

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.

City of Laurel - Organics Recycling


The screenshot shows the City of Laurel's Green Living website. On the left is a dark green sidebar with a white menu. The main content area has a white background with a green header. The page includes a navigation menu, a breadcrumb trail, a 'Green Living' title, four icons for Composting, Recycle Coach, Green Community, and Recycling, a 'Contact Us' section with a phone number, a mission statement, and a list of links for getting involved.


What's New


- Laurel Farmer's Market
- Sustainable Laurel +
- Organics Recycling (Composting) +
- Mosquito Control Program
- Laurel's Environmental Milestones
- Green Community +
- Recycling +
- Green Initiatives +
- Recycle Coach
- Green Living 2025 Municipal Calendar
- Informational Videos


[Home](#) > [Community](#) > [Green Living](#)


Green Living

 **Composting**

 **Recycle Coach**

 **Green Community**

 **Recycling**



Contact Us

Green Living
[Email Green Living](#)

Phone: 301-725-5300, ext. 2203

Planet | People | Prosperity | Peace/Partnership

Welcome to the City of Laurel's Green Living hub: Your go-to space for residents and businesses to explore and support Laurel's sustainability initiatives, track progress, and get involved!

- Discover ways to get [involved, be heard, and make a difference!](#)
- Check out what Laurel is [already doing to become more sustainable.](#)
- Find and support [local businesses that share our mission.](#)

Mission Statement

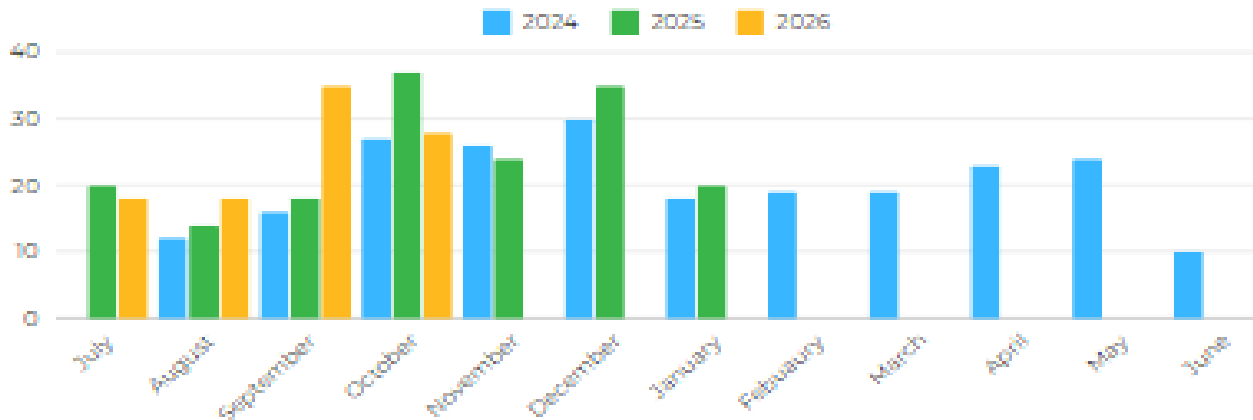
The City of Laurel defines sustainability as meeting the **environmental, social, and economic needs** of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The City of Laurel is committed to moving its operations and the community towards a more sustainable future that focuses on the following four foundational pillars:

Composting Dashboard

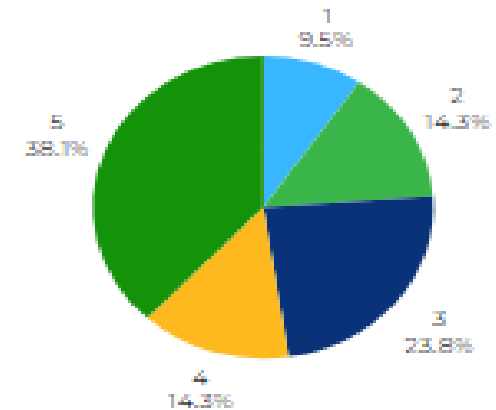
The City of Laurel is proud of our Residential Composting Program. The City has begun delivering 35-gallon and 12-gallon composting carts for single-family and townhomes respectively. This program aims to eliminate food scraps/organic waste from the landfill. With your help the city of Laurel can eliminate food waste. We invite you to take tour of the Dashboard to **See Our Progress!**



Tons of Food Scraps/Organic



Composters by Neighborhood



Why Should You Compost?



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.

Green Gold!
Compost reduces the need for chemical fertilizers.



No More Trash Overflow!

By easily 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.



Shrink the Landfill, Save Big Bucks!

Municipalities can slash tipping fees and keep taxpayer money in their pockets.



Stop the Wildlife Picnics!

Your compost cart has a lock to keep unwanted furry visitors out. Keeping your food scraps/organic waste locked will help keep your trash and recycling critter-free!



Eco-Friendly and Fabulous!

Cut down on waste and help the planet.

Get Started Today!

To Sign up for the Composting Program please use the link to sign-up and receive your composting cart and informational starter pack. [Register Here: https://forms.office.com/r/DC2w95Em55](https://forms.office.com/r/DC2w95Em55)

If you have questions, or issues, email GreenLiving@laurel.md.us and let us know:

- Your Name
- Your Address
- Your Phone Number
- Your email address

The City will deliver to your address:

- One Green 2-Gallon counter-top composting bin with filter
- One Beige/Brown 35-Gallon outdoor composting cart
- Ten 3-Gallon biodegradable composting bags (**As you run out of organics recycling bags contact Public Works for more.** Do not use plastic bags for composting).

•Do **not** use plastic bags for composting). If you want to purchase your own larger bags you can purchase them from [MES-approved Vendors \(PDF\)](#). Your organics recycling will be collected on your designated day each week. When you receive your composting containers, a few simple assembly steps are required:

1. Insert the smell-reducing filter into the lid of your 2-gallon countertop bin.
 2. Attach the lid securely to the bin.
 3. Line the bin with a 3-gallon composting bag to help keep it clean.
- As the smaller bags fill up, transfer them into your 35-gallon beige composting cart.

COMPOSTING IS AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

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Eco-Friendly and Fabulous!
Cut down on waste and help the planet.

Shrink the Landfill, Save Big Bucks!
Municipalities can slash tipping fees and keep taxpayer money in their pockets.

1 From Table

2 To Container

3 To Curb

CITY OF LAUREL
ORGANICS RECYCLING (COMPOSTING)

greenliving@laurel.md.us
<http://www.cityoflaurel.org/composting>

SCAN ME

Compostable Items List

What Can be Composted?

Food Items ✓	Other Items ✓
• Fruits and Vegetables	• Corrugated fruit and vegetable boxes
• Bread, pasta, grains (no raw dough)	• Paper ice cream containers
• Eggs and Egg Shells	• Compostable bags
• Coffee grounds and filters (no "Keurig style" cups)	• Grass and Leaves (no sticks or branches)
• Tea bags - loose tea	• Paper Towels, Napkins - kitchen only
• Meat (including bones)	• Paper plates - only uncoated or compostable
• Dairy Products - Milk, butter, cheese - No containers!	• Food-soiled newspaper
• Seafood (including shellfish)	• Pizza boxes - clean or "greasy"
• Leftover and spoiled food	• Paper bags (uncoated) with or without food scraps
• N/A	• Approved compostable tableware
• N/A	• Animal hair and dryer lint



Leaping Bunny Products

Cleaning products with the **Leaping Bunny** logo are organic and paper towels used with these products CAN be put in your composting cart.

There are a few compostable things we are not accepting in our composting and a few non-compostable items you might think are compostable but are not. Please do **not** put the following in your Organics Recycling and Composting carts:

What Cannot be Composted?

Non-Compostables ✗
• Yard Debris (large debris, branches, or sticks). Please request a Yard Debris pickup
• Pet Waste
• Paper plates, cartons, and containers with a waxy or plastic lining
• Paper Towels used for cleansing with chemical cleaning products
• Plastic
• Medicine



Composting Tips and FAQs

Composting is a highly effective way to reduce methane emissions from landfills, but misconceptions can be discouraging. Luckily, there are simple steps to make composting easier! Fruit flies can be a nuisance despite their small size and short life span (8 to 15 days). Females can lay up to 2,000 eggs, potentially leading to maggots. How can you prevent and eliminate them?

Here are some tips to reduce odors and keep pests away from your kitchen compost containers

Preparing for Composting:

All City-issued kitchen countertop compost containers come with lids and charcoal filters—be sure to keep the lids closed!

- Replace the filters every 4 to 6 months. Contact DPW for information on obtaining new ones.
- DPW provides free compostable liners for kitchen countertop bins. Visit our approved list of compostable bags for your larger curbside cart liners/bags
- Keep the kitchen countertop container and curbside cart out of the direct sun.
- Line the bottom of your compost container with a layer of newspaper
- Insert the compostable bag provided by DPW
- Freeze compost directly in the bag provided by the Department of Public Works (DPW)

Helpful Tips While Composting

- Sprinkle baking soda on the newspaper
- Use organic essential oils and mix with water and spray your compost. Organic Tea Tree oil, lavender, lemongrass, eucalyptus, or peppermint are deterrents and help keep the fruit flies at bay.
- Dry the container before adding a new compostable liner.
- Throw a sprig of fresh mint in your compost.
- Wash your fruit! Fruit flies can hitch a ride on the produce you bring home. Remember the egg story above, and you'll always want to wash your fruits and vegetables thoroughly
- Use your vacuum hose to suck them up - the sucking action will kill them.
- Trap the next generation — pour some apple cider vinegar into a small bowl or cup and tightly cover it with plastic wrap. Poke a few small holes in the wrap using a toothpick. Fruit flies will be attracted to the vinegar and become trapped inside. While it might not look appealing on your kitchen counter for a few days, it's worth it to eliminate those pesky fruit flies.
- Ants are also not fond of white vinegar and lemon juice.

Composting Tips and FAQs

Banana Peel Trap

You can also make use of fruit flies' love for banana peels to make a trap. Within 24 hours, 99% of the fruit flies should be in the container:

- Place a banana peel in a clear plastic container.
- Make three or four holes in the container with a toothpick (a pin should also work).
- Place the container near your fruit bowl or compost bin.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is compostable?

What is not compostable?

Can you put things loose into your beige container?

Should you lock the container on pickup day?

Do I have to put my container out every Wednesday?

Can dog hair and cat hair go into the composting container?

How do I get more composting bags?

How do I get a replacement filter for my countertop can?

Do you still have room for more people to sign up?

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



[Click here to download](#)

Why Should I Compost?

WHY SHOULD I COMPOST?

- Stop the Wildlife Plovers!**
Your compost cart has a lock to keep unwanted furry visitors out. Keeping your food scraps/organic waste locked will help keep your trash and recycling safer!
- 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!**
By weekly 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.**
- Green Gold!**
Compost reduces the need for chemical fertilizers.
- Shrink the Landfill, Save Big Bucks!**
Municipalities can slash tipping fees and keep taxpayer money in their pockets.
- Eco-Friendly and Fabulous!**
Cut down on waste and help the planet.

The City of Laurel launched its innovative Organics Recycling to your neighborhood!

DO Compost

- Fruits/Vegetables
- Bread/Crums
- Eggs/Meat/Boneless
- Coffee Grounds
- Cheese/Dairy
- Grass/Leaves

DON'T Compost

- Tin Waste
- Glass or plastic lined paper materials
- Chemically treated paper products
- Plastic
- Metals

*For the Full List, Scan QR Code

CITY OF LAUREL
ORGANICS RECYCLING (COMPOSTING)

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

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**
Illustration of a table with food items.
- 2 To Container**
Illustration of hands putting food scraps into a compost bin.
- 3 To Curb**
Illustration of a house with a compost bin on the curb.

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2023 and 2024 organics tonnage collected

Enter Compost Tonnage Here->		78.46							
CO2e Calculator			Cost Savings Calculator			Equivalencies Calculator			
Input: Total Tons of Compost	78.46	Composting Cost / ton	\$25.00	Input: Total Emissions Saved (MTCO2e)	36.27	Tree seedlings grown for ten years	598.46	Seedlings in 10 Years	
Total Emissions Reduced (MT CO2e)	36.27	Landfill Costs / ton	\$78.00	Gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year	8.45	Homes' energy use for one year	4.86	Homes Powered in One Year	
		Cost Savings / ton	\$53.00						
		Input: Total Tons of Compost	78.46						
Methane Calculator		Total Cost Savings of Composting	\$4,158.38						
Input: Total Tons of Compost	78.46								
Total Emissions Reduced (MT CH4)	1.36								

Enter Compost Tonnage Here->		89.46							
CO2e Calculator			Cost Savings Calculator			Equivalencies Calculator			
Input: Total Tons of Compost	89.46	Composting Cost / ton	\$25.00	Input: Total Emissions Saved (MTCO2e)	41.36	Tree seedlings grown for ten years	682.36	Seedlings in 10 Years	
Total Emissions Reduced (MT CO2e)	41.36	Landfill Costs / ton	\$78.00	Gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year	9.64	Homes' energy use for one year	5.54	Homes Powered in One Year	
		Cost Savings / ton	\$53.00						
		Input: Total Tons of Compost	89.46						
Methane Calculator		Total Cost Savings of Composting	\$4,741.38						
Input: Total Tons of Compost	89.46								
Total Emissions Reduced (MT CH4)	1.55								

So far this year (ending March) Public Works crews have collected 33 tons, with approximately 3000 carts in service and 3,650 to be delivered.

Next steps:

- ▶ Education/Compliance
- ▶ Composting Ambassadors
 - ▶ Farmer's Market
 - ▶ City Hall in the Park meetings
 - ▶ Sustainability Action Group activities
- ▶ High school student volunteers