

Organics Recycling drop-off program: Frequently Asked Questions



S A I N T P A U L – R A M S E Y C O U N T Y P U B L I C H E A L T H

Who can use this program?

The organics recycling drop-off program is for Ramsey County residents who are recycling organics from their home.

How do I start organic waste recycling?

Step 1. Pick up a free organics recycling starter kit and/or free compostable bags. Available at Ramsey County yard waste collection sites.

Step 2. Fill your bin lined with compostable bag with organic waste.

View a short video on organics sorting: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Somali](#) | [Hmong](#)

Step 3. Bring your bagged organics to a [drop-off site](#).

View a short video on organics drop-offs: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Somali](#) | [Hmong](#)

What materials can I recycle as organics recycling?

- All food waste (including dairy).
- Egg shells.
- Food soiled paper products.
- Fruit/vegetable scraps.
- Grains.
- Meats, including bones.
- Nut shells.
- Paper towels.
- Tissues.

Visit [RamseyRecycles.com/OR](https://www.ramseyrecycles.com/OR) for more items.

How do I set up collection in my home?

Use the caddy from your starter kit or find a bin the fits the free compostable bag from the county drop-off site. If you're using your own compostable bags, make sure the bag, or the box in which it came, has the "compostable" logo from the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI). You will want to use a bin with a preferably tight lid.

Add compostable items such as food scraps and non-recyclable paper. Since your trash volume will be greatly reduced, a small bathroom sized trash bin could now be used for materials that are not compostable such as plastic food wrappers. You may find it convenient to also have a small pail lined with a 2.5-gallon compostable bag to collect kitchen scraps as you prepare or clean up after meals, as well as one in the bathroom for tissue, paper tubes and more. Keep a cover on the pail when not in use to reduce odors.

How are the organic materials recycled?

The organics collected are recycled at a local facility and turned into compost.

Is the compost from this program made available to residents?

Compost produced from this program will be the property of the composting company that accepts it from the county. It may be available locally for purchase but will not be available for free at the yard waste sites.

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What are the benefits of recycling organics?

Organic waste is the largest portion of what remains in our trash after recycling. Recycling these organics keeps waste out of landfills and converts it to a resource - compost. Residents can also save money on trash bills as organics recycling is not subject to the [County Environmental Charge](#) (tax).

How often can I drop off organics from my home?

You can visit the drop-off sites at any time during site hours.

How many bags of organics from my home can I bring in?

There is no limit on the number of bags of organics recycling brought from your home. You may also arrange to bring in bags for your neighbors.

Does the material have to be bagged in a compostable bag?

Yes, organics recycling must be inside a "BPI certified" compostable bag. Paper bags containing organics are acceptable if they are intact.

How long can I store organics in a compostable plastic bag?

Compostable bags are designed to breakdown over time under certain conditions, so it is recommended to check them regularly after one week.

How many free compostable bags can I get?

When you bring a full organics bag to a drop-off site, you will receive an empty one in exchange.

What sizes of bags are available?

12-gallon and 2.5-gallon compostable bags are available for free at drop-off sites. Check local stores for other sizes, but make sure they are "BPI certified" on the box.

Do you accept organics for recycling from businesses?

No, Ramsey County yard waste sites are not accepting organics from businesses. Visit BizRecycling.com for information on business recycling.

Will this smell and attract pests?

Odors will be similar to regular trash and will not attract pests if managed properly. To minimize odors and pests, do not store longer than one week. Keep full bags in areas that are enclosed, cool or even cold, if possible, and not accessible to pets or wild animals.

Can I put yard waste in with my organics recycling?

No, yard waste and organic waste are managed separately. Please place your yard waste such as leaves, grass, garden plants, and brush (trees and shrubs) in the appropriate pile at a [Ramsey County yard waste site](#). Soft plant materials are accepted at all sites. Arden Hills, Frank and Sims, Midway and White Bear Township collection sites accept brush.

Why can't I put my organics out on the curb for recycling?

This may be an option in the future as organics recycling markets develop, but for now, organics for recycling must be deposited at a drop-off site.

Contact info: