



March 28, 2014

Address Block

Dear Madam or Sir:

I am writing to provide early notice to you about changes Metro will be making related to the processing of food scraps collected from businesses such as yours and delivered by haulers to Metro Central Transfer Station. These changes could affect your business operations, and I want to provide you with information that can help you continue to benefit from the food scraps collection program.

Your participation in the food scraps collection program helps our region keep food out of landfills and turn it into valuable products like compost and energy. Since Metro Central began accepting business-generated food scraps, we have also accepted non-food items such as waxed or food-soiled cardboard, other paper products and serveware to make it easier for businesses to participate.

As the food scraps program has grown, so has the volume of these non-food items. These non-food items have reached such a quantity that they are very difficult to handle at processing facilities. The facility receiving most of our business-generated food scraps converts food into methane gas that is used to generate electricity. That facility cannot effectively process the high volumes of cardboard, packaging and other non-food material that comes with food scraps, nor can the composting facility that takes the rest of the food scraps that comes through Metro Central. Continuing to include these items in loads that Metro Central sends to these two facilities puts the entire food scraps program at risk.

To preserve Metro Central's ability to serve businesses like yours, we will be implementing changes to move in two stages to a food-only standard for loads of food scraps arriving at the transfer station:

- **As of November 1, 2014, food scraps loads may not contain regular or waxed corrugated cardboard. Loads with more than trivial amounts of these materials will be treated and charged as garbage.**
- **As of March 1, 2015, food scraps loads may not contain non-food items. Loads with more than trivial amounts of these materials will be treated and charged as garbage.**

We will allow transparent or semi-transparent compostable bags and container liners to be included, because we know they are critical to the ability of some businesses to participate in the food scraps program. These bags and liners must be certified by the Biodegradable Products

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Institute (BPI). The BPI website - bpiworld.org – provides links to vendors of these products. Look for the BPI certification label if you shop for these products from wholesalers or retailers.

We recognize there may be an impact on your business operations, which is why we are having extended transition periods to the new standards. You'll soon receive additional information from the City of Portland offering resources for your business, including assistance, posters, stickers and staff training at no cost. Visit the city's Sustainability at Work website, www.portlandoregon.gov/sustainabilityatwork/compost, to learn more. We are also working closely with your garbage hauler to implement these changes as smoothly as possible.

Thank you for your efforts to put food scraps to productive use. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Ehinger
Director of Solid Waste Operations
503-797-1789
paul.ehinger@oregonmetro.gov