



# RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

## **Achieve a Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) recycling rate to 70% by 2022 and maintain this rate through 2050.**

Seattle is a nationally recognized leader in recycling and composting, and currently diverts 53.7 percent of all MSW generated. This rate, achieved through the City’s numerous innovative policies and programs, is among the highest in the country and already generates significant environmental benefits, including avoided GHG emissions.

The City is already on a path toward greater waste diversion through recycling and composting. In its 2011 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) Revision, the City laid out a plan to achieve 70 percent diversion by 2022 through new recycling and composting programs, increased enforcement, additional material disposal bans, and enhanced outreach and education. By implementing the recommendations of the 2011 SWMP and taking additional actions, the City can reduce GHG emissions from its waste management activities, and substantially increase the amount of avoided emissions achieved through recycling and composting.

### **MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING**

Achieve a MSW recycling rate of 60% by 2015 and 70% by 2022 by implementing new MSW recycling and composting programs and material disposal bans, increasing enforcement, and enhancing outreach and education to residents and businesses.

### **CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION RECYCLING**

Achieve a construction and demolition (C&D) recycling rate of 70% by 2020 by phasing in C&D material disposal bans, and coordinating with local industry to develop a processing facility certification program.

### **FOOD WASTE LANDFILL DIVERSION**

Maximize diversion of food waste from the landfill and promote composting of food scraps by increasing technical assistance to expand and improve the use of compostable food service products, and increasing enforcement of food packaging and food scrap composting requirements.

### **LOCAL RECYCLING MARKETS AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT**

Expand local recycling markets by aligning market development efforts with disposal bans and focusing on potentially recyclable materials with persistently low recycling rates.



# MSW RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

**Achieve a Municipal Solid Waste (residential, commercial, and self-haul) recycling rate of 60% by 2015 and 70% by 2022, by implementing recommendations from the 2011 SWMP.**

MSW includes all the garbage, recycling, and organics (yard and food waste) collected within Seattle and hauled to the city's recycling and disposal (transfer) stations. It also includes some construction and demolition (C&D) wastes that are disposed at city transfer stations or placed in residential or business garbage containers.

Seattle Public Utilities has already developed a plan for increasing recycling of MSW by twenty percentage points in the next ten years. By strongly supporting and implementing the recommendations of the SWMP, the City can achieve the GHG emissions benefits associated with this high recycling rate.

KEY ACTIONS BY 2020
<p><b>Implement new MSW recycling and composting programs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multi-family universal organics collection service (2012)</li><li>• Floor sorting of self-haul C&amp;D loads at transfer stations (2013)</li><li>• Pet waste and diapers composting (2020)</li></ul>
<p><b>Implement additional MSW material disposal bans:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asphalt paving, concrete, and bricks (2013)</li><li>• Asphalt shingles, plastic film, and clean wood (2014)</li><li>• Food and compostable paper (SF - 2014, MF - 2015, Commercial - 2016)</li><li>• Commercial C&amp;D (2017)</li></ul>
<p><b>Increase enforcement of MSW recycling and composting requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase enforcement of commercial paper ban (2012)</li><li>• Increase enforcement of all residential bans (2012)</li></ul>
<p><b>Enhance outreach and education to residents and businesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Restore education funding for all sectors to pre-recession levels (2013)</li><li>• Enhance outreach in advance of material disposal bans</li></ul>

# CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION RECYCLING

**Achieve a Construction and Demolition recycling rate of 70% by 2020, by implementing recommendations from the 2011 SWMP.**

C&D waste includes wood waste, metals, asphalt roofing, gypsum, and other materials generated by construction activities that is not disposed at city-owned transfer stations or mixed with MSW garbage. It is managed separately from MSW for recycling and disposal.

In the 2011 SWMP Update, the City recommended a recycling rate goal for the C&D waste stream for the first time, and outlined recommended actions for achieving this goal.

## KEY ACTIONS BY 2020

### **Phase in C&D material disposal bans at jobsites and private transfer stations:**

- Asphalt, bricks, and concrete paving (2012)
- Recyclable metal, cardboard, plastic film, carpet, clean gypsum (2013)
- Clean wood, asphalt shingles (2014)

### **Develop and promote a C&D processing facility certification program, in coordination with the local industry and other solid waste planning jurisdictions.**

# FOOD WASTE LANDFILL DIVERSION

## **Maximize diversion of food waste from the landfill and promote composting of food scraps.**

Food scraps make up the single largest source of GHG emissions related to waste management activities in Seattle, primarily due to the release of landfill methane. To avoid these emissions, the City should prioritize diverting as much food waste as possible from disposal. In addition to reducing food waste disposal through planned actions such as disposal bans, increased education, and expansion of organics service to the multifamily sector, the City can promote composting of food scraps by providing technical assistance to business customers, and by continuing to encourage the use of compostable single-use food service products, which help prevent contained food scraps from being disposed when separation is not feasible or convenient.

Actions designed to prevent food waste at the source are discussed in the “Source Reduction and Product Stewardship” section.

### KEY ACTIONS BY 2020

**Increase technical assistance and enforcement related to food packaging requirements so that all single-use food service products are recyclable or compostable** (with a preference for compostable in cases where products are likely to be soiled with food).

**Support coordination between organics processors, food service product suppliers, and food service retailers to expand the availability of compostable food service products.**

**Focus grants on schools to establish system-wide collection approaches for food and yard waste.**

## **Expand local recycling markets and support market development for potentially recyclable materials.**

Seattle's robust recycling programs have supported a growing number of recycling businesses in the region, demonstrating both the environmental and economic benefits of recycling and composting. The City can expand the positive effects of recycling by continuing to support existing local recycling markets and by helping to develop local markets for additional materials as they are added to recycling programs.

By 2020, most of the MSW stream will be recycled or composted, but a few recoverable material categories are forecast to have persistently low (i.e. less than 50 percent) recycling rates. Where appropriate, these materials should become the focus of market development efforts.

<b>KEY ACTIONS BY 2020</b>
<b>Launch market development for textiles (2016)</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL ACTIONS BY 2020 (NOT PART OF SWMP)</b>
<b>Focus on materials expected to have persistently low recycling rates as of 2020, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-container glass</li><li>• Mixed plastics</li><li>• Wood</li></ul>