

## Highland Park Compost Program

### **What is the compost program?**

The compost program is the collection of materials such as food waste, non-recyclable paper waste and yard waste in a separate collection container. This material is picked up at the curb, and brought to a compost facility where it is processed into a valuable soil amendment.

Organic matter breaks down and becomes compost, which can be used as fertilizer for gardens. Organic waste makes up 25% – 50% of what people throw away, so composting food scraps and yard waste can substantially decrease the amount of waste that we send to our rapidly-filling landfills. Plus, organic materials that decompose in landfills release methane, contributing to climate change.

### **How does the program work?**

Curbside composting service allows all customers to comeingle their food scraps and yard waste between April 1 and December 15. Any customer is eligible to participate in this program – whether you use volume based or weekly pick up for your trash. You can use this service for composting even if you do not need yard waste service.

There will be two options for this type of collection: volume-based curbside collection and subscription curbside collection. Volume-based customers will place a waste sticker on their container when it is ready for disposal and bring it to the curb on the same day as their waste and recycling collection. Subscription customers will do the same, except there is no need to purchase stickers.

### **What can I compost?**

Egg shells, banana peels, apple cores, coffee grounds, tea bags, stale bread, carrot tops, citrus rinds, peach pits, beef gristle, onion skins, cherry stems, bell pepper stems and seeds, chicken bones, broccoli stalks, corn cobs, wilted lettuce, dirty pizza boxes, used paper napkins and kleenex, dead flowers, house plant clippings, fallen leaves and trimmed branches—just to name a few! Think of all the waste you can keep out of your trash and our landfills by filling your compost bin instead.

### **Is compost smelly?**

When it comes to odor, compost is just like trash: it only becomes a nuisance if left unattended for long periods of time. Curbside composting gets rid of the mess before decomposition sets in. To prevent odors, make sure to regularly remove compost from the container in your home and occasionally clean your bin with baking soda. For easy clean-up, consider lining your curbside bin with paper towels or paper bags. You can also line your curbside bin with a paper yard waste. NO plastic bags are allowed (not even biodegradable ones).

### **What do I do with my yard waste?**

Curbside compost service accepts both food scraps and yard waste—both go into the same bin. If you already subscribe to yard waste service, you can now add your food scraps to the same bin.

### **What if I don't need yard waste collection?**

You can use this service for composting even if you do not need yard waste service. Simply ask for an organics cart (see below), fill it with organic waste, and put it out as needed using a sticker.

**Is there anything I can't compost?**

This service does NOT accept diapers, liquids, grease, pet waste, Styrofoam, or oil. Recyclable items (metal, plastics, newspaper, glass, etc.) should all still go in your recycling bin. Do NOT use plastic bags in your compost bin (not even biodegradable ones).

**How do I get an organics recycling cart?**

Lake Shore Recycling will provide a 35-gallon cart for no additional charge. To request a curbside compost bin, contact Lakeshore Recycling Systems at 773.685.8811.

**What if I don't have enough compost to fill up an entire bin?**

The bin doesn't have to be full to take it out to the curb. Using stickers will allow you to compost only as often as necessary. It is also acceptable to share a compost bin with your neighbors. By pooling your compost—and money to pay for the service or stickers—you can reduce waste and save money at the same time!

**Where can I get a container to collect my food scraps in my kitchen?**

Residents can purchase a compost pail at the Highland Park City Hall, 1707 St Johns Avenue, for \$5. Please call ahead to make sure the bins are in stock (847.926.1000). Many local stores also carry indoor containers to collect food scraps before taking them out to your curbside bin. They come in a variety of styles with different amenities, like charcoal filters. Many are designed to be attractive enough to sit on your counter. Others are designed to go under the kitchen sink. You can also re-purpose an old container to collect food scraps.

**How do I sign up for subscription based composting?**

To sign up, go to: [www.lrsrecycles.com](http://www.lrsrecycles.com) or call 773.685.8811.