



City of Charleston South Carolina

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Charleston's Residential Compost Program Expands, Adds New Drop Sites with Regional Partners

Charleston, S.C. — Charleston's residential compost program is now serving more people. All residents in the Charleston region can take their food scraps to participating drop sites — for free — to be composted locally. Food scraps are then sent to the Bees Ferry Compost Facility instead of the landfill.

The expansion is thanks to a regional partnership between the city of Charleston, Charleston County and the city of Folly Beach, which added two new drop site locations in early October:

- Bees Ferry Convenience Center in outer West Ashley (1344 Bees Ferry Road)
- Folly Beach Community Center in Folly Beach (55 Center Street)

HOW IT STARTED

The city of Charleston started its residential compost pilot program in January, with support from grant funding. Over 900 households have joined the pilot so far, diverting over 30 tons of food scraps. Participants have said that adding more drop sites would improve the program and make composting more accessible. Now, Charleston County and the City of Folly Beach are partnering to expand the compost program.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Residents interested in the program must sign up at www.charleston-sc.gov/compost.

Once registered, participants will receive instructions to take their food scraps to any of the five drop sites:

- Ackerman Park (55 Sycamore Avenue in West Ashley)
- Bees Ferry Convenience Center (1344 Bees Ferry Road in West Ashley)
- Corrine Jones Park (36 Marlow Drive downtown)
- Folly Beach Community Center (55 Center Street on Folly Beach)
- Medway Park (Medway Road on James Island)

WHAT IS COMPOSTING?

Composting is the natural process of recycling organic matter, such as food scraps, into a valuable soil additive. The resulting decomposed matter, which looks like dark, fertile garden soil, is called compost. This material is rich in nutrients and can be used as a natural fertilizer in gardening, agriculture, landscaping and more.

Charleston-region residents throw away more than 30,000 tons of food scraps each year, and food scraps make up 25% of the collected waste. By diverting food scraps from the landfill, composting cuts down on the amount of garbage collected, lowers expenses and saves space in the landfill.

Composting helps reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions from landfills and helps protect air and water from pollution, contributing to the city's Climate Action Plan goals.

By nourishing the soil, compost also helps stormwater absorption.

Finally, compost reduces the need for expensive chemical fertilizers, makes plants healthier and can be used without harming wildlife or ecosystem health.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

City of Charleston Director of Sustainability Katie McKain: "Now is a great time to scale up the program and invite partners to join. If we leverage each other's resources and work together in a community-wide approach, we can reach more people and have a bigger impact."

Charleston County Environmental Management Director Randy Rudd: "Charleston County is excited to join the City and Folly Beach in creating a regional program for residents to easily drop-off their food scraps at five convenient locations. For the Bees Ferry site specifically, residents can now drop off food scraps to be composted at the same time they drop off recyclables, electronics, hazardous waste, and more."

City of Folly Beach Zoning Administrator Jenna Stephens: "Folly is thrilled to partner with the city of Charleston to offer composting to our residents. We were able to offer this program to Folly Beach at minimal cost and staff time and hope to expand in the future."

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