

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Food Scrap Collection Service Expands

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The Dubuque City Council approved a contract at their April 15 meeting that allows for the expansion of Dubuque’s curbside collection of food scraps for composting program.

The expansion represents a value-added service that allows City customers to include food scraps and compostable paper in their yard waste cans, bags, and carts. These additional materials will be made into compost, at the same time also reducing greenhouse gas pollution. Under the new contract with Full Circle Organics, LLC (FCO), the City will now deliver its co-collected “organics” (grass, leaves, brush, food scraps, and compostable paper) to FCO’s new commercial composting facility near Farley at a lower net cost.

City collection customers may either subscribe to dedicated food scrap collection carts (13, 48, or 64 gallons) for an additional fee or place food scraps and compostable paper in with grass clippings, leaves, and other yard debris in their current yard waste cans, carts, and bags. As a result, many City customers will be able to divert their food scraps for composting at little or no additional cost by adding these materials to their under-filled and/or underweight yard debris containers.

“This City service expansion enables more citizens to help our community achieve its sustainability goals, usually for no additional cost, through increased diversion from landfill disposal, beneficial use of compostable paper and food scraps, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions,” said Paul Schultz, Resource Management Coordinator for the City of Dubuque.

In addition to compostable paper bags, Schultz said the improved program will also allow the use of special bio-plastic compostable “kitchen catcher” bags to reduce the “yuck” factor of storing food scraps for weekly collection.

Dubuque initiated Iowa’s first curbside food scrap collection for composting program seven years ago. Within three years, participation reached the maximum capacity allowed by

the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at the Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency's (DMASWA) composting facility. This "Green Cart" collection program has served over 220 residential customers, 14 schools, and seven other businesses and community groups. As a result, the City's program has had a waiting list for four years.

Schultz said the DMASWA board has been supportive of the new facility and the private sector developing this expanded compost processing and distribution business model. The DMASWA compost site will most likely continue to be partly used as a drop-off and transfer point for yard debris. The change could open up acreage at the DMASWA landfill site to be used for other discard management programs like shingles recycling.

For more information and tips on food scrap recycling, visit [www.cityofdubuque.org/foodscraps](http://www.cityofdubuque.org/foodscraps) or call the Public Works Department at 563-589-4250.

**New Acceptable Compostable Materials in Yard Debris/Organics Co-Collection:**

All food scraps (including meat and bones), coffee filters and tea bags, all food-soiled paper products, paper cups and plates, paper towels, placemats, napkins, and paper bags.

**Unacceptable Materials in Yard Debris/Organics Co-Collection:**

Plastic bags, straws, lids, wrapping, containers, diapers, clothing, shoes, treated/painted wood, dead animals, animal waste/litter, cigarette butts, vacuum cleaner bags, hygiene products, and medical and hazardous waste.

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