



For Immediate Release

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City Expands Curbside Composting Collection Program to 38,000 New Austin Households

AUSTIN, TEXAS – Austin Resource Recovery (ARR), a department of the City of Austin, announces the expansion of the Curbside Composting Collection Program to approximately 38,000 additional Austin households to begin the week of June 25, 2018 on their weekly collection day.

Currently 52,000 homes are included in the curbside composting program. This expansion will bring the total to over 90,000, providing the service to nearly half of ARR's curbside customers. Austin Resource Recovery plans to add all curbside customers to the service by 2020, pending funding approval by City Council in future years.

The program collects food scraps, yard trimmings and food soiled paper, and converts them into nutrient-rich compost. This program is part of the City of Austin's Zero Waste goal to divert 90 percent of materials from landfills by 2040.

"Austin Resource Recovery is excited to provide Curbside Composting to almost half our customers," said Austin Resource Recovery Interim Director Sam Angoori. "We have been very pleased with the response from our existing customers. We look forward to expanding this service city-wide to all our customers; keeping even more material out of the landfill and helping Austin reach its Zero Waste Goal."

Residents included in this year's Curbside Composting expansion will receive a notification postcard in the mail in late March informing them of their new service, and inviting them to an informational open house. At the open house, attendees will learn about Curbside Composting, what to put in and keep out of their new green cart, and receive a free kitchen food scraps collector and compostable bags. Curbside customers can also search for their address in the My Schedule web app at austinrecycles.com to see if they are in the service expansion area.

Curbside Composting customers concerned with the odor, or "ick factor," can take several steps to help eliminate odor:

- Use a BPI-certified compostable bag to collect food scraps
- Layer food scraps with yard trimmings in the green cart
- Keep food scraps in the freezer until collection day
- Line the kitchen collector with a paper bag or cereal box
- Sprinkle baking soda in the kitchen collector and cart
- Wash kitchen collector and cart with mild soap and water





Residents who currently compost at home can still take advantage of their green composting cart. This City's Curbside Composting service does include many items that cannot be placed in a backyard composting system such as cooked or raw meat, bones, dairy products, paper napkins, plates and cups and even pizza boxes. Excess yard trimmings can also be placed in the green cart.

A recent study showed that almost half of everything residential customers send to the landfill is compostable material. When buried in a landfill, compostable materials do not break down as they would in nature or in a compost pile. They decompose anaerobically, without oxygen, and in the process become the number one source of human-caused methane released into the atmosphere. Instead of going to a landfill, organic materials placed in the green carts are transported to a local composting facility, where they break down into compost. Compost helps soil retain water, and fertilizes lawns and gardens without using chemicals.

In addition to contributing to Austin's Zero Waste goal, Curbside Composting may help residents save money on their utility bills. After putting food scraps and food-soiled paper in their green carts, customers will have less trash to throw away each week. This may allow them to downsize to a smaller, less expensive trash cart. Austin Resource Recovery offers four trash cart sizes – the smaller the cart, the less it costs each month.

For a list of educational open houses, downloadable resources and instructional videos visit austintexas.gov/austincomposts.

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About Austin Resource Recovery

Austin Resource Recovery provides a wide range of services designed to transform waste into resources while keeping our community clean. Services include curbside collection of recycling, trash, yard trimmings and large brush and bulk items; street sweeping; dead animal collection; household hazardous waste disposal and recycling; and outreach and education. In December 2011, the Austin City Council approved the Austin Resource Recovery Master Plan, which is the City's roadmap to Zero Waste. The City of Austin is committed to reducing the amount of waste sent to area landfills by 90 percent by 2040 or sooner.

