

Organics Law – Public Notice to Businesses



In 2022, the Organics Management law passed in Washington State. The law requires businesses to divert food and yard waste materials they generate through a phased-in approach over the next few years. Businesses generating certain amounts of organic and solid waste must arrange for organic materials management service. You are required to comply with the following timeline.

Jan. 1, 2024

At least 8 cubic yards
of **organic material**
waste per week

Jan. 1, 2025

At least 4 cubic yards
of **organic material**
waste per week

Jan. 1, 2026

At least 96 gallons of
organic material
waste per week

The law applies in all or parts of these areas: King, Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, Island, Pierce, Thurston, and Grant Counties, and the City of Seattle. Find out if you are in an area where the law applies:

<https://ecology.wa.gov/BOMA-map>.

Businesses are part of Washington's climate solutions

The Organics Management Law's primary goal is to reduce methane emissions created when organic materials, such as food and yard waste, decompose in a landfill. As an alternative, these organic materials can add valuable nutrients and structure to soils when turned into compost.

A business is defined as any for-profit or non-profit commercial or public entity. This includes, but is not limited to, grocery stores, restaurants, manufacturers, hotels, caterers, firms, corporations, associations, schools, hospitals, and public agencies. Multifamily residential properties are not considered businesses under the law.

There are also advantages for your business:

- Food and yard waste may be cheaper to collect and manage than solid waste. Depending on your organization's situation, adding food and yard waste service may allow you to reduce garbage service.
- Adopting an organics program in 2024 makes you an early adopter. Your organization will be a leader and role model for other businesses in your community.

Organic material waste includes

- Food waste from fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products, fish, nuts, seeds, grains, and similar materials from the storage, preparation, cooking, handling, selling, or serving of food for human consumption.
- Landscape and gardening debris, including lawn clippings, small branches, sawdust, and untreated or unpainted wood.
- Other organic waste, such as manure, food processing waste, and wood waste.

Exemptions to these requirements for businesses

Businesses may be exempt from arranging for organic material management services if one of the following conditions apply:

- Organic materials are managed onsite
- Organic materials from growing or harvesting food or fiber are used offsite by a business for growing food or fiber
- Organic materials are sold or donated to another business for offsite use
- Organic materials are generated from a natural disaster
- Organic materials are self-hauled to an organic materials management facility

Other options to manage organic materials

- **Preventing food and landscape waste:** This could include using tools to track and better manage food inventories and landscaping in ways that generate less organic waste to manage.
- **Donating or selling food:** This could include participating in a local food rescue or recovery program or selling food or fiber to another business for off-site use.

Reach out to your current garbage and recycling service provider or visit your city or county website for more information about service options.

Contact information

Organics Management Team
Organics@ecy.wa.gov
509-960-1290



ADA accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6000 or email at SWMPublications@ecy.wa.gov, or visit ecology.wa.gov/Accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.