



TOWN OF ARLINGTON DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Summary of Food Scrap Diversion Program Expansion

Massachusetts Waste Characterization studies show that food waste is the heaviest material in our waste stream: 15% - 20% of our trash by weight. Arlington's focus on diverting food scraps will result in lowering the weight of our trash and using this wet waste to create soil amendment through composting and clean energy through anaerobic digestion.

In addition to our longstanding backyard composting sales and educational programs, two additional opportunities to divert food scraps have evolved- private subscription collection services, which pick up food scraps at a household's curb, and a Town-sponsored drop off pilot program called Feed FiDO.

Beginning in October, DPW will be more actively promoting food scrap diversion through these two newer methods.

Residents who sign up for a subscription service will receive a starter kit of equipment, including a small green rolling cart, a sink-side food scrap collector, and biodegradable bags. Our goal is to double the number of residents who use subscription services. To start, 500 kits will become available in October.

The Feed FiDO program will also be expanded. With over 400 current users, Feed FiDO is a no-cost-to-residents option that allows participants to experiment with food scrap separation and see what it's like.

Separating out food scraps from the regular trash is easier than people may think, and many current users report to prefer it, once it's a habit. Promoting this behavior not only saves the town on trash fees, but also provides our residents with a preview of what is quickly becoming a Best Practice in waste management. The timing is right, as we face a FY22 Municipal Solid Waste bid process.