

Palm Springs Organics Collection

The City of Palm Springs is embarking on a pilot organics collection program. This program will be a collaboration between Palm Springs Disposal Services (PSDS), Cal-Biomass, and the City of Palm Springs.

It is envisioned that this program will begin by focusing on the five largest commercial organics producers within the City: the Palm Springs Convention Center; the Wyndam hotel; the Hilton; the Spa Casino; and the Riviera.

We have already visited the Palm Springs Convention Center and the Wyndam hotel and received enthusiastic responses from both facilities. We will be visiting the remaining three locations in the next three weeks. It is anticipated that the pilot program will begin the last week of October and will initially include the five locations cited above.

The initial focus will be on collection of food scraps from the kitchens, banquets, and room service from each of the locations.

PSDS will provide the 36 gallon wheeled toters that will be used to collect the organics captured. Bagged organics from the full toters will be taken to a 40-yd. greenwaste roll-off in the City's Public Works yard by PSDS. The bagged organics will be mixed with other green waste collected in the City. Once the 40-yd. roll-off is full PSDS will transport the roll-off to the composting facility at Cal-Biomass located near Thermal at no cost to the participants.

Cal-Biomass will supply the compostable liners for the 36 gallon wheeled toters, will accept the collected materials at no charge, and supply bi-lingual signage as well as bi-lingual training material to include a bi-lingual training DVD at no charge to the participants.

The City will provide hands-on training and oversight of the program by visiting the participating locations to ensure that organics collection is taking place, that there is no contamination in the collected organics and to ensure the program runs smoothly.

It is anticipated that the City will recognize the participating sites in the City's newsletter and perhaps at City Council meetings. The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) has a program that formally recognizes businesses that excel at recycling. The California Resource and Recycling Association (CRRA) also has a formal recognition program that we can participate in.

The City recently asked for responses to a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) for an Energy Services Company to develop a comprehensive citywide energy plan. Organics collection is one of the elements included in the SOQ. Establishment of this pilot program will move the City one step closer to a viable organics collection effort to be included in the City's overall energy conservation effort.

This pilot program will also allow the City to move on to collection of organics at large venue events in accordance with AB 2176, which requires recycling at the largest 10% of events that take place within the City. It will also provide a vehicle for collection of organics at events that receive money from the City, a notion that will be recommended by the Sustainability Commission to the City Council in the near future.