

Universal Recycling

Food Scrap Ban Guidance

Background

On July 1, 2020, Vermont state law bans disposal of food scraps in the trash or landfills.

Food scraps include pre- and post-consumer food waste that is derived from processing or discarding of food and that is able to be used through one of the following options: food donation for people in need, animal feed, composting, or anaerobic digestion.

On July 1, 2020, trash haulers must offer food scrap collection services to non-residential customers and apartments with 4 units or more, unless another hauler is willing to provide that service.

Why? Keeping food scraps out of the trash saves landfill space and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing food waste saves resources. Food donation has nearly tripled since the law was passed.

What will enforcement look like for the food waste ban?

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) prioritizes outreach and compliance efforts on the largest producers of food waste and on complaints we receive. ANR has enforcement authority under 10 V.S.A. Section 8003(a) for solid waste laws and all of Vermont's 11 landfill disposal bans, which includes the food waste ban. ANR has consistently prioritized education and outreach on the food waste ban and has worked to ensure options exist for food scrap collection and drop-off. ANR has supported grant funding for low-cost/subsidized residential composting bins as a way to encourage cost savings through home composting. ANR does not sort through residential trash bags looking for recyclables or food scraps.

Residents

Residents are separating their food scraps into buckets or bins and either using local food waste drop-offs (like transfer stations), curbside food scrap haulers, or composting in their backyards.

Vermont state law allows residents who compost in their backyards to dispose of meat and bones in the trash even after July 1, 2020.

Residents are NOT required to compost in their backyards and can choose to bring food scraps to drop-off facilities or use curbside food scrap haulers. Residents can ask their trash hauler if they provide food scrap collection. Residents can find drop-off facilities and food scrap haulers at VTrecycles.com or by contacting their local solid waste management entity at 802recycles.com.

To learn how to prevent food waste and manage your food scraps, visit VTrecycles.com.

Businesses/Institutions

Businesses are donating edible food to food shelves and separating food waste into collection carts or dumpsters that food scrap haulers pick up and bring to composting facilities, farms, and digesters.

Vermont state law allows businesses/institutions with established food waste separation programs that include regular staff training to dispose of an insignificant amount of food waste.

The ANR [Solid Waste Program](#) considers the following to be examples of “insignificant”:

- Occasional, small amounts of food waste that are accidentally thrown in the trash.
- Disposing of small packages, such as one-ounce packets of food waste, that would be extremely time-consuming to de-package, and in small quantities or package sizes too small for depackaging machines.

Businesses/institutions with questions are encouraged to contact ANR [Solid Waste Program](#) via email or at 802-828-1138.

To learn how to prevent food waste and manage your food scraps, visit VTrecycles.com.

Commercial Haulers

More than 20 haulers offer food scrap collection and it's currently required by law for bag drop haulers.

According to Vermont state law, commercial haulers are not required to offer collection of food scraps if another hauler provides collection services in the same area and has capacity to provide services to all customers.

Commercial haulers can visit VTrecycles.com for a list of food scrap haulers and the areas they serve.

Commercial haulers that want confirmation that another hauler will offer food scrap collection to customers in their area may contact the Vermont ANR [Solid Waste Program](#).

Information on how to haul food waste, food scrap separation signage for customers, and downloadable food scrap symbols, visit VTrecycles.com or contact the ANR [Solid Waste Program](#) via email or at 802-828-1138.

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VERMONT
AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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