

## Recycle Right: Composting & Shared Composting Pilot Program

Gordon Jamieson, Arlington Recycling Committee

Welcome back to Recycle Right. In the first edition of our weekly Recycle Right series, we noted that kitchen waste represents the next big portion of our solid waste stream (ca. 25% by weight) that we'd like residents to focus on reducing as it can make a really big impact with little/no effort.

So how can you help reduce our kitchen solid waste tonnage?!

Please, consider one or more of the following ways of reducing the amount of kitchen waste in your trash.

Empty all containers of liquid before placing them in your recycling bin/container!

Composting: Back yard compost bins are available for purchase daily at the Department of Public Works. And both the Department of Public Works and several community education programs can hook you up with proper composting procedures so that you can get up and running quickly!

Shared Composting: The Arlington Recycling Committee (ARC) in partnership with the Department of Public Works is sponsoring a pilot program in which two or more families share a 'neighborhood' composting bin. In return for committing to sharing a composting bin with one or more families -and- providing us with some feedback on how it goes; we will provide you with a free composting bin. We welcome veteran composters and those who have never done it and would like to learn. If interested, or for more information, please contact the DPW Recycling Coordinator Charlotte Milan at 781-316-3108 or [cmilan@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:cmilan@town.arlington.ma.us).

Composting alternatives: Don't have space or time to compost on-site? No problem! Bootstrap Compost ([www.bootstrapcompost.com](http://www.bootstrapcompost.com)) will, for a small fee, stop by your home on a regular basis, collect your kitchen waste compostable items and compost them off-site. No muss no fuss!

Garbage disposal: Assuming that your plumbing is in good shape, much of the kitchen waste you generate including, vegetable trimmings, light table scraps, etc. can be safely disposed of down the drain. Where, similar to other solid waste flowing through the town's sewage system, it will be anaerobically fermented into methane for use in powering the waste disposal process at MWRA's Deer Island Facility. Just be sure to not dispose of bones, grease and fibrous materials (corn husks and the like) this way!

Potential Savings: If each Arlington household used one or more of these methods to reduce their kitchen waste production by just ½ pound a day, yes just ½ pound a day, we could reduce our annual solid waste disposal tonnage by almost two thousand tons, providing an annual savings of up to \$125,000 per year!

Arlington's Recycling Committee welcomes your involvement as a recycler, as a volunteer at recycling events, or as a committee member. Questions from recyclers will be an important and fun part of this column. There is a lot of information on the Town website ([arlingtonma.gov](http://arlingtonma.gov)) Recycling & Trash page. But if you can't find the answer there, please visit the Town's Request/Answer page, select "Ask a Question" and choose the Recycling category so your question is routed to Arlington's Recycling Coordinator.

Reduce - Reuse - Recycle!