



How to Make your Food Scraps Collection Program a Success! Employee Training Guide

It may seem daunting to set up a food scraps recovery program, but with a little training, your staff will be on board in no time! Use the helpful tips and talking points in this training guide to make learning quick and easy.

How do we set up the training for staff?

- Include all staff that handle food waste.
- Hold the training where the waste is generated, using examples of materials your staff handle regularly, the containers they'll use, and posters showing what material is acceptable.
- Provide talking points (see below) so staff is ready to tell customers about your participation.
- Identify a go-to person on each shift who will be responsible for answering post-training questions and providing new staff orientations. Encourage this person to bring back new ideas to improve the system after implementation.
- Use this training as an opportunity to revisit and re-train staff on best practices for recycling your containers and paper products. Remind staff to keep those materials separate from food scraps collection bins.

Why should we do this program, what are the benefits?

- Businesses are the source of 60% of all landfill waste; food scraps and food soiled paper make up 30% of that amount.
- If thrown away, food scraps and food-soiled paper end up in the landfill where they produce methane. Methane is a greenhouse gas 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide, meaning that it has a big impact on climate change.
- Food scraps from our program will be processed and made into animal feed or nutrient-rich compost instead of being thrown in the landfill. A much more beneficial use than landfilling it!

How does the program work?

Collection details:

- Let staff know when and where to empty full food scrap containers.
- Tell staff who collects your food scrap containers, and on what days.
- Tell staff how to prepare collection containers prior to filling (for example: clear liners, either plastic or compostable are fine).

What kind of food and paper products can be included?

YES:

- All food trimmings and plate scrapings, including meats and shellfish, eggs and dairy, fruits, vegetables and bakery items.
- Food-soiled papers such as coffee filters and tea bags only.

NO THANKS:

- No liquids (soups can be strained and the solids can go into the collection).
- No grease/oil (your business should be using a rendering or waste-oil collection service instead).
- No glass, metal, plastic or other recyclables.
- No garbage, plastic gloves, foil wrappers, plastic straws, plastic stir-sticks or other small contaminants.

What if the food scraps bin gets contaminated with non-food materials?

It is very important to keep contaminants out of the food scraps bins since the material is being processed into animal feed. The maximum allowable contamination level is 5%. A warning will be issued after the first instance of contamination found in excess of 5%. After two instances, the food scrap bin will be removed and replaced with a refuse container of the same size.

Quick Tips

- Convenience is key. Keep indoor organics, recycling and garbage collection containers together in one area.
- Use color-coded bins. Standard colors are green for organics, blue for recycling and black or grey for garbage. For container suppliers, see recyclingrulesac.org/docs/Recycling_trash_recep_suppliers.pdf or calrecycle.ca.gov/recycle/Tools/Containers.htm.
- Use clear (no black) liners for containers so it is easy to remove contaminants.
- Post prominent signage clearly above or on the sides of each container. Go to recycling.inSunnyvale.com to download the poster.
- Educate employees, tenants and janitors. Download a sample letter from recycling.inSunnyvale.com.
- For landscape trimmings and clean wood waste, call Utility Customer Service at (408) 730-7400 to request a separate container.

What if I have problems or need troubleshooting, who do I call?

Contact City of Sunnyvale Utilities at (408) 730-7400 for help with:

- Billing questions,
- Missed pick-ups,
- Collection days or times,
- Additional containers.

Call Mary Lindemuth, City of Sunnyvale Recycling Program at (408) 730-7484 for help with:

- Common questions or concerns,
- Free tools and resources,
- General problem solving.