

Benicia Mandatory Organics for Townhomes / Formerly YW-Exempt Customers FAQs

When is my green cart arriving?

Your 32-gallon green cart will be delivered to your home the first week of December 2024.

Why do I need to have a green cart?

State law SB 1383 requires all residents to sort their organic waste into a green organics cart, as part of a statewide effort to curb greenhouse gasses by diverting food waste and organics from landfill.

Can I return or refuse the green cart?

SB 1383 requires each household to separate all organics for composting; therefore, requests to remove the cart cannot be granted.

Will this increase my bill, or can I reduce my bill by not having a green cart?

Your quarterly bill includes mandatory organics cart service. You cannot reduce your bill by refusing a green cart.

What if I don't have a yard or my HOA takes care of all landscaping?

Even if you don't have yard trimmings, SB 1383 requires residents to compost food scraps and food-soiled paper, such as pizza boxes and paper towels.

What if I don't cook or generate a lot of food scraps?

Any amount of food waste, no matter how minimal, should be sorted into your green organics cart. Paper towels, napkins and pizza boxes should also go in your green cart.

What if I don't have space for a green cart?

All residents must have a green organics cart to comply with SB 1383. We will be providing you with a smaller 32-gallon green cart to accommodate space concerns (standard green cart size for homes is 96-gal). The City Municipal Code does not allow for waivers (for space or low generation).

What are the dimensions of the new green organics cart?

The 32-gallon green cart is 22.8" wide, 22.3" deep, and 38.2" tall.

I only want the food scrap pail, not the green cart.

Our trucks will only service the green carts curbside – we cannot service food scrap pails set out at the curb. Please use your pail inside your home to collect food scraps and food-soiled paper, and then empty the contents into your green cart for weekly service.

Who made composting mandatory? Where do I learn more / who can I complain to?

CalRecycle is California's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. California passed Senate Bill (SB) 1383 in 2016 and it went into effect in 2022 – you can learn more about California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy and details about the regulations here: <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/>

Republic Services did not create this law – we are just required to provide all customers with an organics cart and service for compliance.

Can I share a green cart with neighbors so we each don't need to get our own? Or can we request a waiver?

Each residential account is required to have their own organics cart at this time. The City of Benicia does not allow for de minimis (low volume) or limited space waivers.

What materials are accepted in the green organics cart?

Organic material accepted in the green organics cart includes:

- All food scraps (raw and cooked)
- Uncoated food-soiled paper – ex. paper towels, paper plates, pizza boxes
- Cut flowers, indoor house plant trimmings
- Yard trimmings, leaves from your patio
- Clean wood (4' or less in length)
- Wood chips

What materials are NOT accepted in the green organics cart?

These items belong in the landfill (trash) cart, not the organics cart:

- Coated (shiny) food grade paper products – ex. Starbucks coffee cups, ice cream cartons, milk cartons, fast food soda cups.
- "Biodegradable" and "compostable" plastic products (except BPI-Certified Compostable Bags if you need to use a liner).
- Ashes (cool first)
- All pet waste – even if it's in a compostable bag! Our compost facilities are not permitted to take animal or human waste.
- Poison oak and ivy, palm fronds.

Needs special disposal / preparation – call Customer Service 925-685-4711:

- Rocks, concrete, sod, and dirt
- Treated and painted wood
- Large tree trunks and stumps – needs to be cut into <4 ft long, < 2 ft diameter pieces

The materials listed below should go in your recycle cart (empty, clean & dry):

- Glass containers
- Metal containers
- Plastic containers #1-#7

How can I keep my cart clean?

Make use of your food scrap pail:

- Use the kitchen food scrap pail (delivered with your new green cart) to collect food scraps.
- Line pail with paper towels, newspaper, or BPI-Certified compostable bags (that meet ASTM 6400 Standard) to keep it clean.

Prep your green cart:

- Cover food scraps with yard trimmings (if available) in your cart to avoid pests and odors.
- Place newspaper or a piece of cardboard at the bottom of your cart to reduce potential sticking.

Dispose of organics on a schedule:

- Empty food scraps into your organics cart every few days to prevent flies.
- Wait to do fridge clean-outs until the night before your service day so food isn't sitting in your cart for a long time.