

City of Lodi and WM New Trash, Recycling and Organics Contract Frequently Asked Questions



Why is our trash, recycling and organics collection service changing?

The California Legislature passed a law, SB1383, that requires all jurisdictions to remove 75% of organic waste disposed in a landfill by 2025. It's the most significant landfill waste reduction mandate adopted in the country and it's intention is to reduce the amount of methane-producing materials that are disposed in state landfills.

The law also institutes mandates to help standardize curbside collections throughout the state which is requiring WM and the City of Lodi to make changes to how we collect curbside materials and what type of equipment we use.

Visit the CalRecycle website at <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/> to learn more about SB1383.

Why is WM replacing every residence with three new garbage receptacles?

SB1383 requires that all communities throughout the state utilize collection containers or lids with certain colors, depending on the material. Trash must be gray, recycling blue and organics green. Currently, the City has a mixture of cart colors and lids for materials. WM and the City's public works department decided to have all carts green with different lid colors. WM will be swapping out these carts and lids over the next year. At the same time, WM plans to eliminate 20- and 35- gallon trash carts in Lodi and offer more value with a new rate structure. This plan is also an effort to comply with California's SB1383.

Unfortunately, the current cart size options and rate structure in Lodi has led many residents to subscribe to the lowest cost container regardless of their trash disposal needs. As a result, many residents find they do not have room in their trash container for all the materials they need to dispose. WM often finds overloaded trash containers and trash placed in recycling and yard waste/organics containers.

WM conducted an audit last year and found that 1 in 8 homes place trash in the recycling container and 1 in 3 homes are continually overfilling their trash container. That same audit found that 65% of all overfilled trash carts were either 20 or 35-gallon carts.

While residents will no longer have the option to use smaller carts, WM is lowering the monthly cost of our larger trash containers to provide a better value to residents.

Why is WM increasing the size of trash containers and doesn't that add more waste to the landfill rather than reduce it?

WM does not anticipate an increase in the amount of trash. Instead, we believe this change will help increase the amount of materials we can recycle and compost.

Currently, at least 38 percent of recycling materials collected in Lodi are disposed of as trash because they are contaminated. If recycling is contaminated with trash, it cannot be recycled.

With our new proposed rate structure, WM is making it cheaper to subscribe to a larger cart making it easier for residents to choose cart size based on need and not economics. As a result, residents will have more room to dispose of trash properly, thereby reducing contamination in recycling and organics carts.

Why increase the size of trash carts and eliminate smaller trash carts?

As mentioned above, our current cart offerings and rate structure is flawed. It's too expensive to subscribe to a larger cart forcing many residents to choose cart size based on economics not need.

Why not just fine customers who do not follow the rules?

WM is preparing to roll out our WM Smart TruckSM technology in Lodi in the next year. This program uses cameras to take videos and pictures of containers immediately prior to service and as the containers are emptied into a collection vehicle. Through these videos and pictures, WM can determine if containers are overfilled and/or contaminated. As a result, WM will be able to issue surcharges as approved by the City Council.

Will residents still receive the same amount of recycling and organics containers under the new rate structure that we currently can receive?

Yes, Lodi residents can receive up to two 64-gal recycling carts and three 96-gal organics carts at no additional charge.

Can we still place a biodegradable bag in the lawn and garden container and go two weeks, if that does not work for some, the individual can increase the size of their container.

WM will begin collecting organics containers once a week next year. Unfortunately, biodegradable bags or other items marketed as compostable are not acceptable in the organics container. WM uses the organic materials collected in Lodi to make Central Valley Gold, a compost that is approved for organic farming application. Biodegradable bags take too long to decompose and often still leave small particles of plastic in the compost.

Learn more about how to sort organics properly at wmncn.com/organics101.

As a widow, I do not even half fill the containers that I have. Why do I have to get a bigger container and pay more?

This is a great question. While your monthly bill will eventually be a little higher, you will be receiving a better value. Currently, your disposal rate is about \$1.04 per gallon of trash. Under our new rate structure, your disposal rate will be about \$.68 per gallon of trash.

Yes, you might not need the extra volume, but this is the only solution WM and the City of Lodi could find to be as fair as possible to all residents while reducing contamination and making sure everyone has access to the correct cart size.

In fact, Lodi continues and will continue to have one of the lowest trash rates of any town its size in California, despite all the new regulations and unfunded mandates.

I'm a property manager at a HOA and/or multi-family complex. How do I make sure everyone is sorting properly in common areas, so we do not get a contamination surcharge?

WM offers onsite trainings and printed materials to help inform your community about proper sorting. Contact WM Recycling Education Representatives at LodiOrganics@wm.com to schedule a site assessment.

Is there a fine for not utilizing your organics container?

At this point in time, there is no direct penalty for not using your organics container.

However, the State of California can issue fines to cities for noncompliance with the guidelines of SB1383.

The state requires every jurisdiction to conduct audits of their waste streams to see how much material is going into each stream. That audit includes investigating the amount of recycling and organic materials in the trash. The state requires jurisdictions to meet certain thresholds to help reach its goal of diverting 75% of all organic waste from landfills.

How do I prevent the "ick" factor in my organics cart, especially in the summer?

There are many tips and tricks you can utilize to prevent insects in your organics container and minimize rotten smells. One trick is to use shredded paper or a broken down cardboard box to line your cart. Even using a paper bag to dispose of your organics helps. The paper absorbs any liquids and helps reduce rotten smells and attracting insects. Another tip is to freeze your food scraps until the night before you place your organics cart curbside.

WM offers many tips and tricks at wmncn.com/organics101.

