

14-1432
Related CFS: 12-1877;
14-1422

Motion

AB 1826 (Chesbro), signed into law on September 28, 2014, will require businesses and multifamily residences generating a large amount of organic waste to subscribe to organics recycling services.

The new legislation would phase-in organics recycling collection starting April 1, 2016, and would encourage cities to create appropriate infrastructure for organics recycling. Organic waste is described as food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, non-hazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste.

Currently, organic waste makes up about 33% of our waste stream. Organic waste left to rot in landfills produces methane gas, a greenhouse gas with at least 21 times more heat-trapping potential than carbon dioxide. Under AB 1826, cities will be encouraged to recycle organic waste into renewable energy and compost, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions, energy, water, chemical pesticides and fertilizer use while creating green local jobs. Recycling organics into compost, for one beneficial example, can play a significant role in our state's water crisis. With California facing the worst drought in recorded history, the ability to return organic matter to soil becomes increasingly important. Just a 1% increase in soil organic matter allows for an acre of soil to hold 16,500 more gallons of water. Additionally, returning organic matter back to the soil helps to regrow the soil's humus layer, which sequesters carbon and provides biological minerals that make food more nutrient rich.

The City of Los Angeles has taken substantial steps to strengthen organics recycling in the region, demonstrated by the recent approval of the Zero Waste LA Franchise System for Municipal Solid Waste Collection which, when implemented in 2017, will require franchised waste haulers to offer organics collection and processing services to commercial and multifamily residential dwellings. The City also runs a successful restaurant food waste collection program and residential food waste collection pilot.

Combined with AB 1826, the City has the opportunity to reach zero waste and beyond. Los Angeles can lead the country in a shift from the current one-way system: farm to table to landfill, to a cyclical system: farm to table, to green bin, back to farm's fields to restore struggling and diminishing soils. Each piece of organic matter can be converted to energy for our immediate use, or to rebuild our starving soils.

Still, Los Angeles faces myriad obstacles for the development of adequate infrastructure to handle and process the separated organic waste generated. The Solid Waste Integrated Resource Plan (SWIRP), approved by Council and currently in CEQA program review, provides existing benchmarks toward addressing infrastructure gaps.

The Bureau of Sanitation – the City's strategic leader in planning for this infrastructure development – is also currently engaged in the task of implementing and executing the Zero Waste LA franchise system, which will be instrumental in addressing the obligations of AB 1826 and the City's own Zero Waste goals.





I THEREFORE MOVE that the Bureau of Sanitation report back to the Council within 120 days after the selection and award of the Zero Waste LA franchises, with a plan to facilitate organics recycling, including private and public compliance with requirements of AB 1826. This report should include, but is not limited to:


- Identifying how the Solid Waste Integrated Resource Recovery Plan (SWIRRP) and the implementation of the Zero Waste LA franchise can expand organics recycling in the City;
- A needs assessment and any infrastructure gaps to expand organics recycling, and recommended strategies to overcome these challenges;
- Potential strategies to expand organic waste recycling services to multifamily residential dwellings of 4 units or less and businesses generating less than 4 cubic yards of organic waste;
- Identifying opportunities to incorporate organic waste-derived products into City procurement contracts to support organic waste processors; and
- Identifying strategies for large-scale public awareness campaigns to maximize participation and minimize contamination of improper disposal into the organics stream.

PRESENTED BY:


PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District


JOSE HUIZAR
Councilmember, 14th District


MIKE BONIN
Councilmember, 11th District

SECONDED BY: 

ah/fm

ORIGINAL

OCT 21 2014