

Food Waste Recycling Pilot Project Third Quarter Report

The Borough's Food Waste Recycling Pilot Project is a program partially funded by a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection and undertaken in cooperation with Centre County Solid Waste Authority and Penn State. In January 2010, special containers for food waste scraps were made available to residents in two neighborhoods of the Borough. Nine commercial accounts were added at a later date. These containers are collected separately from the regular trash and taken to the Borough's Yard Waste Recycling Facility, mixed with leaves (and now other green waste), placed in windrows and turned to create compost. Many factors are monitored including costs and composition of the final product. Food waste collection processes, types of material collected and mixing of the material have all been variable to determine the most effective and efficient processes. As part of the grant requirements, the Department of Environmental Protection requires quarterly updates on the program.

During the third quarter of the year from July 1 to September 30, no significant changes were implemented in the pilot project. However, towards the end of the period, green waste and food waste were collected together to minimize collection costs but continue to divert both organic wastes from the landfill.

Over 54,000 pounds of waste was diverted to the yard waste facility during the third quarter despite the lower weights from the schools involved in the program. To date, for the entire year, over 135,000 pounds of food waste has been diverted from the landfill. Collection costs are still higher than savings resulting from avoidance of disposal fees but the combination of food waste and green waste collection should narrow the gap.

The next effort in the program will be to find efficient ways to collect food waste from businesses in the Downtown Business District. If you would like more information about the program please email your questions or comments to foodwaste@statecollegepa.us or call 814-234-7135.