collection from 12,000 single-family households in the District for one year.

Q: What is the purpose of the Curbside Composting Pilot Program?

A: The Curbside Composting Pilot Program has the following objectives: Divert food waste from landfill and incineration; Increase access to composting services; Determine the feasibility of expanding curbside food waste collection to all DPW-serviced households; and Evaluate the food waste processing capacity in the region.

Q: When will I receive my starter kit?

A: Your starter kit will be delivered to your home one week before collection begins. Your starter kit will include one 5-gallon screw-top curbside collection container, one 1.9-gallon kitchen caddy, and 100 BPI-certified compostable bags.

Q: Will this program attract more rodents?

A: Rodents are attracted to the smell of food and easy access to it. Currently, households are placing food scraps into their trash containers, which do not securely close. Participating households can actually reduce rodent activity near their homes by moving food scraps out of their trash containers and, instead, placing them in the provided curbside compost collection containers. This will reduce odors when closed securely with the lid screwed on properly. The containers have also been tested for odor and rodent mitigation. Throughout the pilot year, DPW will be working closely with DC Health to identify any areas of improvement for rodent abatement.

Q: How do I reduce unwanted odor?

A: The use of the BPI-certified compostable bags provided in your starter kit or paper bags can help keep both your kitchen caddy and curbside collection container clean week-to-week. The bags also allow for easy removal of food waste on collection day, easy wipe-downs of the container for maintenance, and will help prevent spills from any liquids when tied shut. For particularly smelly food items (like meat scraps, seafood shells, or expired dairy), it can be helpful to store those individual items, or your entire kitchen caddy, in the fridge or freezer until your collection day.

Q: What if all my food waste cannot fit in my curbside collection container?

A: Participating households may bring their excess food waste to a nearby Food Waste Drop-Off site. To find a site near you, visit zerowaste.dc.gov/foodwastedropoff. For ideas on how to reduce the amount of food waste your household generates, visit epa.gov/recycle/preventing-wasted-food-home.

Q: Do I need to use compostable bags?

A: Yes. This makes collection much easier for the drivers and helps keep your kitchen caddy and collection bin clean. Please line your kitchen caddy with a BPI-certified compostable bag provided in your starter kit. Once it's filled with food scraps, tie off the bag and place it in your curbside collection container. If you do not want to use compostable bags, you can line your kitchen caddy or curbside collection container with a paper bag. We advise against lining your curbside collection container with the provided compostable bags as they will tear when screwing the lid on and off.

Q: What happens if my container is lost or gets damaged?

A: If you need a container replacement, please submit a service request by calling 311 or visiting 311.dc.gov and our collections crew will replace your curbside collection container no later than your next collection day.

Q: What if I no longer want to participate in the Curbside Composting Pilot Program?

A: If you would like to opt-out of the Curbside Composting Pilot Program, please submit a service request by calling 311 or visiting 311.dc.gov and our collections crew will retrieve your clean and emptied curbside collection container on your next collection day.

Q: Can I get finished compost for my garden?

A: Yes. At the end of the Curbside Composting Pilot Program year, five pounds of finished compost will be delivered to each participating household. DPW will also allow District residents to fill up to five 32-gallon bags (bring your own bags and shovel) of free compost Wednesday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. and Saturday 7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the Ft. Totten Transfer Station (4900 John F. McCormack Road NE).

Q: Can I put yard waste in my curbside compost collection container?

A: No. Please keep yard waste separate from your food waste. Please call 311 or visit 311.dc.gov to schedule separate yard waste pick up. Learn more about DPW's yard waste collection program by visiting dpw.dc.gov/yard-waste.

NEED HELP?

DPW is committed to providing excellent customer service to all participating households. If you have any questions about the program or need to report an issue there are several ways to reach out.

Submit a Service Request:

If you would like to report a missed collection, a lost, stolen, or broken curbside collection container, or opt-out of the Curbside Composting Pilot Program, please call 311 or visit 311.dc.gov to submit a service request. See below for details regarding each service request type.

- **Missed Collection:**

Please make sure that your curbside compost container is free of contaminants like plastic. If these contaminants are spotted in your container, our collections crew will not empty the contents of your container into the collection truck and instead will affix an “Oops” tag to your container to indicate the presence of contaminants.

If your curbside compost collection was missed not due to contamination, please wait until 2:00 p.m. to submit a service request as collection may be delayed. If your compost has still not been collected after 2:00 p.m., please submit a “Missed Curbside Compost Collection” service request by calling 311 or visiting 311.dc.gov and our collections crew will collect your compost within two business days.

- **Lost, Stolen, or Broken Curbside Compost Collection Container:**

If your curbside collection container is lost, stolen, or broken, please submit a “Curbside Composting” service request by calling 311 or visiting 311.dc.gov and our collections crew will deliver a replacement curbside collection container by your next collection day.

- **Opt-Out of the Curbside Composting Pilot Program:**

If you would like to opt-out of the Curbside Composting Pilot Program, please submit a “Curbside Composting” service request by calling 311 or visiting 311.dc.gov and our collections crew will retrieve your clean and emptied curbside collection container on your next collection day.

More Questions or Feedback?

During the pilot year, we are interested in hearing from participating households and welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have. Participating households will also be asked to take surveys throughout the pilot year to assist DPW in identifying areas of improvement.

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback about the pilot program, please email curbsidecomposting@dc.gov or call (202) 645-8245.



CURBSIDE COMPOSTING PILOT PROGRAM

For more information, visit

Para más información, visite

Pour plus d'informations, visitez

ለበለጠ መረጃ፣ ይጎብኙ

欲了解更多信息，請訪問

자세한 내용은 다음을 방문하십시오.

Để biết thêm thông tin, hãy truy cập



zerowaste.dc.gov/curbsidecomposting

