

# Eastern Kern Universal Collection Area

## 2025-26 Winter Commercial Business Waste and Recycling Newsletter



### Season's Greetings from WM!

As winter settles in, we're excited to share helpful tips and resources to make managing your services easier and more effective. Whether you're clearing out for the holidays or planning for the new year, we're here to support a cleaner, greener Kern County—together. Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a bright start to the new year!

### Service Overview

Businesses within the EKUCA must subscribe to recycling and organic waste collection services along with their trash collection service unless issued a waiver by the Kern County Public Works Department.

### Recycling Collection

In accordance with California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutants regulations under State Senate Bill (SB) 1383, businesses must participate in a recycling program by subscribing to recycling services or, in lieu of service, receiving a waiver exemption from the Kern County Public Works Department.



### Trash Collection

Regardless of the size of your business, WM can create a customized collection program that meets your needs and protects the environment. Trash containers are available in a variety of sizes. Roll-off containers and compactor services are also available.



### Holiday Schedule

Collection does not occur on the following holidays:

**New Year's Day** | **Memorial Day** | **Independence Day**  
**Labor Day** | **Thanksgiving Day** | **Christmas Day**

When a holiday falls on a weekday, your collection will be delayed by one day for the remainder of the week. If a holiday falls on Saturday or Sunday, there will be no delay in service.

### Organic Waste Collection

Also, in accordance with California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutants regulations under State Senate Bill (SB) 1383, businesses must participate in a program to recycle their organic waste (food waste, food scraps, food-soiled paper, and yard waste) by subscribing to organic waste recycling service or, in lieu of service, receiving a waiver exemption from the Kern County Public Works Department.



To assist businesses in complying with SB 1383, WM is proud to offer recycling and organic waste recycling services to meet your needs. To get started, contact Customer Service to schedule a site visit with a WM Recycling Manager.

### Why Organic Waste Matters

Did you know? Keeping food scraps and yard waste out of landfills helps reduce methane emissions—a major contributor to climate change. Composting and recycling organics is a simple way to make a big impact!

### Preventing Organic Waste

Plan your meals and store food properly to help reduce waste. Whenever possible, donate edible food to support your community. This aligns with SB 1383, which requires some commercial food generators to donate the maximum amount of edible, recoverable food to food recovery organizations. For more information, visit <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/foodrecovery> or email [organics@kerncounty.com](mailto:organics@kerncounty.com).

### How to Handle Organics

Place food scraps, yard trimmings, and other organic materials in your green container. No plastic bags, please. They clog machines and contaminate compost. You may use a paper bag, box, or a compostable bag that meets ASTM D6400 standards.

### Health & Environmental Impact

Landfilling organic waste creates harmful greenhouse gases and leachate. Recycling organics protects air quality, soil health, and our community.



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## Container Color Transition

SB 1383 requires that collection container be uniform colors across the state by 2036. In the Eastern Kern Universal Collection Area (EKUCA), existing carts and bins will be gradually transitioning to the new color scheme—recycling carts will have a blue lid, recycling dumpsters will have a blue body with black lid, organic waste carts will have a green lid, and trash containers will have a black body with a black lid. We will make these changes gradually to minimize disruption to your service. Please make sure you check the lid or label for instructions on how to use the container correctly and avoid contamination.

## Kern County Public Works – Commercial Generator Waiver Program

State regulations allow Kern County to grant waivers from one or both recycling containers to qualifying businesses. However, only those who have completed a waiver application and received approval from Kern County Public Works can avoid mandatory participation. Site visits might be needed for waiver evaluations. If a waiver is not approved by Kern County Public Works, your business will be required to have the mandatory service. There are two (2) types of waivers that can be requested:

### De Minimis Waiver

Businesses that generate below a certain amount of organic waste material may qualify if either of the following conditions are met:

- The total solid waste collection service is two (2) cubic yards or more per week and organic waste comprises less than twenty (20) gallons per week.
- The total solid waste collection service is less than two (2) cubic yards per week and organic waste comprises less than ten (10) gallons per week.

### Space Constraint Waiver

Businesses that lack the physical space for a separate or additional organic waste and/or recycling container may qualify if the business is able to demonstrate the space constraints cannot be resolved by changing container sizes or locations. Kern County requires that all applicants for this waiver work with their hauler first, before beginning the waiver process. Proof of working with the hauler is required when completing the application.

If you believe your business may qualify for either of these waivers, please visit [www.kernpublicworks.com/organics](http://www.kernpublicworks.com/organics) to see additional information and to complete the online waiver application.



# Organics | Recycling | Trash

## Right Materials - Right Container - Know Which Container to Use

SB 1383 aims to slow climate change by diverting organic materials from landfills, recovering 20% of edible food, and redirecting it to food-insecure Californians. Organic waste in landfills emits 20% of the state's methane, a climate super pollutant that heats 84 times more than carbon dioxide\*. (\*CalRecycle, <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp>)

### What Goes in the Organics Container:



Food Waste



Yard Waste



Produce



Food Soiled Paper,  
Coffee Filters & Tea Bags



Meat, Fish & Poultry



Dairy



Bread, Pasta, Rice,  
Grains, Coffee Grounds

You may use a paper bag, a compostable bag that meets ASTM D6400 standards or place organic waste loosely in the cart.



### Do Not Include:

- Plastic Bags or Film
- Serveware/Utensils
- Plastic Containers
- Foam Containers
- Hazardous Waste
- Fats, Oils, or Greases

### What Goes in the Recycling Container:



Plastic Bottles, Cups  
& Containers



Paper & Paper Cups



Glass Bottles & Containers



Flattened Cardboard  
& Paperboard



Food & Beverage Cans



Place recyclables directly into your recycling cart -  
**Don't bag your recycling materials.**



### Do Not Include:

- Food Or Liquids
- Plastic Bags or Film
- Foam Containers
- Clothing, Furniture or Carpet
- Batteries
- Electronics
- Hazardous Waste
- Yard Waste

### What Goes in the Trash Container:



Foam Cups &  
Containers



Garden Hose



Broken Ceramic  
Dishes & Pots



Candy, Snack &  
Food Wrappers



Plastic Bags & Film



Diapers



Pet Waste



Clothing & Textiles



### Do Not Include:

- Organics/Recyclables
- Hazardous Waste
- Electronics & CFL Bulbs
- Batteries, Tires or Paint
- Flammable Material



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