

For compliance with
The Waste Bylaw

Organics Guide

Businesses and
Organizations



saskatoon.ca/businessorganics



greener
TOGETHER

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As of October 2023, all businesses and organizations that **generate food or yard waste** as part of their operations are required to:



Have **separate labelled containers** for garbage, recycling and organics.



Educate employees and tenants annually about which materials are organic and how to sort them.



Ensure organic waste is removed and taken to an appropriate facility.

Enforcement will begin October 2024, to give businesses and organizations time to educate themselves and ensure services are in place to meet the [new bylaw](#) regulation.

Organics are materials such as food waste (table and kitchen scraps), food-soiled paper products and unbagged yard waste (leaves, grass clippings and other plants) that can be turned into a nutrient-rich mixture through decomposition processes and added to soil to improve its quality.



Does this new organics regulation apply to your business or organization?

If your establishment belongs under North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes of industries that are known to generate organic waste, this bylaw regulation applies regardless of establishment size or number of employees or tenants.

➤ **Food services**

Including but not limited to:

- ▶ restaurants and cafés (fast food or sit-down)
- ▶ coffee shops
- ▶ hotels (room service, banquet services, or restaurant on site)
- ▶ health care facilities (hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities)
- ▶ hospitality or entertainment facilities with food or banquet services
- ▶ food concessions at sports and similar facilities
- ▶ schools (cafeterias, nutrition programs, Food Studies classrooms)
- ▶ mobile food services
- ▶ leased food-service locations in facilities such as hotels, shopping malls, airports and department stores

➤ **Beverage, food and tobacco manufacturers**

➤ **Daycare services**

➤ **Florists**

➤ **Landscaping services**

➤ **Nurseries and garden centres**

➤ **Supermarkets and other grocery stores**

Including but not limited to:

- ▶ fruit and vegetable markets
- ▶ meat and deli markets
- ▶ fish and seafood markets
- ▶ baked goods retailers
- ▶ food wholesalers
- ▶ convenience stores
- ▶ auction houses that sell food products



Businesses and organizations that fall under the new regulation may apply for an exemption if one or more of the following criteria is met:

- The premises does not routinely generate organic material as part of its operations (e.g., only has organic material from staff lunches).
- Unable to find a local waste processor that inhibits the ability to divert waste as required, such as the presence of risks that cannot be mitigated or large quantities of a single type of organic waste.
- For any other reason outside of its control, the premises is unable to sort and divert organic waste.

To obtain an exemption, businesses may complete a self-declaration form at saskatoon.ca/recycling-exempt stating the reason for exemption and provide supporting documentation. Exemptions will be reviewed for approval by the City of Saskatoon.

Businesses who do not produce food or yard waste as part of their operations do NOT have to fill out an exemption form. Staff lunch waste is not required to be diverted as part of the Waste Bylaw at this time. Only organic waste from food prep or food production areas as part of the business operations falls under this regulation. If you are unsure as to whether the criteria applies to you or not, please contact business.waste@saskatoon.ca

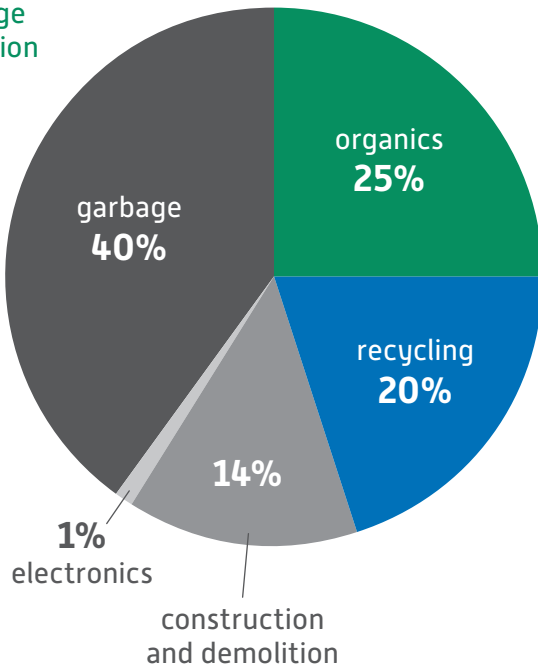
We will work with your business or organization to help you meet the bylaw requirements. However, if there is still no compliance, the business owner(s) will be subject to inspection by an Environmental Protection Officer, who may issue a violation ticket or fine in accordance with [The Waste Bylaw](#).

Home-based businesses are not included in this regulation as they have access to the residential waste diversion programs. However, they are responsible for the proper removal of materials that exceed the capacity of their residential containers.



Businesses and organizations generate **68%** of the garbage in our community. Approximately **25%** is organic waste that could be rescued or composted.

ICI Garbage Composition



2016 Waste Characterization Study, Dillon, 2cg and City of Saskatoon.



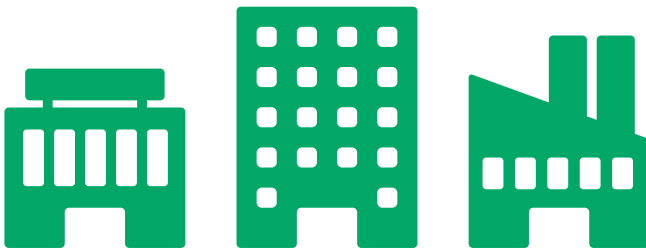
Food and yard waste disposed of at a landfill becomes pollution, not soil.

Landfills bury food and yard waste, which leads waste to decompose in the absence of oxygen. When this type of waste breaks down in this environment, it turns into leachate (garbage juice) and methane.

Leachate pollutes our land and water, and needs to be managed under strict environmental regulations. Methane can escape into the atmosphere and is a much more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Both of these pollutants are expensive for landfills to manage.

It's important to properly manage your business or organization's food and yard waste, just like you manage recycling and garbage. By diverting food and yard waste, we can reduce our dependence on landfills, minimize the harmful environmental effects of food and yard waste in landfills, and produce useful new resources, such as compost.

The best way to protect our environment and save money is to use the "Food Waste Hierarchy" (see [page 8](#)).



169,000 tonnes

of garbage from businesses and organizations go to Saskatoon and area landfills each year.

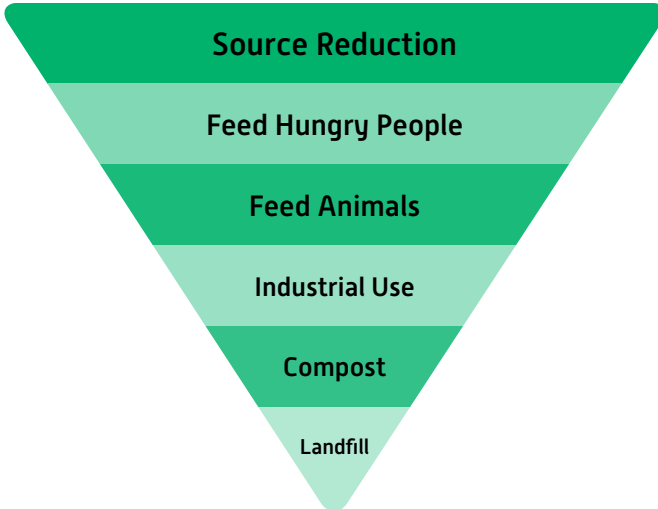


Waste diversion is just good business.

A successful organics program not only demonstrates your organization’s commitment to sustainability and our community, but can also help your bottom line, conserve natural resources, and save valuable space in our landfills.

Waste diversion programs are good for business as they will retain or attract new customers and employees with the same values and illustrate a business’s commitment to making Saskatoon a great place to live, work, learn and play.

Food Waste Hierarchy



Setting up your organics program

Saskatoon businesses and organizations are unique in size and the types of waste produced, which is why you have the flexibility to set up an organics program that best meets your needs.

Tailor waste management to your business by choosing:

- **To reduce or repurpose materials before they become waste.**



- **How material is collected.**

Contract a hauler or self-manage the removal of organic waste from your property.



- **Where and how your waste is stored.**

Indoors or outdoors, in a bin or cart.



- **How often material is collected or dropped off.**



You must divert the types of food and yard waste included here, whether through reducing or repurposing, or collection through a service provider:



Check with your service provider to ensure compostable takeaway foodware used in your business is certified compostable for the organics processor your material is being taken to; e.g., Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI).

Food service businesses are required to safely dispose of commercial quantities of fats, oils, and grease (FOG). See more about FOG requirements [here](#).

Landscaping waste

Your landscaping waste may be handled by a landscaping company. Ask your service provider how they dispose of landscaping waste to ensure it is diverted from the landfill.



STEP 1: Understand your waste management needs

What's in your waste?

Conduct a waste audit to identify the types, amounts, and sources of waste being generated. Waste audits range in complexity and price from a simple visual audit done in-house to a comprehensive audit conducted by a third party.

For more information on conducting a waste audit, including a do-it-yourself guide, see the resources at saskatoon.ca/businessorganics



Where is your waste generated?

Consider where your waste is generated and collected to help determine the size, location, and number of containers you need. It may be ideal to have multiple small collection containers indoors at the point of waste generation and an ample collection container outside for storage and collection.

Walk through your site and see where organics, garbage and recycling containers are right now:

- Are they conveniently located close to where waste is produced?
- Are organics, garbage and recycling containers located together so staff can easily sort items?
- Are items being placed in the proper containers? If not, more employee education may be needed.

Knowing the distinct types and amounts of waste generated at your business or organization will help you make informed decisions when selecting waste diversion programs or service providers.

Unsure what is divertible material and where it goes?

Ask the BizWiz! Visit the business waste diversion search tool at saskatoon.ca/bizwiz to find out where to properly discard your business waste.



STEP 2: Look for options to reduce and reuse organic materials

Before putting in place an organics container system, consider options to reduce or repurpose food and yard materials. These options are permitted under the Bylaw and encouraged as a preferred method of organics diversion over composting and landfilling. As well as helping your community, this can potentially reduce your requirements for organics diversion containers.

- Use information from your waste audit to adjust menus, purchasing and portion sizes.
- Discuss food waste prevention strategies with your staff.
- Find a charitable organization that can use your surplus food that would otherwise be wasted in the garbage.
- Consider composting on site [see more information below].

Donation of edible food that would otherwise be composted or landfilled is the preferred method of reducing organic waste.

Visit the Resources section at saskatoon.ca/businessorganics for more information on charitable organizations in Saskatoon that accept food donations, and for additional information on reduction and reuse options.



Through food rescue, we can reduce the amount of edible food that is going into the landfill while benefiting charitable organizations and the people they serve.

Food Donation Protections

In Saskatoon, there are multiple agencies that have an urgent need for food donations, but often restaurants and grocery stores are hesitant to donate food in case someone falls ill after consuming these well-intended donations. There are protections in place to protect those who act in good faith when addressing community food needs.

Did you know? In every part of Canada, the law provides protections for companies and individuals who donate food rather than throwing it away. In Saskatchewan, details can be found in [Donation of Food Act, 1995, The SS 1995, c D-32.01](#).



Agricultural Needs

For organics no longer fit for human consumption, there are many local farms that have use for these materials as animal feed or compost. There are programs that put donors in touch with local farmers who have multiple uses for these materials.

Many businesses and organizations across Saskatoon are already donating organics through community, provincial, and federal organizations. Consider donations of organics to your community and local farms before your items are placed in organic containers for compost.

For more information on who you can contact when you have organics fit for human or animal consumption, please visit saskatoon.ca/bizwiz or saskatoon.ca/businessorganics

On-Site Composting

Are you interested in using your own workplace-generated waste into compost for your own use? Depending on location and type of organic waste production, on-site composting could be another way to divert organic material from the garbage while still meeting bylaw requirements. Reach out to business.waste@saskatoon.ca to apply for approval to compost on site.

Some information to get you started can be found at saskwastereduction.ca/recycle/resources/composting



STEP 3:

Contract a waste hauler

How to choose the right provider:

For materials that remain after reduction and reuse, you can set up a compost sorting and processing system. Contact one of the qualified organics service providers in Saskatoon to discuss your specific needs. Topics to discuss include:

- Types of services and service costs, including ability to unlock and relocate containers for collection.
- Accepted optional materials, including BPI-certified compostable bags, plates, cutlery and cups.
- Contract terms, contract duration and payments.
- Quantity, size of containers and frequency of collection.
- Storage spaces, sorting requirements, and options.
- Where the material is taken after collection.
- Ability to deliver additional services: waste audits, signs, flyers, educational materials, and monthly and quarterly reporting on waste collection.

If you are setting up a new service, you can negotiate service level, frequency and cost, as rates are not standardized by the City.

Before switching to a new hauler, contact your current waste or recycling hauler as they might be able to offer additional services or reduce your other waste collection's frequency or container size.

Visit saskatoon.ca/bizwiz or saskatoon.ca/businessorganics to find service provider options for businesses.



STEP 4:

Set up your organics storage

You will need to find a location to store your food and yard waste.

The location should be easy for your employees and tenants to use and have enough containers so that they do not overflow between collection days.

You will not generate more garbage by separating food and yard waste. By diverting this material, you will be reducing the amount of garbage left over.

If your organization donates to local charitable organizations, take into consideration any specific handling or spatial requirements that may be required.

We recommend speaking to a collection company who can help you find a suitable storage location.



Best practices for consideration:

Indoors

- **Be safe and follow fire codes.** Do not block hallways, stairwells, doorways, or fire exits. Do not store excessive amounts of organics or use utility/service rooms for storage.
- **Position organics containers as close to the source of waste as possible.** For example, place a collection container next to food prep areas.
- **If possible, put organics, garbage, and recycling containers near each other** so that no extra effort is required for diversion.
- **Keep the lid of your kitchen pail or container fully closed** while not in use.
- **Empty the contents of your kitchen pail or container** into your green cart as frequently as necessary.
- **Rinse your kitchen pail or container** after emptying it into your green cart.
- **Sprinkle baking soda in the bottom** of your kitchen pail or container to reduce odours and deter insects.
- **Ensure cleaning staff are aware** of the organics program and how it works, including what items are accepted.

Outdoors

- **Plan for extra room to accommodate** the upcoming organics program if you generate food or yard waste as part of your operations.
- **If you plan on building fences around containers,** please check with your haulers about locking and adequate space for collection.
- **Store your green cart** in a shady, flat, and ventilated location and **keep the lid fully closed.**



- **Keep your outdoor collection area clean** to make it easy and safe for your employees, tenants, and haulers to access your containers.
- **Choose a well-lit area** to improve safety and reduce scavenging or illegal dumping issues.
- **Line your cart** with newsprint, cardboard, or yard waste before adding food waste.
- **Covering food waste** with yard or paper towel waste will help prevent odours and insects. Keep the contents of your cart dry by alternating a layer of food waste with a layer of paper towel, dried leaves, grass clippings, or dead plants.
- **Place collection containers** in an area that is free of overhanging tree branches, with four feet of space from all obstacles (fences, cars, vegetation, etc.).
- **Do not place containers on the sidewalk.**
- **Place containers in a secure area**, and not under eaves or carports or too close to your building (in case of fire).
- **Schedule regular collection** or go on-demand, calling when the bins are full.
- **Set your container out** for every scheduled collection, even if it is not full.
- **Ensure your organics container does not pose a hazard** to users or impede traffic flow in your parking area.

Be sure to check Zoning Bylaws before constructing or modifying your waste storage area.

If your containers are overflowing by the day of collection, it may be time to assess the need for additional containers, or look into other opportunities to divert, in order to meet bylaw requirements.



Preventing odours and pests in your containers

Here are a few tips to help:

- A sturdy food and yard waste container with a lid will help prevent pests from getting into the container.
- Determine whether you will use a liner, newspaper, paper bags, or certified compostable bags in your containers. Talk to your service provider about their requirements.
- Remind users to close the container lid after each use.
- In warmer months, consider increasing your collection frequency and perhaps keep meat and fish scraps in the freezer until collection day.
- Sprinkle vinegar or baking soda into the bottom of your container to neutralize odours.
- Rinse your containers regularly to keep them clean.
 - ❗ **Hint:** *Cleaning waste containers can be added to your janitorial service contract.*
- **Talk to your service provider** who can offer great resources and advice on how to troubleshoot issues with your containers.

Tips:

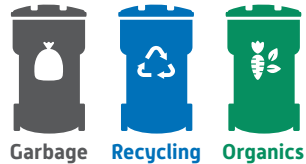
- ▶ Check with your hauler for sorting guidelines and opportunities to save money.
- ▶ Tonne for tonne, landfilling costs more than organics collection so proper sorting can save your business money.
- ▶ Ensure your organics are free of contaminants such as plastic to ensure they do not end up in a landfill.
 - ❗ *Unaccepted material can result in a contaminated load.*



STEP 5: Add signage to your waste stations

Organics containers need to be clearly identified and accessible to your employees and tenants.

- Use consistent color-coded containers to make waste diversion easier. Green is most often associated with organics, blue with recycling, and black with garbage.



- Use clear signage to encourage organics diversion (pictures are most effective). You can access pre-made signage at saskatoon.ca/businessorganics, speak to your hauler about signage, or develop your own.

Look inside all your collection containers (green, blue, and black) to ensure your waste is being diverted correctly. Note any organic materials that have been thrown in the garbage or recycling, and if any garbage is ending up in organic or recycling containers. Identifying the materials that are contaminating your collection containers can indicate which types of materials to focus on when creating signage and educating employees and tenants.



STEP 6: Educate and train your employees and tenants

Food and yard waste diversion may be a new program for your business.

Employees and tenants need to be informed of the food and yard waste reduction and diversion opportunities available to them.

As a business owner or property manager, you will be required to provide signage on all collection containers and education to employees and tenants at least once per year. To set yourself up for success and comply with the bylaw requirements, you must do the following:

- Ensure there is clear signage on all collection containers for garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste, indicating what type of material goes in each collection container. This helps tenants, employees and customers quickly understand what goes where.
- Pictures are not required; however, they will help people understand what goes in each container and improve the success of your program.



- Inform your tenants and employees at least once per year, as well as when a new tenant moves in, of the following:
 - ▶ Location of garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste containers.
 - ▶ List of materials that go into each container.
 - ▶ Proper method for preparing and sorting waste material for collection.

This information can be communicated to tenants and employees by some of the following methods:

- Written format: paper copies in mailboxes, under doors or in orientation packages.
- Electronic communications via email. Face-to-face communication is also recommended.
- Letter templates for employees and tenants can be found in our resources at saskatoon.ca/businessorganics

Organics training checklist:

- Why is diverting organics important?
- What are the Bylaw requirements?
- What items go in the appropriate containers and how do they need to be prepared?
- Where are containers located?
- What is the collection schedule?
- How will participating in waste diversion benefit customers, employees, and tenants?
- What special handling requirements do donation items require?



Make composting easy and convenient

If you use indoor waste stations, group them together to be accessible and convenient, rather than individual containers scattered throughout the building.



This station is in a **convenient location**, in a high use area. Consider the layout of your business and commonly used areas when figuring out where your waste station should be located.

The containers are **placed together** to help users choose the proper diversion option.

Signs with words and pictures help users quickly understand what goes where.

Colour-coded containers help users understand what goes in each container. Use blue for mixed recyclables and green for food and yard waste.

Each container has an **appropriate liner** to help custodial staff gather materials for collection. For instance, clear plastic bags could be used for the landfill and mixed recycling, while a certified compostable liner can be used for food and yard waste. Make sure to check with your collection company about which liners can be used for your waste diversion programs.

Let customers and vendors know about your recycling and food and yard waste programs to show you care about community and the environment. Consider designating a “champion” to lead the program.

Monitor your program

- Get regular feedback from your tenants and employees.
- Work closely with your collection company to understand how your program is going.
- Perform regular waste audits.
- Information can be found under “Resources” at: saskatoon.ca/businessorganics
- Form an education team.



STEP 7:

Elevate your game!

You may already make the effort to divert organics and recycling from the garbage, but there are many ways to improve waste reduction and diversion.

Reduce waste produced in your business or organization.

Measure progress and discuss waste diversion with your employees and tenants.

Conducting an annual waste audit is a great tool to identify opportunities for improvement. The data can be used to celebrate successes, such as diversion rates, with employees and tenants and start a conversation about diversion issues and solutions.



Right-size your containers and reduce unnecessary collections.

Waste management is most cost-effective when organics, recycling, and garbage containers are used to their full potential. It is likely that with new organic and recycling services in place, your garbage container will be too big. Talk to your service provider about downsizing.

You can also monitor whether your containers are full prior to collection day. If you find they are not full, you may be able to cut costs by reducing the frequency of collections.



Talk to the experts.

Get the Saskatoon Waste Wizard app or visit saskatoon.ca/bizwiz to use the business search tool for more information, or ask your service provider.



We're here to help!

Visit saskatoon.ca/businessorganics to:

- Access waste audit information.
- Print signs, templates, and educational materials.
- Learn about free workplace presentations and professional advice from City staff to help start or improve your program.
- Sign up for our Sustainability newsletter for periodic updates about business interests including waste diversion information.
- If you have any questions, please contact business.waste@saskatoon.ca





City of
Saskatoon
Water and Waste Operations