



Larchmont-Mamaroneck Joint Garbage Disposal Commission

FAQS ON FOOD WASTE COMPOSTING

Why Recycle Food Waste?

Food waste is one of the largest components of trash sent to landfills and incinerators. However, food waste is not trash, it is a resource that can be turned into useful compost.

Recycling food waste into compost captures its nutrients and energy and returns them to the environment. When food waste is sent to a landfill or incinerator this resource is lost. In a landfill, food waste creates methane, which is a potent greenhouse gas that traps CO₂ and contributes to global warming. When sent to an incinerator, food waste reduces the efficiency of the incinerator because they contain water and therefore don't burn well.

Composting food waste turns that story around! Instead of wasting energy trying to burn food, or creating methane from landfilling it, composting food scraps produces a useful and valuable product that gives back to our nutrient life cycle resulting in cleaner soil, water and air.

What Is Compost?

Compost is a soil amendment which enriches our soil. When purchasing a bag of potting soil or observing your landscaper putting down "dirt" you are using compost.

Compost benefits our landscape by maximizing plant growth, preventing soil erosion and mitigating the frequency of water, fertilizer and pesticide use.

By recycling your food waste you are reducing waste and creating compost - a double win!

How can I participate in the Larchmont-Mamaroneck Joint Garbage Disposal Commission’s Food Waste Recycling Program?

You can participate in this program as long as you are a resident of the unincorporated Town of Mamaroneck or Village of Larchmont. This is a drop-off and voluntary program. You are NOT required to have a food waste "starter kit" to participate as you can bring your food waste in another receptacle to Maxwell Ave. Recycling Center.

Drop-off Location and Hours:

The food waste recycling drop-off cans are located at the Maxwell Avenue Recycling Center (40 Maxwell Avenue, Larchmont, NY 10538), up the hill and opposite the office – look for the big signage with “Food Scrap Drop-Off Site.”

The Maxwell Avenue drop-off site hours of operation are:

- Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays: 8am-3pm
- Tuesdays: 8am-2pm
- Saturdays: 8am-11:45am
- Wednesdays & Sundays: CLOSED

Starter Kits & Compostable Bags:

Starter kits can be purchased at the Maxwell Avenue Recycling Center or Mamaroneck Town Center (2nd floor Administrator/Supervisor’s Office) for \$20. Kits include one 2-gallon countertop pail, one 6-gallon home storage & transportation bin, and one roll of 25 compostable bags for your pail. The different parts of the kit, including additional compostable bags (for both the 2-gallon pail and 6-gallon bin) are also sold separately at the Recycling Center and Town Center.

Payment can be made by cash or check made payable to Larchmont/Mamaroneck JGDC. For details on all items that can be purchased, click on this link: <https://lmsanitation.org/items-for-purchase/>.

What do I do once I have a starter kit?

Most residents will fill the countertop pail with food waste as needed. It is suggested that residents also have a larger bin to TRANSFER food waste into for weekly storage. This larger six-gallon storage bin can also be used for transportation of food waste to the Recycling Center. It is recommended that the food storage/transportation bin be kept indoors – either in the house or in the garage.

You will then bring your transportation bin to the food waste drop-off cans at Maxwell Avenue's Recycling Center to dispose of your food waste as often as needed.

Note: See this brief video-clip on "How to Load Compostable Bag" for the countertop pail from Scarsdale's Food Scrap Recycling Program:
<https://www.facebook.com/townofmamaroneckenvironment/videos/1475577592520320/>.

What items are accepted in the food waste bins?

- ALL FOOD, including:
 - Fruits and Vegetables (remove stickers, bands, ties)
 - Meat and Poultry (bones ok)
 - Fish and Shellfish (shells ok)
 - Dairy Products
 - Bread and Pasta
 - Rice and Grains
 - Egg Shells
 - Chips and Snacks
 - Nuts and Seeds
 - Leftover, Spoiled and Expired Food (cooked ok)
 - Coffee Grounds (paper filters ok)
- Tea Bags (no staples)
- Paper Towels and Napkins
- Cut Flowers
- Compostable Bags (no plastic bags)

Note: This is more than backyard composting allows for!

What items are not accepted?

It is important not to include the following items, as they will contaminate your food waste recyclables:

- Twist ties or stickers on fruit
- Plastic bags, plastic packaging and wrappers
- Baby/Hand wipes
- Diapers
- Glass, metal or plastic
- Pet waste or kitty litter
- Styrofoam
- Yard waste

Note: If you have questions about any other materials that are not listed above, visit our page on Residential Services (<https://lmsanitation.org/residential-services>) or the Recyclopedia (<https://lmsanitation.org/waste-wizard-recyclopedia/>).

Am I required to use compostable bags?

Using a compostable bag is not required. You can either use a compostable bag, a paper bag, or no bag. If you choose to bring your food waste in plastic bags, please be advised you will need to empty the food waste into the large food waste recycling pails and then throw the plastic bag in a separate can used for garbage.

Can I use plastic bags labeled “biodegradable”?

“Biodegradable” plastic bags are not accepted in the food waste recycling pails. Compostable bags are made of plant-based materials that break down in the composting process. Plastic bags labeled “biodegradable” are made of plastic that breaks down into small pieces of plastic and will contaminate the compost. Therefore, these “biodegradable” plastic bags must also be thrown in the separate cans used for garbage.

Will composting be messy or smelly?

Collecting food scraps should not be any more messy or smelly than putting food scraps in your trash. The same materials are being collected – just in a different container. Using compostable bags with your pail will also keep everything cleaner.

Where will the food waste end up?

All material collected will be brought to a composting facility, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency in Kingston, NY, where it will be turned into compost (<http://www.ucrra.org/compost/commercial-composting-operation/>). The compost is then sold to landscapers and garden centers.

Where does Westchester county's trash go?

In Westchester, 2,250 tons of municipal solid waste are burned at the county's incinerator in Peekskill each day. Discarded food makes up almost 22 percent of waste in landfills and incinerators, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

(Source:

<http://www.lohud.com/story/news/local/westchester/scarsdale/2017/02/15/scarsdale-food-scrap-recycling/97659302/>)

When did our residential, drop-off food waste recycling program begin and where else are there such programs nearby?

Our program began on September 18, 2017. In January 2017, the Village of Scarsdale launched their food scrap recycling program, which our program is modeled after. Bedford began a similar program in July 2017. Greenburgh began their food scrap recycling program in January 2018.

In June 2018, Scarsdale began curbside residential food scrap pickup while continuing their drop-off site. In March 2019, City of Rye began a food scrap recycling pilot program including a drop-off site and curbside residential food scrap pickup limited to 150 households.

Are there any cities in the U.S. that have food waste recycling programs?

Yes. New York City's residential organics collection program is already the largest in the country. More than a million residents in parts of all five boroughs have curbside service. By the end of 2018, officials say, all city residents will have a way to recycle their food scraps and other leaf and yard waste. Smaller cities like Portland, Ore., San Francisco, and Seattle all have mandatory programs.

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/02/nyregion/compost-organic-recycling-new-york-city.htm> [l?mcubz=1& r=0](#))

Where has our food waste recycling program been featured?

Soundview Rising, May 3, 2019 article on "Free Compost Give-Back for Mamaroneck-Larchmont Residents":

http://www.risingmediagroup.com/images/web%20pdfs/2019/5-3soundview_rising.pdf (page 2)

Larchmont-Mamaroneck Patch, January 21, 2019 article on "Moving Towards Zero Waste": https://patch.com/new-york/larchmont/moving-towards-zero-waste?utm_term=article-slot-1&utm_source=newsletter-daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter

Larchmont-Mamaroneck Patch article on the one year anniversary celebration of the program, September 6, 2018:

<https://patch.com/new-york/larchmont/1st-anniversary-mamaroneck-larchmont-recycling-composting>

LMC-TV, June 28, 2018:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8-SA1Bhe5s&app=desktop>

The Loop, June 2018 article on receiving Westchester County Eco Award: <http://theloopyny.com/eco-award-for-town-of-mamaroneck-and-village-of-larchmont/>

Larchmont Ledger, June 2018 article on Free Compost "Give Back": <http://www.larchmontledger.com/LL0618.pdf> (page 11)

Larchmont Ledger, April 2018 article on "Trash to Treasure": <http://larchmontledger.com/LL0418.pdf> (page 2)

Larchmont-Mamaroneck Patch article on the six-month milestone of the program, March 16, 2018: <https://patch.com/new-york/larchmont/mamaroneck-larchmont-celebrate-6-months-food-waste-recycling>.

Footage on *News 12* on Sep. 17, 2017:

<http://www.news12.com/story/36386420/mamaroneck-larchmont-launch-new-composting-program>

Journal News article and video clip on the food waste program, Aug. 29, 2017:

<https://www.lohud.com/story/news/local/westchester/2017/08/29/composting-programs-spreading-through-sound-shore/576709001/>

QUESTIONS?

Email Information@LMSanitation.org or the Sustainability Coordinator at sodierna@townofmamaroneckny.org