



RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts Program Overview & Reusable Takeout Containers



FREE ASSISTANCE FOR BUSINESSES & INSTITUTIONS

RecyclingWorks MA is funded by MassDEP, delivered under contract by the Center for EcoTechnology



recyclingworksma.com



Massachusetts Commercial Food Waste Ban

Updated on Nov 1, 2022:

Applies to businesses and institutions that generate **one-half ton** or more of food waste per week

recyclingworksma.com/commercial-organics-waste-ban/

Massachusetts Waste Disposal Bans

Commercial Food Waste

Applies to businesses & institutions generating one-half (0.5) tons or more food waste per week

Textiles & Mattresses & Box Springs

Cardboard & Paper

Metal, Glass, and Plastic Containers

Construction & Demolition Materials

Yard Waste

White Goods

recyclingworksma.com/waste-bans-and-compliance/



One-half ton of food waste fills approximately four of these 64-gallon carts.

	Average Measurement	
Meals Served [Full-Service]	1	lbs/meal
Meals Served [Limited-Service]	0.5	lbs/meal
Employees [Full-Service]	3,000	lbs/employee/year
Employees [Limited-Service]	2,200	lbs/employee/year
Disposed Waste ¹ [Full-Service]	66	% of disposed waste by weight
Disposed Waste ¹ [Limited-Service]	51	% of disposed waste by weight



Estimating Food Waste Generation



**RecyclingWorks
Hotline Service**

888-254-5525

Info@RecyclingWorksMA.com

What Is Technical Assistance?

Evaluate existing waste streams

Identify opportunities to prevent, recover, and divert waste

Empower employees through education and training

Create customized waste bin signage

Conduct cost analysis

Offering remote or on-site assistance



Find-A-Recycler Tool

Recycling Assistance for Businesses & Institutions

Any Material or

City/Town/Village or ZIP Code

RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is a recycling assistance program that helps businesses and institutions maximize recycling, reuse, and food waste diversion opportunities.

[LIST YOUR BUSINESS](#)

[ABOUT RECYCLINGWORKS](#)

[ABOUT THE FIND-A-RECYCLER TOOL](#)

Signage and Training Tools



FOOD SCRAPS
RESTOS DE ALIMENTOS

ALL FOOD SCRAPS
Fruit & vegetable peels
Dairy, eggs, grains, bread
Meat, fish, poultry
Bones, shells

TODOS LOS RESTOS DE ALIMENTOS
Piel de frutas y vegetales
Lácteos, huevos, granos, pan
Carne, pescado, aves
Huesos, cáscaras

NO
Coffee cups, wrappers
Plastic, metal, glass

NO
Taza de café, envoltorios
Plástico, metal, cristal



Best Management Practice Guidance Developed by RecyclingWorks

Source Reduction
Guidance



<https://recyclingworksma.com/source-reduction-guidance/>

Food Donation Guidance



<https://recyclingworksma.com/donate/>

Source Separation
Guidance



<https://recyclingworksma.com/local-health-department-guidance-for-commercial-food-waste-separation/>

Guidance for Businesses
Contracting for Trash,
Recycling, and Food Waste
Services



<https://recyclingworksma.com/hauler-contracting-bmp/>

A man with glasses, wearing a blue polo shirt and a red apron, is focused on his work. He is holding a long-handled tool, possibly a spatula or a brush, and appears to be preparing food. The background is a busy kitchen or food service area with various items and people blurred.

Source Reduction Guidance

Cost savings

Waste tracking

Meal planning

Food purchasing & procurement

Storage

recyclingworksma.com/source-reduction-guidance/

Food Donation Guidance

Why should my business donate?

What foods can be donated?

Building a donation program

Finding partner food rescue organizations

Food transportation

recyclingworksma.com/donate/



Food Donation

Is there extra food that can be donated today?

DONATE

- Whole fruits & vegetables
- Fresh dairy: milk and cheeses
- Grains: rice, bread, pasta
- Non-perishables in original packaging
- Perishable foods in original packaging
- Prepared Foods

NO

- Moldy, rotten, spoiled food
- Items past expiration date
- Food not held at proper temperatures

Call _____ at _____ today with questions or to schedule pickup. Store food in fridge located _____ Label and keep temperature log every _____ minutes.

If you can't donate it - compost it! Compost bins are located _____





Food Scraps Source Separation Guidance

Collect for composting, animal feed, or anaerobic digestion

Container placement and color coding

Clear signage

Easily accessible and available bins

Good housekeeping practices



recyclingworksma.com/source-separation-guidance

Reducing Waste from Restaurant Takeout and Delivery Meals



REDUCING WASTE FROM RESTAURANT TAKEOUT AND DELIVERY MEALS

Reducing your restaurant's single-use packaging can save money, reduce waste, and show commitment to sustainable practices. Prevent unnecessary waste and prioritize reusable materials to reap the most financial and environmental benefits.

Provide clear guidance to customers on what to do with the materials you give them. Remember that recyclables must be free of food and liquid residue.

TIPS FOR REDUCING UNNECESSARY WASTE

- Avoid single-use materials that cannot be recycled or composted.
- Require customers to request single-use utensils, napkins, straws, and condiment packets.
- Ask whether customers need a bag and avoid double-bagging.
- When possible, consolidate foods into the same container and do not individually wrap items.
- Take action to reduce wasted food. [Click here to review our Food Waste Solutions](#).

Tips for reducing unnecessary waste

Compostable and recyclable packaging options

Consider a reusable container program



Recyclopedia: Can I recycle it?

Recyclopedia



Beyond the Bin Directory

Beyond the Bin.



<https://recyclesmartma.org/>

Compost Site Technical Assistance

Assist commercial-scale sites with composting food scraps

Site layout and design

Operational best management practices

Pest and odor management

recyclingworksma.com/learn-more/compost-site-technical-assistance

Compost Site Operator Workshops

Opportunity for composters to tour a compost site and learn about best practices for composting food scraps

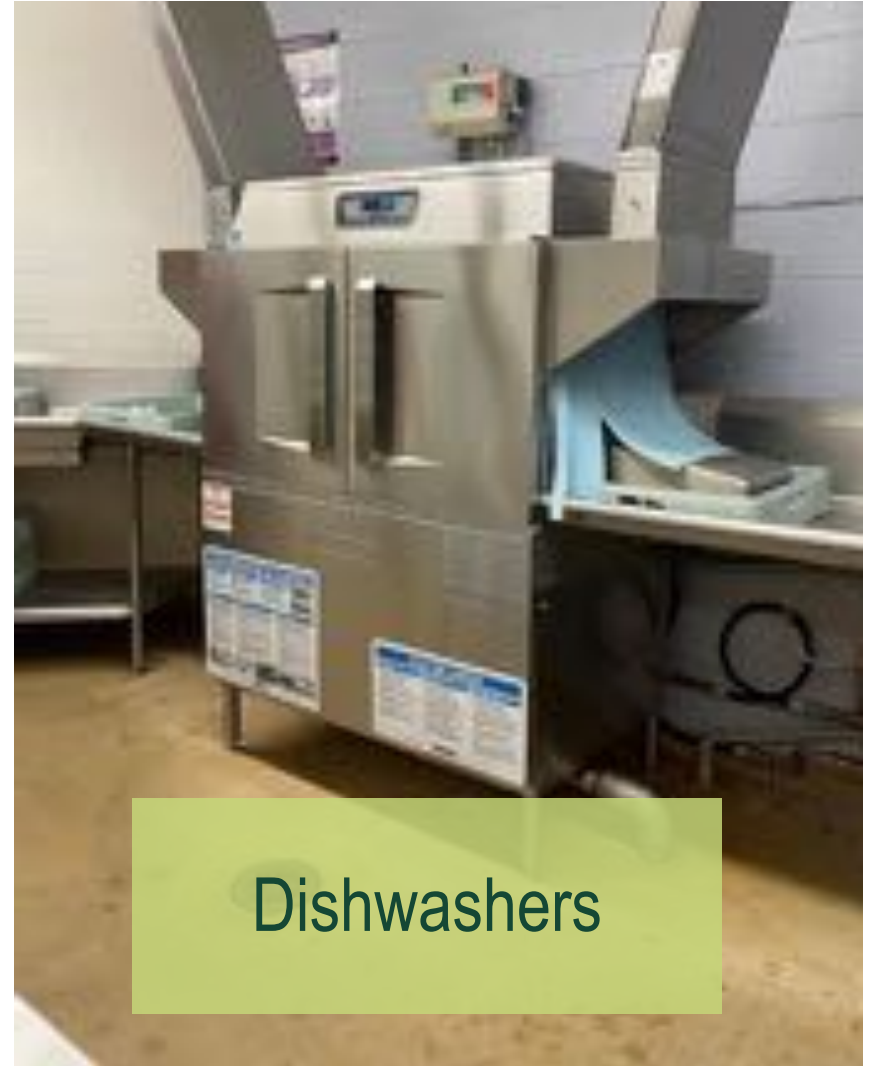
K-12 Schools



Share Tables



Reusable Trays



Dishwashers



THE GREEN TEAM

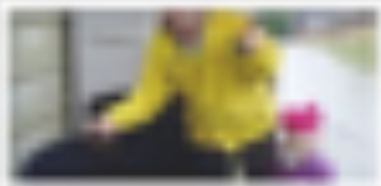
www.thegreenteam.org

[Register Now](#)

[View Participating Schools](#)

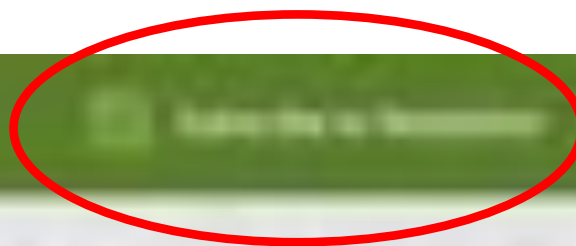
THE GREEN TEAM
2009/10

Number of Participating Schools	318
Number of Participating Students	277
Number of Participating Schools	277
Number of Participating Students	97,948



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monthly newsletter!**



<https://recyclingworksma.com/>

Waste reduction & recycling success stories
New resources and guidance documents
Waste ban updates



Educational signage for staff and customers

Collects 600-700 pounds of food scraps per week for composting

Reduced nuisance conditions in trash area



recyclingworksma.com/johnnys-luncheonette

Johnny's

LUNCHEONETTE



Restaurant Reusable Takeout Container Program



Photos courtesy of Recirclable

Reusable Takeout Container Pilot

Middletown, Connecticut

A collaboration with the
City of Middletown,
USEFULL, and CET



USEFULL™
Stainless steel
cups & bowls



[Reusable Containers](#)
[Press Release](#)



Reusable Foodware Container Best Management Practices Guidance Project

Project Overview and Goals

- Developing recommended best management practices (BMPs) for use of reusable food service ware with support from MassDEP and MassDPH
 - For use by local health officials and food service businesses
 - Enable increased use of reusable service ware
 - Priority in MassDEP's Solid Waste Master Plan & Reduce & Reuse Action Plan
- Provide opportunities for participation from all relevant stakeholders
- Modeled after past BMPs for composting food scraps and food donation
- Ensure food safety and consistency with Food Code

Process Overview

- Initial stakeholder meeting held on October 12, 2023
 - Plenary and small group sessions
- Second stakeholder meeting scheduled December 7, 2023
- Opportunity to schedule 1-on-1 meetings with RecyclingWorks MA team
- RecyclingWorks MA develops draft BMPs with MassDEP & MassDPH based on input
- Share drafts with stakeholders for review and comment
- Publish and share revised BMPs
- Update in future, as needed

Key Stakeholders Include:

State, Local and Regional Public Health Officials

Restaurant Owners and Other Food Services

Professionals

Reusable Container/Service Providers

Environmental Advocacy Organizations



Key Factors & Variables

- Who provided the container? (food business, third-party, customer)
- Is the container designed and constructed to be safely reused for food or beverages and easily cleaned?
- What type of food or beverage will the container be used for? (e.g. bulk foods, prepared foods, items requiring time/temperature control for safety)
- Will the container be refilled for the same customer or refilled for different customers?
- Who fills the container and how is it filled?
- Who cleans the container (food business staff, third-party, customer) and how is it cleaned prior to reuse? (e.g. rinsed vs. cleaned, sanitized, and inspected)

Other Factors & Variables

- For containers provided by establishment or third-party vendors:
 - Single type of container or multiple containers for different items?
 - Storing container inventory
 - Different return models:
 - Return container to same location it was received (e.g. same restaurant)
 - Centralized return location (e.g. college/university drop-off)
 - Return container to multiple locations (e.g. multiple restaurants using same container type)
 - End-of-use considerations – can the container be donated or recycled?

Health and Safety Issues

- Public health officials may have different interpretations, guidelines, and/or requirements for businesses in their community.
- Food businesses, employees, and/or consumers may have misconceptions around the allowance and safe use of reusable food and beverage containers.
- Different considerations and requirements may apply depending on the business setting (i.e. restaurant, cafeteria, retail/grocery).

October 12, 2023 – First Virtual Stakeholder Engagement Meeting

Themes from breakout group discussions:

Different considerations for cafeterias vs. bulk retail

Health and safety protections

Logistical challenges and return of containers

Training and education

Collaboration with health departments

Local regulations and ordinances

Customer desire for reusables

The next stakeholder meeting for reusable takeout containers will be held on December 7, 2023



To get involved, contact
Info@RecyclingWorksMA.com

888-254-5525

Contact Info

RecyclingWorks Hotline

(888) 254-5525

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Thank You!

