

# Zero Waste in Action

*Real communities. Real solutions.*

## Curbside Composting: Oakland, California, USA

### Summary

In 2005 Oakland expanded its every other week yard trimmings collection to weekly collection of all organics, including food scraps and soiled paper, as part of its efforts to reach Zero Waste.

### Population

396,000

### Year enacted

2005

### Who's affected

Households

### Compost Collection Overview

Oakland's "Green Cart" program serves 96,000 residences including all single-family homes and apartments with up to four units. Residents receive weekly trash, recycling, and compost collection. The costs of composting and recycling are included in the price of trash and based on the amount of trash service.

The green cart compost collection includes all food scraps, yard trimmings, branches (less than 4' long and 6" in diameter), unpainted or untreated wood (less than 4' long and 6"), and food-soiled paper. Food soiled paper includes waxed cardboard, paper napkins, paper towels, paper plates, paper milk cartons, ice cream cartons, tea bags, paper restaurant take-out containers, and paper coffee filters.

Residents receive a 64-gallon green cart for weekly curbside compost and can request an additional green cart for \$7.59 per month. Residents also receive unlimited yard trimmings collection and can either place their branches in bundles or use kraft bags, biodegradable bags, or their own marked container for extra yard trimmings.

Residents may be charged for extra garbage if they place yard trimmings or food scraps in plastic bags.

### Education



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All residents received a 2-gallon kitchen pail for sorting kitchen food scraps when the program began.

Oakland staff provide extensive education around composting as part of the city's Zero Waste goal.

The Alameda County Waste Management Authority Source Reduction and Recycling Board, better known as StopWaste.Org, provides education and services throughout Alameda County on food waste composting, including in Oakland.

## Background Information

In 1995 Oakland began collecting yard trimmings from residents every other week. The City has an exclusive franchise contract for trash and composting collection, and two haulers that pick up recycling from residents.

In 2010, Alameda County enacted a landfill ban on yard trimmings and plant debris that affects the City of Oakland.

In 2013, the Oakland City Council voted to expand composting to all multi-unit apartment and buildings, which make up 40% of the city's population, as part of its trash and recycling contract negotiations.

## Downloads

[Oakland, CA Trash Service Rates, 2013–2014](#)

[Results of Public Opinion Surveys on Food Composting in Alameda County](#)

[Oakland's Zero Waste Strategic Plan](#)

## More information

[Oakland's Recycling and Garbage Program Information](#)

[Zero Waste Oakland](#)

[Oakland's Residential Recycling Program](#)



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