

# Organics Bins

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why has the Shire of Collie decided to introduce Organics bins?

There are many environmental benefits of the Organics bin. Organic waste in landfill produces methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, so it is environmentally responsible to prevent organic waste from going to landfill.

The Western Australian State Government have also set recycling targets for regional areas of 30% of waste diverted from landfill by 2015 and 50% diverted by 2020. If we do not meet the targets we may not be eligible for future funding. The 3-Bin kerbside system incorporating an Organics bin has been successfully introduced in nearby local government areas and the Shire of Collie is joining this regional sustainability initiative.

### What can be put in the Organics bin?

The average rubbish bin contains about 50% 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 accepted includes lawn clippings, garden prunings, leaves, weeds and flowers. Even animal droppings, kitty litter, hair, tissues, and paper towel can be included. A calendar and information booklet will be provided to assist you.

### But I have my own compost heap/ worm farm/ bury my organic waste/ have chooks...

Thankyou! 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, eggshells and potato peels. You can put the things they don't like in the Organics bin.

Feel free to continue burying your organic waste as it is great for adding nutrients to the soil. If there are some things that you do not bury, such as meat and dairy, they can be put 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.

### Will it cost me anything?

The Shire has received funding from the state Waste Authority towards the cost of introducing the Organics bins. The pro-rata service charge for the Organics bin collection service has been included on the 2015/2016 property rates notices.

### What's in it for me?

In future waste will cost a lot more as taxes on landfill increase, so by diverting organic waste from landfill it won't cost the Shire as much, saving you money in the long term. We all know we have to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. This is your opportunity to contribute to that.

### Will there be changes to collection days?

There will be no changes to your current collection day.

Organics bins will be collected weekly, while Rubbish and Recycling bins will be collected fortnightly on an alternate basis. 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.

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### 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. Degradable and biodegradable bags are not suitable.

### Can I use plastic bags?

No! Please don't use plastic bags as they contaminate the compost. The Shire will supply households with special compostable bags for the start of the Organics service. Degradable and biodegradable bags are not suitable for composting either – the bags need to be compostable to break down in the organics facility.

### What will happen to the waste in the Organics bin?

The waste collected in Organics bins will be taken to a regional Council composting site in Dardanup. The organics waste is pasteurised using a combination of static and forced air composting processes.

The compost produced from the collection of organics can be sold to farmers and industry, used in parks and gardens and for rehabilitating land.

### Will my bin smell?

The Organics bin will be collected weekly so it won't smell any more than your Rubbish bin does now.

Wrapping food scraps in newspaper helps reduce smells or you can use compostable bags supplied by the Shire. Freezing particularly odorous food scraps, like seafood, and putting them in the Organics bin the night before collection is also an option. Layering food waste with dry materials, like leaves & 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. Emptying the poo down the toilet and securing the nappy in a plastic bag will minimise odours. Research has shown that nappies smell progressively worse for four days then do not smell any worse (or better) after that. So, a Rubbish bin with nappies in it smells no worse after 14 days than it does after 7 days.

### Will the Recycling bin change?

No, recycling will remain the same.

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

Hints for fitting more in your Recycling bin include: crushing boxes and putting them along the inside edge of the bin, removing the lids and crushing plastic bottles and ensuring recyclables are loose in the bin and not in plastic bags. Recyclables tied up in plastic bags are considered as contamination and are not recycled.

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

Also ensure you are sorting your waste correctly into each of your bins.

### My family has special needs – is there anything we can do?

If you have special needs, please contact the Shire for assistance.

### How do I find out more information?

Contact the Shire of Collie on 9734 9000 or the Regional Waste Education Officers on 9792 7350 & 9792 7351.