



Business food scraps separation requirements

Public benefits of a regional solid waste system

Through its management of the regional solid waste system, Metro seeks to:

- Protect people's health
- Protect the environment
- Get good value for the public's money
- Keep our commitment to the highest and best use of materials
- Be adaptable and responsive in managing materials
- Ensure services are available to all types of customers

In July 2018, the Metro Council adopted a policy that requires certain types of businesses to keep their food scraps out of the garbage starting in 2020.

What types of materials are included in the food scraps program?

The program is for food scraps only. Food scraps include excess, spoiled or unusable and inedible food such as waste from fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products, fish, shellfish, nuts, seeds, grains, coffee grounds and similar material that results from the storage, preparation, cooking, handling, selling or serving of food for human consumption. Food scraps do not include large amounts of oils and meats that are collected for rendering or other beneficial uses or any food fit for human consumption that has been set aside, stored properly and is accepted for donation.

It is important to note that the program covers food scraps that are generated "back-of-house." Back-of-house is the area of business operation where food preparation areas and kitchens are located and that is not accessible to customers. The food scraps separation requirement *does not apply* to food that is generated front-of-house. Front-of-house is the area of a business accessible to customers where food is consumed and where some establishments' customers are asked to dispose of garbage and food scraps, such as at quick-serve restaurants. A business may choose to include front-of-house food scraps in its collection program, but the business must take full responsibility for ensuring that the food scraps are free of non-food items, such as cups, napkins, cutlery and other materials, before placing the food scraps in their collection bin.

What types of businesses are required to participate in the food scraps separation program?

Grocery Stores: Establishments that sell food and beverages including grocery stores, warehouse clubs, wholesalers, and specialty food stores.

Restaurants: Establishments that prepare meals, snacks and beverages, to customers' order, for immediate consumption on and off premises. This includes organizations and corporate campuses with full service and on-site cafeterias as well as catering companies.

Lodging and Hotels: Establishments primarily engaged in providing short-term lodging with full service restaurants or on-site food preparation.

Hospitals: Establishments, licensed as hospitals, with full-service restaurants or on-site food preparation.

Nursing and Residential Care Facilities: Establishments primarily engaged in providing residential care with full-service restaurants or on-site food preparation. This includes retirement and assisted living facilities.

Correctional Facilities: Jails, prisons, or other place of incarceration with on-site cafeterias or food preparation.

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Colleges and Universities: Higher-education institutions with full-service restaurants or on-site food preparation including those that offer two- to four-year programs in the arts and sciences, technical and vocational schools, and junior and community colleges.

Elementary and Secondary Education: Schools with on-site cafeterias or food preparation including a centralized kitchen that prepares food for delivery to multiple school locations.

Food and Beverage Manufacturers: Establishments primarily engaged in producing food and beverage products such as fruit and vegetable canning, chocolate and confectionery manufacturing, meat, poultry and seafood processing, commercial bakeries, and breweries.

I own or manage a food service business described above. When does my business need to have a food scraps separation program in place to comply with the requirements?

Business Group 1:

- **Implementation period begins March 31, 2020.**
- **Businesses that generate 1,000 pounds or more of food scraps per week.**
(Equivalent to about four 60-gallon roll carts per week)



Business Group 2:

- **Implementation period begins March 31, 2021.**
- **Businesses that generate 500 pounds or more of food scraps per week.**
(Equivalent to about two 60-gallon roll carts per week)



Business Group 3:

- **Implementation period begins September 30, 2022.**
- **Businesses that generate 250 pounds or more of food scraps per week.**
(Equivalent to about one 60-gallon roll cart per week)



(Conversion Factors: 800 pounds per yard and 4 pounds per gallon; 60-gallon roll cart = 240 pounds)

How do I know when my business needs to comply with the requirement?

The **Food Scraps Generation Estimation Guide** (see page 4) will help you estimate the quantity of food scraps your business generates and determine when your business needs to comply with the requirements.

If your business has practices in place to prevent food waste, you may generate less than indicated by industry averages. Individual estimates may also vary depending on the type of food service. For example, full-service, sit-down restaurants are more likely to generate higher quantities of food scraps compared to quick-serve or take-out restaurants. Technical assistance specialists from your city or county's garbage and recycling department can help you estimate your food scraps generation levels through free on-site assistance. They will also help with program set-up, training and problem-solving.

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The Estimation Guide was developed based on industry data from published reports and studies including work done by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). CalRecycle conducts periodic in-depth studies of waste generated by businesses to better understand the types and amounts of materials generated. The per-employee generation rates for each business type used in the Food Scraps Generation Estimation Guide were developed based on these in-depth studies. These rates represent industry averages that can be used to help estimate the quantity for food scraps your business generates. This source data is also used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies for similar purposes. Metro will continue to refine the Food Scraps Generation Estimation Guide as updated or improved data become available.

How does the food scraps separation requirement apply to:

Businesses that are part of a chain with multiple locations? The requirement is based on the amount of food waste generated per location, rather than the entire chain. For example, if one location generates 1,000 pounds of food scraps per week or more, that location is part of Group 1. If another location produces less than 1,000 pounds of food scraps per week, that location is subject to the requirement at a later date.

Facilities with multiple buildings with common ownership such as a college or corporate campus? The requirement is based on the total amount generated by all food-related operations such as cafeterias and catering for the entire campus. If the campus as a whole generates 1,000 pounds of food scraps per week or more, then the campus is included in Group 1, even if no single building on the campus disposes of more than 1,000 pounds of food scraps per week.

Businesses in a shopping mall or multi-tenant building with shared garbage collection service? The requirement is based on the amount of food scraps generated at each individual business located in the mall or building, rather than the total amount generated by all the food-related businesses located in the mall or building. For example, if one business generates 1,000 pounds of food scraps per week, that business is subject to the requirement in Group 1.

I read this document and it didn't answer all of my questions. Who can I call for more information?

Call Metro at 503-234-3000 to speak with someone who may be able to answer any questions about this policy that are not addressed here.

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Food Scraps Generation Estimation Guide

To estimate the quantity of food scraps your business generates and determine when you likely need to have a food scraps separation system in place, select your business category and enter the number of full-time employees that work at your business.

Grocery stores	# of full-time employees	× 4000 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Restaurants¹	# of full-time employees	× 2760 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Lodging and hotels	# of full-time employees	× 1200 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Hospitals	# of full-time employees	× 300 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Nursing and residential care facilities	# of full-time employees	× 300 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Correctional facilities	# of full-time employees	× 1700 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Colleges and universities	# of full-time employees	× 300 pounds of food scraps per employee per year	÷ 52 weeks per year	= pounds of food scraps per week
Elementary and secondary schools	Elementary and secondary schools will be included in Group 3, starting in September 2022, regardless of the amounts of food scraps they generate.			
Food and beverage manufacturers	Food scraps generation and handling vary widely by food product manufacturer. City and county technical assistance staff will help these businesses determine if and when they will need to have a program in place.			

Source for Business Generation Estimates: Cascadia Consulting Group. *2014 Generator-Based Characterization of Commercial Sector Disposal and Diversion in California*. Publication # DRRR 2015-1543. California Department of Resources and Recycling and Recovery, September 2015.
<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/publications/Documents/1543/20151543.pdf>

¹ For organizations and corporate campuses with full service and on-site cafeterias that are not included as another business category such as hospitals, colleges and universities or correctional facilities, enter the number of full-time employees involved with food preparation and service.