



Residential Organics Recycling & SB 1383: Frequently Asked Questions

What is SB 1383?

California Senate Bill 1383, enacted in 2016, is a State law aimed at reducing short-lived climate pollutants and greenhouse gases. The law requires all organic waste to be recycled, including food waste, for the purposes of diverting it from landfills. You can view the legislation text [here](#).

How will this law help the environment and reduce climate change?

Landfill gas created by organic waste is a significant source of greenhouse gases which further climate change. This law will help California achieve its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by diverting materials from landfills that produce those gases. Organic materials (yard trimmings, food scraps, food soiled paper, etc.) make up almost half of the State's waste stream. Redirecting these resources to composting and digesting operations will save landfill space, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, generate energy, and create valuable soil amendments that will be sold to farmers and other agricultural users.

When does the new requirement take effect?

Organics recycling for residential customers within the City of Sacramento is anticipated to begin in summer 2022. Most restaurants have been recycling organics since 2014, and nearly all commercial businesses have been recycling organics since July 2021. Most multi-family homes and apartment complexes will add organics recycling services starting January 2022.

Who must comply with the new law?

The law affects all California residents, including those in single and multi-family homes, apartment complexes, commercial entities, schools, hospitals, care facilities, etc. The City of Sacramento is planning to launch its organics recycling program for single-family residential customers in summer 2022. Education and outreach will be provided to Sacramento residents before the anticipated launch.

What does this mean for residents?

Food waste will no longer be placed in your garbage can. Residents will place all food waste and all organic waste in their yard waste can instead of the garbage can. Organic waste includes grass clippings, leaves and yard waste, fruit and vegetable scraps, grains, coffee grounds, dairy, eggs, meat, bones, seafood, leftover food, and food-soiled paper such as coffee filters, pizza boxes, and paper napkins.

Will there be an exemption for residents who are currently exempt from having a yard waste can?

A small percentage of City customers (less than 10%) are currently exempted from having a yard waste can, due to things like no yard, new development with immature tree canopy, etc. These customers will no longer be exempt when the City adds food waste collection to comply with SB 1383. These customers will receive a smaller ~32 gallon can for organics, including food waste.

Can a resident get an exemption from the food waste recycling program?

Over 90% of City residential customers already have a yard waste can, which will be used for all organics including food waste after the program starts. As noted above, the current yard waste exempt customers will receive the smaller ~32 gallon can for food waste and other organics. As such, exemptions from residential organic service are not part of the SB 1383 program. Homeowner's Associations ("HOAs") that require waste cans be placed in the garage will also NOT be exempted from the program. SB 1383 does allow, in limited cases, exemptions for commercial properties. More information on commercial exemptions is available [here](#).

What if I would like a smaller yard waste/organics can?

Prior to roll-out of the program in summer 2022, the smaller ~32-gallon can will be provided to customers who are currently exempt from having a yard waste can. Subsequent to that, the City is planning to offer smaller yard waste/organics cans to other customers in certain circumstances, like when space is an issue. Just like can change outs in the existing recycling program, a smaller yard waste/organics can will still be charged the same monthly rate for collection. This part of the program has yet to be developed and is anticipated for 2023.

Will there be a reduced rate for low-income residents?

Residential customers meeting eligibility requirements can apply for a reduced rate through the Sacramento Utility Rate Assistance (SURA) program [here](#).

What if I already compost my food waste and/or generate little to no food waste?

You can continue to compost food waste in your home or on your property. The City's program will accept other organics that are not recommended for backyard composting, including clean wood waste, larger branches, food soiled paper, and certain food wastes that can attract vermin. While these are not recommended for backyard composting, they will be processed for composting by the City's contractors. SB 1383 requires the City to collect all organics, not just those that can be recycled in backyard composting. As such, these residents will also require organic waste collection services from the City.

What happens to the organic waste after collecting it?

Organic waste will be taken to one of the City's three recycling processors and turned into compost which will be marketed and sold to farmers and other agricultural users.

Can I self-haul my food waste?

Currently, there are no solid waste facilities that accept clean, separated food waste from residents for recycling. As such, all residents will receive organics waste collection services from the City.

Can I start using my yard waste can to dispose of my food waste now?

At this time, residents should continue placing only lawn clipping, leaves, wood waste, etc. in their yard waste. Residents will be notified when the comprehensive organics program begins and can start putting food waste, food soiled paper, and all other organics into their yard waste can at that time.

How can we prevent issues with odor, pests, and hygiene when we start putting food waste in with yard waste?

When the program launches, the City will make available a free, ~2-gallon, kitchen countertop container for food waste, a roll of compostable bags and educational materials on the best ways to recycle organics and reduce odors and pests. We suggest putting food waste in compostable plastic bags, paper bags, wrapped in newspaper or paper towels, or layering with yard waste if putting loose in the can. Food waste should never be put in plastic bags.

How often will food waste be collected?

Yard waste will continue to be collected weekly and residents are encouraged to put out their cans every week after the addition of food waste, regardless of how full.

Where can I find more information?

You can find information at SacOrganics.org. Updates will be added as the program is developed. If you would like information on SB 1383 regulations and statewide resources, you can find it at Cal Recycle's [website](#).