

TOWN OF BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



Refuse & Recycling

<https://www.bedfordma.gov/recycling>

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September 13, 2024

Dear Resident,

Bedford Department of Public Works is launching a curbside food waste pilot program, in partnership with Black Earth Compost. The program will target two distinct neighborhoods and is intended to last six months, from December 2024 - May 2025. The Pilot program is grant funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Beginning in December, residents in your neighborhood will receive free weekly curbside food waste service, in addition to your weekly trash and recycling collection. Collected food waste and other compostable materials will be transported to a nearby commercial composting facility, where it will be turned into nutrient rich soil. By separating food waste from the trash, your trash cart will be cleaner, lighter and less attractive to animals. You may find that you have less need to use Official Town of Bedford overflow trash bags, which will save you money.

This pilot program is free and completely voluntary. **Please return the yellow post card that is included with the notice to indicate your choice no later than October 7, 2024.** Postage has been pre-paid.

- **Opt-in:** Sign up for free weekly collection service at www.blackearthcompost.com and return the post card marked with "Count me in!" Call (781)275-7605 x4261 if you need assistance with this process.
- **Opt-out:** Simply return the post card marked "No, thank you."

Each participating household will be issued a green 12-gallon wheeled cart and a supply of compostable liners to use during this food waste collection program. Carts will be delivered approximately mid-November. Organics carts are property of Town of Bedford. Carts will be collected at the end of the project for participants who do not wish to continue beyond the project period.

Questions about this program should be directed to Liz Antanavica, Trash & Recycling Administrator, (781)275-7605 or trashrecycling@bedfordma.gov

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What can I put in the green food waste carts?

A: Anything that was once alive is acceptable for composting. This includes:

- All food waste and plate scraps, such as vegetable peels; sauces; cheese, yogurt and other dairy items; eggs and eggshells; pasta and other grains; meat and seafood (including bones or shells);
- Coffee grounds and filters; fruit rinds; tea bags; paper napkins and paper towels; hair and fur;
- Certified compostable items (must be BPI, CMA or OK Compost certified compostable)

Q: What types of items are not accepted in the green food waste carts?

A: The following items should not be included in the green carts:

- Absolutely no plastic, including cups, containers, candy wrappers, chip bags, shopping bags, produce bags, etc.;
- No cartons, such as milk, juice, ice cream, shelf-stable cream, broth or soup containers;
- No produce stickers, rubber bands, produce ties;
- No dog or cat waste (including cat litter);
- No grass clippings or yard waste;
- No laundry lint, dryer sheets, dental floss, Q-tips or sanitary products (including diapers);

Q: What is the cost for service?

A: The initial 6-month project is completely free, funded by MassDEP.

Q: What if I'm already a paid subscriber in the project area?

A: All existing active subscribers will be automatically enrolled into the pilot at the beginning of December. The paid plan will be paused during the project and resumed automatically when the pilot ends.

Q: What day is collection day? How is my cart emptied?

A: Green food waste carts will be collected weekly, on Wednesdays. Place your food waste cart at the curbside, just as you would for trash and recycling.

Q: Do I need bin liners?

A: Bin liners are required and will help keep your bin clean. You will be provided with a supply of compostable bin liners with your green wheeled cart. All liners must be certified compostable by Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI), Compost Manufacturing Alliance (CMA), or TUV and have at least one of their logos printed directly on the bags. Doubled-up brown paper bags can also be used as a liner when the temperature is above freezing.

Q: I'm a renter. Can I still participate?

A: Yes! If you live in a rental unit in one of our target neighborhoods, you are eligible to participate.

Q: I'm planning to move during the project period. Can I still participate?

A: You may participate in this project until you move. Unfortunately, this project is neighborhood specific and you will not be able to transfer your free service to an address outside of the project area.

Q: Can my friend in another neighborhood participate in the free program as well?

A: No. This pilot project is specifically targeting two distinct neighborhoods, Bedford Gardens and Meadowbrook/Birchwood. Residents in other neighborhoods may instead participate in one of the food waste programs open to all Bedford households. Visit <https://www.bedfordma.gov/484/Food-Waste> for more information on these programs.