

City of Burbank

Green Material Collection Program

Introduction

The City of Burbank has partnered with its hauling company and a grower to implement a highly successful green material diversion and composting public education program.

Program Summaries

Green Material Diversion Program

The City of Burbank's green material diversion program has helped the city meet its 50 percent landfill diversion mandate. Specifically, the city's program diverts 75 tons of green material a day.

The city collects the green material from residents and takes it to the city landfill, where city employees remove contaminants (plastic, paper, metals, etc). The clean green material is then loaded into the contract hauler's 40-foottrailers and trucked to a 1,300-acre orange grove.

Once delivered to the orange grove, the green material is spread on an asphalt pad where it is further sorted for contaminants and then chipped. The green material is then windrowed and cured for two weeks, after which it is then mixed with a mushroom compost and paper pulp.

The final product is used as a soil amendment and is applied to the orange grove. The grower reports that the processed green material makes an excellent slow-release fertilizer. By using this material, the grower has added organic matter to sandy soils and benefited from faster growth of the orange trees.

Compost Education Program

The City of Burbank has also implemented education programs to inform the public about the benefits of compost use. The Burbank Recycle Center holds 4 to 5 workshops each year from which residents can take home a free backyard composter with instructions.

The city also supplies compost bins at no charge to any public or private school that requests them.

With a grant from the League of California Cities, and in conjunction with a local conservationist, the recycle center designed a pilot waste-less lunch program, in which food waste from schools is either composted in worm bins or compost bins. The pilot study showed that 85 percent of school waste could be either recycled or composted. At least five schools continued permanent compost programs with compost from worm or compost bins being used in working gardens.

Burbank's recycle center also features a hands-on exhibit where children can walk through a replica of a compost bin to help them visualize and understand how a composter works. The fiber optic worms and bug replicas are made of recycled plastic bottles.

Every April on Earth Day, the city holds a workshop and distributes compost bins to the public. The recycle center also makes a 40-cubic-yard truckload of compost available, free of charge, to residents. Recycle center staff has also demonstrated composting at Warner Bros. Studios, Walt Disney Studios, and Providence St. Joseph Medical Center at their Earth Day events.

Recently Burbank began a pilot vermiculture program where the city provides worm bins to interested residents. Throughout the year the Burbank Recycle Center helps those interested in composting and has helpful information on grasscycling, vermiculture, and composting that is available for anyone. A compost demonstration site at the Burbank Recycle Center displays the composting bins provided through the city's program

Diversion amounts

Burbank's curbside program has helped to save landfill space by diverting 75 tons (375 cubic yards) per day of green material, resulting in over 19,500 tons of green material that is diverted annually. In addition, over 750 tons of green waste is diverted through their backyard-composting program.

Key Benefits

The application of the mixed compost and green material has helped to add nutrient value to sandy agricultural soils. Some other benefits of Burbank's green waste programs include:

- Produces 500 pounds of compost a year from 4,000 backyard compost projects.
- Extends the 50-year life expectancy of their landfill.
- Helps Burbank maintain their State-verified 60 percent waste diversion rate.
- Educates the 1,500 visitors who tour the recycle center annually—mostly school children—about the benefits of composting.

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The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, Flex Your Power and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.