

WLSSD's
Organic Waste Recovery Ordinance
Update

CISSR
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Today...

- Organics recovery in WLSSD
- Organics ordinance overview
- Incremental roll-out
- Results & rumination
- What's next?



Organics Recovery in WLSSD

- Developed successful methods to recover organics from businesses (2001–present)
- Refined composting operations to accommodate an increasing volume of organic material (2001-2006)
- Stakeholder meetings (2004-present)
- Six food waste drop sites established for residents and small business use (2004-2007)
- The WLSSD Board Solid Waste Ordinance with mandatory diversion of pre-consumer organic waste. (October 2006)
- WLSSD board established implementation timeline. (June 2007)





Why mandatory?

- Intentional approach will achieve higher participation and recovery rates.
- Recovery replaces disposal; reduces reliance on landfills.
- Promotes sustainable practices through local recycling and reuse.

Organic waste definitions in ordinance

- **Pre-Consumer Organic Waste:** Animal and vegetable waste which results from storage, preparation, cooking, handling, selling, or serving of food.
- **Post-consumer Organic Waste:** Organic waste created after the sale or delivery of food to a consumer.
- **Industrial Organic Waste:** Inedible, non-paper waste generated in a large commercial or industrial operation – such as waste grain and fish hatchery waste.



Which businesses are affected?

Generators of pre-consumer organic waste:

- **Grocery stores** of 7,500 sq. feet or larger
- **Restaurants and caterers** with a St. Louis County “Level 3” food-handling license or a MN Dept of Health “Large” license for Carlton County*
- **Post-secondary institutions** with 1,000 or more full-time students; prepare meals on-site
- **Hospitals and nursing homes** having 100 or more beds, and that prepare and serve meals to employees, patients, guests, or residents.
- **Food manufacturers/processors** of 5,000 sq. feet or larger
- ***Revised category: Restaurants and caterers licensed under MDH as medium or large.**

Approved diversions under ordinance

1. Edible food goes to feeding programs for human consumption
2. Organic waste diverted to licensed animal feeding operation
3. Organic waste diverted to permitted composting facility (WLSSD)

Implementation Schedule

Category	Deadline
Grocery Stores	Mar 1, 2008
Post-Secondary Institutions	Jun 1, 2008
Hospitals/Nursing Homes	Jun 1, 2008
Restaurants/Caterers - Level 3 Large	Jul 1, 2008
Food Manufacturers	Aug 1, 2008
Restaurants/Caterers - Level 3 Medium	Sep 1, 2008
Restaurants/Caterers - Level 3 Small	Aug 1, 2009
All above categories in Carlton County	Mar 1, 2009



Why incremental roll-out?

- Allowed education & assistance to be delivered using existing resources
- Education plan and materials developed for target categories
- Common challenges addressed efficiently
- Compliance checks completed within designated timeframe



Cooperative Responsibilities

- WLSSD provides education and technical assistance to affected businesses/institutions.
- Businesses/institutions contract for organics hauling service & implement source separation.
- Haulers (4) develop collection schedules and provide suitable labeled external containers.
- Businesses document donations; drop-site users document volume and drop-off dates.
- WLSSD conducts compliance checks and enforces the ordinance.



WLSSD's tasks & tools

- Early notification: “Fats, Oils, and Grease” workshops 2006-07
- Further notification: public meetings & notices
- Certified letter, phones calls establish reliable internal contact(s)
- 1:1 visit, walk-through, trial bins & bags
- “Harvesting Our Leftovers” video, bin hang tags, tailored signage, training
- Preview compliance check list with business

Businesses: Good sanitation, no contamination

- Inside bins labeled; approved compostable bags
- Implement sensible separation practices (make it easy and retrain as needed)
- No liquids, minimize paper
- Monitor volume & frequency of pick-up
- External carts are leak-proof, labeled, locked
- Communicate with hauler regularly

Haulers' responsibilities

- Drivers are front line: vigilance!
- Empty truck before first food waste pick-up
- Drivers note non-compliance
- Assess volume: carts & collection adequate?
- Evidence of vectors? Leakage?
- Communicate with dispatch/supervisor, customers, WLSSD compost site operator

A large pile of food waste, including vegetables, meat, and plastic bags, with text overlaid.

Staff turnover?
Retraining needed?

Are all employees on board?





Characterize contamination to determine source



A good load:
Contaminant-free + approved bags!



As of today:

1. 152 businesses and institutions are required to comply with the ordinance.
2. Last category is coming into compliance but exemptions for some are likely.
3. Approximately 2800 tons of source-separated organics will be recovered for composting in 2009.
4. Roll-out is complete and tonnage is currently under the limit of the permitted site capacity.



Annual tonnage breakdown by category

Sector (final number)	Initial Assumption (tons/year)	Reality (tons/year)
Grocery Stores (15)	2132	948
Colleges/Universities (3)	82	50
Hospitals/Nursing Homes (11)	307	264
Large Restaurants (10)	530	480 (about 3yds/wk)
Medium Restaurants (44)	1280	1000 (about 6 to 8 carts/wk)
Small Restaurants (68)	315	96 (about 1 cart/wk)
Food Manufacturers (1)	335	15 (primary manufacturer closed)
Totals (152 businesses & institutions)	4981	2853

Our primary lesson: Communicate... a lot!

1. Identify key contacts and use them.
2. Communicate regularly with all stakeholders (haulers, businesses, compost site operator).
3. Continually assess incoming loads (photos)
4. Respond quickly to address problems
5. Implementation requires 3-5 contact hours per business to tailor the fit.

What's next?

- Refine list of affected businesses.
- Extending ordinance to prisons and health care facilities?
- Hold off on requiring post-consumer diversion (increasing tip fees may make this an attractive *voluntary* option.)
- Compliance checks continue...

A close-up, top-down view of a large, vibrant salad. The salad is composed of a variety of fresh ingredients: bright red cherry tomatoes, clusters of dark purple grapes, green broccoli florets, a slice of orange bell pepper, a whole white mushroom, and a variety of leafy greens including green spinach, purple-tinged lettuce, and curly kale. A long, yellowish-green vegetable, possibly a kohlrabi or a large asparagus spear, is visible on the left side. The salad is presented in a green plastic bowl, and the overall appearance is fresh and appetizing.

Bon Appétit!