

Organics Bins – Frequently Asked Questions

Why has the Shire of Harvey decided to introduce Organics bins?

As the population grows, so does the amount of waste generated. It is important that we take action on our waste now. The new Organics bin service will divert a significant amount of organic waste from landfill, and will instead recycle it into compost.

Organic waste is a problem in landfill as it produces methane, a harmful greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Turning it into compost reduces the impact on the environment and allows waste to become a usable product. Existing landfill sites are also nearing capacity and the creation of new sites can cause significant detrimental effects through land clearing, loss of habitat for local wildlife, and potential groundwater and soil contamination from the leaching of heavy metals and chemicals.

The Western Australian State Government have set recycling targets for major regional areas of 50% of waste diverted from landfill by 2020, and 60% by 2030. The new 3-Bin kerbside system incorporating the Organics bin will assist the Shire and its community in achieving these targets.

The Organics Bin has already been successfully introduced in nearby local government areas and the Shire of Harvey is joining this regional sustainability initiative. Everyone can help reduce the impact of waste and improve environmental outcomes by using their kerbside bins correctly.

When will the Organics bin service start?

The new Organics bin service will commence during late July/ early August 2019. A letter advising of the specific start date for each area in the Shire will be posted out prior to this, along with a calendar. The service will be delivered to all households with an existing domestic Rubbish and Recycling bin service.

Will there be changes to collection days?

There will be no changes to your current bin collection day.

Organics bins will be collected weekly. Rubbish bins will change to a fortnightly collection. Recycling bins will continue to be collected fortnightly, on an alternate basis to Rubbish bins. This will ensure there are never more than two bins out on your verge at the same time. A calendar will be provided so you know when to put each bin out.

Will it cost me anything?

The Shire will be applying for funding from the state Waste Authority to reduce the cost of introducing the Organics bins. The annual service charge for the Organics bin collection service will be included on the 2019/2020 property rates notices as part of Waste Management charges.

What can be put in the Organics bin?

The average Rubbish bin contains about 60% organic waste that can be composted. All food waste, including fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, bones, dairy products, eggshells, bread, pasta, cereals, tea bags, coffee grinds and table scraps can be put in the Organics bins. Garden waste includes lawn clippings, garden prunings, leaves, weeds and flowers. Even animal droppings, kitty litter, hair, tissues, paper products and cardboard can be included. An information booklet will be provided to assist you.

But I have my own compost heap/ worm farm/ chooks...

You are doing a great job! The Organics bin can complement your compost heap as it can take the things that your compost heap can't - like weed seeds, excess lawn clippings and leaves, meat, bones and dairy products. Compost heaps need the right blend of 'green' and 'brown' materials so if you've got excess of one type you can add it to the Organics bin, knowing that it will still be composted. Branches that are too thick for the compost heap can also be put in the Organics bin.

Worms can be fussy eaters and often do not like onions, citrus, potato peels, bread products and eggshells. You can put the things they don't like in the Organics bin. Chooks are great at turning organic matter into fertilizer. There are some things that chooks won't eat which can instead be put in the Organics bin.

Do I have to use compostable bags?

You don't have to use bags - you can put things straight in the Organics bin. If you do use bags they must be compostable. The Shire will supply households with several rolls of compostable bags and a kitchen caddy at the start of the service to help your household use your Organics bin.

Can I use plastic bags?

No! Please don't use plastic bags as they contaminate the compost. Degradable and biodegradable plastic bags are not suitable for composting either - the bags need to be compostable to break down in the organics facility and not contain the chemicals found in plastic.

What will happen to the waste in the Organics bin?

The waste collected in Organics bins will be taken to an organics processing facility located in Dardanup. The facility has been co-funded by several local governments in the region. The organics waste is pasteurised using a combination of static and forced air composting processes and is tested to Australian Standards. You can find out more information on the process and see photos online at www.bhrc.wa.gov.au

The compost produced from the collection of organics waste is then sold to farmers and industry, used in parks and gardens and for rehabilitating land. Free tours of the facility are available on request - contact the Regional Waste Education Officers on Ph: (08) 9711 1053 for bookings.

Will my bin smell?

Organics bins are collected weekly - so it won't smell any more than your Rubbish bin does now.

Using the compostable bags supplied by the Shire for food scraps helps reduce odours, or you can also wrap them in newspaper. Layering food waste with dry materials, like lawn clippings & paper, can help.

Your Rubbish bin will be collected fortnightly. Most things that cause smells can go in the Organics bin, with a couple of exceptions such as disposable nappies. Disposable nappies should only be placed in the Rubbish bin. Research has shown that nappies smell progressively worse for four days then do not smell any worse (or better!) after that.

Will there be any changes to my Recycling bin?

No, there will be no changes to recycling.

My Recycling bin is always full. What can I do?

If your Recycling bin is full, you can put newspaper, cardboard and paper in the Organics bin.

Ensure you are sorting your waste correctly into each of your bins to maximise available space. Hints for fitting more in your Recycling bin include: crushing boxes and putting them along the inside edge of the bin, removing lids and crushing plastic bottles and cans. Please ensure recyclables are loose in the bin and not in plastic bags. Recyclables tied up in plastic bags are considered as contamination.

How do I find out more information?

Contact the Shire of Harvey on Ph: (08) 9729 0300 for kerbside bin services, or the Regional Waste Education Officers on Ph: (08) 9711 1053 for information on using the 3-Bin system.

Let's get our waste sorted.



Find out more – visit www.harvey.wa.gov.au/organics

