



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

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July 14, 2022

Theresa Savarese
Zero Waste Director
City of Boston
theresa.savarese@boston.gov

Dear Ms. Savarese,

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the City of Boston's food waste collection program.

MassDEP is the state regulatory agency charged with developing the Commonwealth's Solid Waste Master Plan pursuant to M.G.L. c. 16, s. 21. The Solid Waste Master Plan is the Commonwealth's blueprint for reducing and managing solid waste that is generated, reused, recycled, or disposed by Massachusetts residents and businesses. It establishes a broad policy framework for solid waste management in Massachusetts over a span of 10 years (2020-2030). The Plan establishes aggressive goals to reduce disposal, including reducing disposal of food waste by an additional 500,000 tons on an annual basis by 2030.

The City of Boston is taking an important leadership role in reducing waste disposal through its food waste collection program. MassDEP supports the efforts of the City to establish a pilot curbside food waste collection program for residents. This pilot effort helps advance MassDEP's 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan goals of diverting food waste from disposal. The City's efforts will support new and existing infrastructure to handle food waste, including both anaerobic digestion (AD) and composting facilities. AD significantly reduces the volume of food waste by converting it into biogas used to generate clean energy, while composting operations turn these organic wastes into useful soil amendments.

The City of Boston intends to send collected food waste to the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District (GLSD) – GLSD's co-processing of food waste and wastewater sludge has resulted in an 80-85% conversion of the food waste to biogas resulting in a significant increase in biogas

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generation, which has reduced the need for power from the grid and decreased GLSD's energy costs. It has also furthered GLSD's efforts to become a "zero-net-energy" facility. In addition, this on-site power generation enables GLSD to maintain wastewater treatment operations even during large power outages, providing important environmental benefits.

If you have further questions about MassDEP's Solid Waste Master Plan goals or MassDEP's Biosolids program, please contact me at john.fischer@mass.gov or Lealdon Langley at Lealdon.Langley@mass.gov, respectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Fischer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John Fischer
Deputy Division Director, Solid Waste