

# City of Laurel Organics Recycling Program



## ► Evolution of the Program:

- August 2019 Pilot Program - 200 participants. Cost of the program startup \$16K.
- 2020 - 2021 COVID! Program growth slowed down - lack of staff and materials.
- 2022 - Kick-start the program by introducing One and Done (one day per week for trash; accompanied by the recycling collection).
- It didn't work.....
- 2023 - Introduced to Mayor and Council, legislation mandating that organics recycling become mandatory for all single-family; town-homes and condos in July 2025. Non-compliance will be subject to monetary penalties.
- 2023/2024 - Developed kick-off campaign with improved educational information and began city-wide deployment of organics recycling kits (educational packet, kitchen countertop container and outside locked container).
- 2025 - completing deployment of carts to all residents - created "Composting Ambassadors" throughout the City.

# Compliance

## Legislation, Education and Citations.

- ▶ Ordinance 2010 -- Adds the definitions of compost; composting; composting facility; organic waste and green waste.
  - ▶ Establishes the organics composting program; defines separation of materials; and provides an effective date for the mandatory separation of organics from the waste stream.
  - ▶ Defines Public Education and enforcement and provides an effective date for education and outreach.
- ▶ Compliance: Rehrig's Vision Suite - The RFID reader, observation panel and camera will allow the driver to "tag" a collection using preassigned areas of concern - i.e., trash overflow; mixed trash (RSP in trash); recycling in trash; plastic bags in recycling, etc.
  - ▶ "tagged" item is transmitted to staff for review
  - ▶ A picture is included with a letter stating the issues along with educational information on correcting the problem. There is a controlled escalation of education and outreach before we get to the citation stage. Tagged and left at curb; Letter with picture; Letter with violation and associated municipal infraction; Citation.
- ▶ The RFID reader will also flag carts that are at the incorrect address, allowing staff to better monitor overall City participation in recycling and composting, stay on top of our inventory so that we can order carts in a timely manner and save resources by focusing on problem areas.

# Documents Library

## What Can I Compost?

### WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

- Fruits and Vegetables
- Bread, Pasta, Grains (no raw dough)
- Meat (raw and cooked, including bones)
- Eggs, Eggshells, Seafood (raw and cooked, including shellfish, shells and bones)
- Dairy products (milk, butter, cheese) without containers
- Coffee grounds, Filters, and Loose tea
- Uncoated/Compostable tableware (plates, utensils)
- Pizza boxes (clean or "greasy")
- Grass clippings/leaves
- Kitchen paper products\* (napkins, paper towels, paper bags)



Organics Recycling (Composting) City of Laurel  
Reciclaje de Productos Orgánicos (Compostaje)

For more information/ Para más información  
<http://www.cityoflaurel.org/composting>  
[greenliving@laurel.md.us](mailto:greenliving@laurel.md.us)



[Click here to download](#)

## Why Should I Compost?

**WHY SHOULD I COMPOST?**

- Stop the Wildlife Problem!** Your compost cart has a lock to keep unwanted furry visitors out. Keeping your food scraps and organic waste locked will help keep your trash and recycling off the street.
- Reduce Global Warming!** Methane is a powerful heat trapping greenhouse gas. Landfills are the third-largest source of methane gas emissions. Composting reduces methane gas emissions at the landfill. Do your part - divert food scraps and other organic waste from the trash into the compost cart.
- No More Trash Overflow!** Regularly using your compost cart for food scraps and other organic waste you can reduce the amount of trash in your trash can and say goodbye to unsightly overflow.
- Composting carts will be delivered to all neighborhoods throughout the next year.**
- The City of Laurel is excited to introduce Organic Recycling to your neighborhood!**
- DO Compost**
  - Fruits/Vegetables
  - Bread/Grains
  - Eggs/Meat/Seafood
  - Coffee Grounds
  - Cheese/Dairy
  - Grass/Lawns
- DON'T Compost**
  - Oil Waste
  - Waxy or plastic lined paper materials
  - Chemically treated paper products
  - Shells
  - Medicines

**CITY OF LAUREL ORGANICS RECYCLING (COMPOSTING)**

Starting service is easy! Just put your cart out to the curbside with your trash and recycling! For questions check out our website.

[greenliving@laurel.md.us](mailto:greenliving@laurel.md.us)  
<http://www.cityoflaurel.org/composting>

[Click here to download](#)

## Composting is as Easy as 1,2,3!

**COMPOSTING IS AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!**

- 1 From Table**
  - Green Gold!** Compost reduces the need for chemical fertilizers.
  - Eco-Friendly and Fabulous!** Cut down on waste and help the planet.
- 2 To Container**
  - Shrink the Landfill, Save Big Bucks!** Municipalities can slash tipping fees and keep taxpayer money in their pockets.
- 3 To Curb**

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- Organics Recycling (Composting) Program
- Composting - Easy as 1,2,3
- Compost Like a Pro: Composting Hacks
- Composting Resources and FAQs

## Organics Recycling (Composting) Program

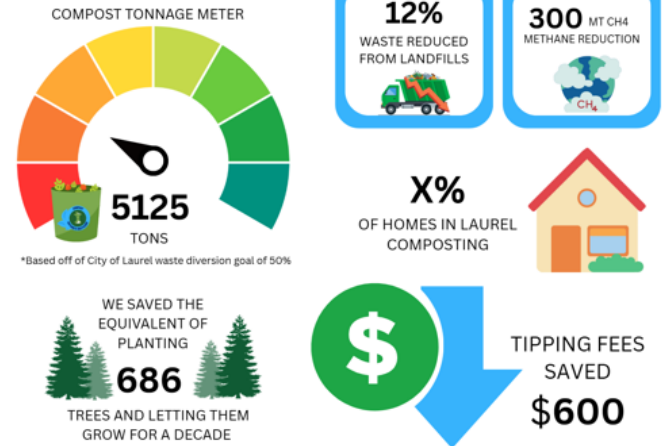


Organics Recycling, also known as composting, plays an integral role in eliminating organic waste, such as food scraps, from landfills. The City of Laurel is proud of our [mandatory](#) Residential Organics Recycling Program. All City of Laurel residents living in single-family homes and townhomes received a 35-gallon or 12-gallon curbside composting cart and a 2-gallon countertop composting bin.

*If you live in an apartment or condo and would like to participate, please reach out to your property management company.*

The City of Laurel's Organics Recycling program is managed by the Department of Public Works. If you have not received your composting carts or bins, please submit a request via [DPW's Organics Recycling](#) page.

### COMPOSTING IN LAUREL



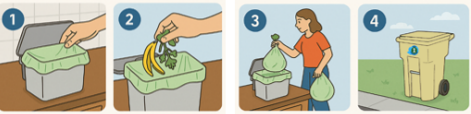
The City of Laurel is committed to reducing organic waste and improving sustainability. Throughout the year, we collect data during waste pick-up using visual identification and RFID technology. This helps us understand how well we're meeting our waste diversion goals, how different neighborhoods and groups are performing, and how we can improve our efforts moving forward. Your participation makes a difference—thank you for helping us build a cleaner, greener Laurel!

Download the Quarterly Composting Report Here!

## Composting - Easy as 1,2,3

### How Does Composting Work?

1. Line your kitchen countertop compost bin with a 3-gallon composting bag to help keep it clean.
2. As needed, dispose of compostable organic waste in your kitchen countertop compost bin.
3. As the 3-gallon bags fill up throughout the week, transfer them to your outdoor composting cart.
4. On your designated refuse collection day, place your outdoor composting cart at your curbside for weekly collection.




### Composting Reminder

**Do not use plastic bags for composting!** Bags for countertop bins can be purchased at the [Joseph R. Robison Laurel Municipal Center \(City Hall\)](#) on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays or at the Laurel Farmer's Market on Thursdays (cash-only). [Maryland Environmental Science \(MES\)-approved compostable bags](#) can also be purchased online or from the [local Giant Food grocery store](#). Brown paper shopping bags can be used as an alternative.



### What is Compostable?

- Kitchen Paper Towels
- Leaping Bunny-Approved Kitchen Paper Products\*
- Food-Soiled Newspaper
- Paper Ice Cream Containers
- Pizza boxes
- Raw and Cooked Eggs, Meat, and Seafood (including shells and bones)
- Tea bags and Loose Tea Leaves
- Uncoated and/or Compostable Tableware (plates and utensils)
- Animal Hair
- Bread, Pasta, and Grains
- Coffee Grounds and Filters
- Compostable Bags
- Corrugated Fruit and Vegetable Boxes
- Dairy Products (without containers)
- Food Waste
- Fruits and Vegetables
- Grass Clippings and/or Leaves

\* Cleaning products with the Leaping Bunny logo (  ) are not tested on animals and can be placed in your composting containers along with the paper towels used with these products.

### Fall Leaves and Pumpkins!

This fall, compost your fallen leaves and pumpkins! Make sure to remove any branches, sticks, and other yard debris before placing leaves in your composting cart.

### What is NOT Compostable?

- Yard Debris (including all branches and sticks)\*\*
- Pet Waste
- Paper Products with a waxy plastic lining
- Keurig Coffee Pods
- Raw Dough
- Paper Towels used with chemical cleaning products
- Plastic
- Medicine
- Dryer lint

\*\*Reach out to the Laurel Department of Public Works (DPW) to request a [Yard Debris Pickup](#).

Download a printable version to hang near your bin here.







36.27				
598.46	Seedlings in 10 Years			
8.45	Cars Driven in One Year			
4.86	Homes Powered in One Year			





## Next steps:



- ▶ Education/Compliance
- ▶ Increased social media presence via Sustainable Laurel Facebook page
- ▶ Composting Ambassadors
  - ▶ Farmer's Market
  - ▶ City Hall in the Park meetings
  - ▶ Sustainability Action Group activities
- ▶ High school student volunteers