



The Portland Building Compost Program Coming to a Break Room near You on January 4th, 2010

Composting: Make it your New Year's Resolution

Why is the Portland Building composting?

The Portland Building's recycling rate is 38%, which is significantly below the City's internal goal of 85% by 2015. Compostables make up 1/3 of the building's waste stream and can significantly increase our waste diversion rate. Additionally, The City's Climate Action Plan aims to reduce the region's carbon emissions 80% by 2050. Deferring organics from the landfill to compost facilities reduces the amount of methane emitted into the atmosphere and the City's carbon footprint.

What can be commercially composted?

Organic items such as cooked and raw foods including fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, seafood, shellfish, bones, rice, beans, pasta, bakery items, cheese and eggshells. Non-food items include pizza boxes, napkins, paper towels, flowers, plant trimmings, tea bags, & coffee grounds/filters.

What CANNOT be composted?

Metals, plastics, and plastic lined paper products: even if plastics have carried food, such as zip lock baggies or string cheese wrappers, they cannot be composted. If the paper appears shiny or has held liquid it is most likely plastic lined and cannot be composted. Examples include: to-go soda & coffee cups, soup containers, shiny paper plates, and wrappers of any kind including candy wrappers & tea bag wrappers.

Why Commercial and not Residential Composting?

Distance and contract limitations with composting facilities currently limit the City's ability to provide curbside residential composting. In the meantime, food can be composted at home through worm bins and backyard composters. These composting methods have more limitations, such as not allowing meat, bone and dairy if you compost at home. One of the benefits of commercial composting is that larger commercial systems can control issues like strong odors and harmful bacteria, such as E. coli, whereas backyard composting cannot.



Want to Know More!?

- Come to **THE PORTLAND BUILDING COMPOSTING BROWN BAG** presentation, Tuesday, December 15th, noon-1pm in The Portland Building Auditorium.
- Cedar-Grove is our commercial composting company. **Learn more** about what they accept.
- **The Bureau of Planning & Sustainability** oversees commercial composting in Portland.
- More questions? Wendy Gibson x31181 is the composting contact at Facilities Services.

Brought to you by the OMF Green Roots Team

Electronic versions are available at www.portlandonline.com/OMF/GreenMatters