

# ORGANICS COLLECTION FROM INDOOR SETTINGS

This program is a partnership of:



THURSDAY APRIL 6TH 1:00 P.M. ET.



# Agenda

0:00 -20:00 Case study presentations:

- *Amy Marpman, SBM Management Services*

25:00 - 70:00 Breakout group discussions

- *Main Room - Q&A w/ speaker + Other topics*
- *Room 1 - Labor / Custodial*
- *Room 2 - Other Operational Issues & Infrastructure*
- *Room 3 - Education / Behavior*

70:00 - 75:00 Close out program

# Participate!

- Share thoughts through chat
- Mute yourself when not talking
- Turn camera on during discussion
- Review discussion notes
- Share Resources

# Presenter:



**Amy Marpman**  
Director of Sustainability  
SBM Management Services

# Organics Collection

From Indoor Settings

April 6, 2023



# SBM SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

SBM has been driving Sustainable Innovation for years. We incorporate business sense, customer priorities, and best practices to drive sustainability results within the following programs:



**Increasing  
Diversion**



**Managing  
Costs**



**Increasing  
Compliance**



**Zero  
Waste**



**Standardizing  
Practices**



**Building  
Partnerships**



**Dedicated  
Project Manager**



**Consulting  
Services**



**Waste Sorting**



**Risk  
Mitigation**



**Innovation**

# Case Study: Corporate Compost Expansion

## Increased Organics Collections

SBM supported expanding the compost program beyond the restrooms and café to office and break areas (single-site)

### Opportunity:

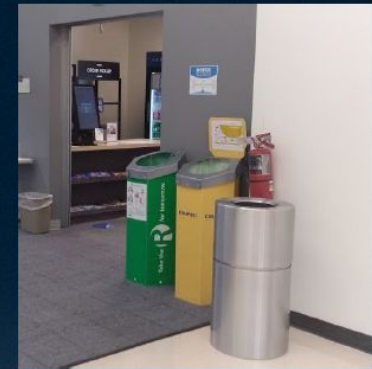
- The site had an established compost program in the front of house cafeteria, back of house cafeteria, and restrooms
- After conducting a waste analysis focused on employee facing areas (offices and breakrooms), SBM found that 51% of that trash was compostable

### Solution:

- Client agreed to implement thirteen (13) new compost bins in the office and break areas to capture compostable waste from those areas

### Challenges:

- Cafeteria Purchasing
- Collection and training
- Addressing contamination
- Good participation



*Yellow Compost Bins (pictured below); New Signage (pictured above)*

# Compost Program Considerations

**Accepted Materials:** All food waste, paper towels, fiber containers

**Destination:** Local collection, traditional windrow processing

**Purchasing changes needed** for cafeteria service ware

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## What items can be composted?

- Food Waste
  - All food waste
  - No meat and dairy
  - No fibrous waste (ie. Corn husks, pineapple tops)
  - No oyster shells, large bones, coconut shells, avocado pits
- Fiber Materials
  - Paper Towels / Napkins
  - Soiled paper / paper bags / pizza boxes
- BPI Certified Compostable food packaging
  - Fiber-based cups and containers
  - PLA or other 'bio-plastic' cups and containers
  - Liners

## What is accepted depends on:

- Processing facility / equipment
  - Anaerobic digestion
  - Traditional windrow (industrial)
  - Animal feed
  - Community garden
  - On-site biodigester
- Capabilities to ID and sort contaminants
  - Pre-screening
  - De-packaging
  - Post-process screening



# Compost Program Considerations

**New Compost Bins Only:** Purchase of stand-alone, additional compost bins

**Compostable Green Liners:** Compostable liners required by vendor

**Full Signage Refresh:** New compost signs created + recycle and landfill signs updated

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## Existing Bins v New Bins

- Capacity
- Space
- Aesthetic
- Lids v no-lids
- Central areas only – no deskside organics
- Use existing bins + Add compost bin
  - Maintain aesthetics
  - Opt for different color to distinguish
  - Lids v open
- All new bins
  - Stand alone grouping
  - Consoles/Single Unit with multiple streams

## Best Practices:

- Bin Groupings
  - For every trash bin add recycle + compost bins
  - Place in same order, left to right
- Liners
  - Different color for each stream
- Signage
  - Color coded
  - Simple message: basic words + images
  - Consistent terminology
    - Trash v Landfill
    - Compost v Organics
    - Recycle v Recyclable

# Compost Program Considerations

**Staff Collection Training:** Updated collection timing and janitorial training

**Address Contamination:** Targeted messaging and vendor communication

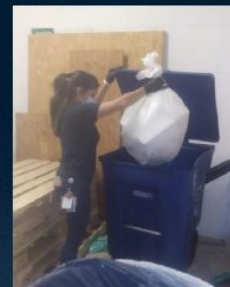
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## Collection Roles and Expectations - Logistics

- Adding a new material stream requires collection changes
  - Is it within scope of agreement/contract?
  - How much extra collection time is required?
  - Is new collection equipment or modification of collection routes needed?
  - Who needs to be involved in the discussion?
    - Discuss BEFORE new bin placement and program launch
- Disposal/Staging equipment and location
  - Where are totes or dumpsters located?
  - Have movement/transport logistics been determined for efficiency and safety?

## Communication and Training:

- Confirm details around logistics BEFORE training
- How are you managing visible contamination?
  - Be very specific in expectations around addressing contamination
- Liner color = Disposal Container
- Safety should also be addressed in collection training
- Determining on-going monitoring and training



# Compost Program Considerations

**Employee Engagement Events:** Green team hosted events to raise awareness

**Challenge with Capacity:** Site is maximizing as many totes as space allows

## On-going Communication

- Updated, customized messaging
  - What's working well
  - What's not working well
  - Address common contaminants
- How best to communicate information?
  - Monitors/screens
  - Email/text
  - Social media
  - Intranet
  - Posters/table toppers
- Engage
  - Interactive
  - Real-time data
  - Competitions
  - Contests



# Case Study: Compost Program Expansion

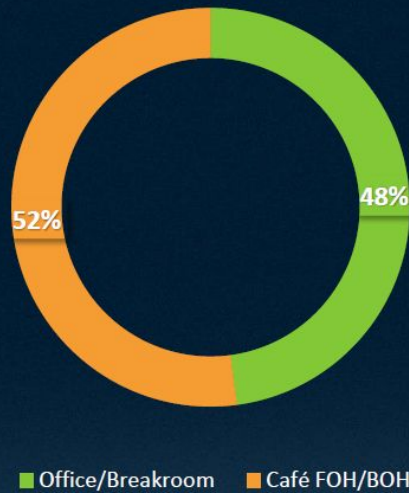
Waste audit to evaluate status of portfolio compost expansion

Eight (8) sites, One (1) region – 21% of trash is Compostable

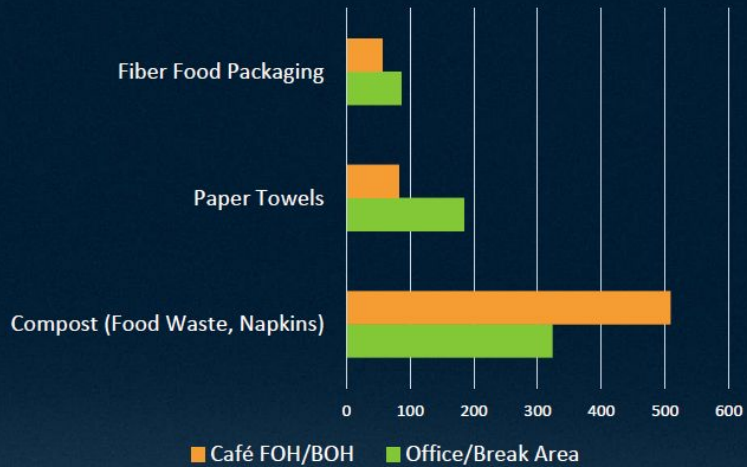
Total of 2800 lbs of trash physically sorted across all 8 locations (representing 24-hrs waste from each location)

Areas separated: Office, Breakroom, Cafeteria (FOH), Cafeteria (BOH)

Total Compostable Breakdown  
By Area



Compostable Items  
By Area



Total trash sorted 2023: 2800 lbs  
Total compostable materials in trash 2023: 1200 lbs  
Total compostable materials from office/breakroom 2023: 595 lbs



# Thank You For Your Time!

## Any Questions?



### **Amy Marpman**

#### **Director of Sustainability**

- LEED-Accredited Professional
- TRUE Advisor
- CSRMP

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# Response to Live Poll Question #2:

## Live Poll #2

1. What is the status of food waste collections from non-dining indoor locations? (choose one) (Single Choice) \*

N/A - No current program or near-term plans 26%

Planning / pilot stage 26%

Beginning - still working out kinks; limited recovery 17%

Established, but room to grow 19%

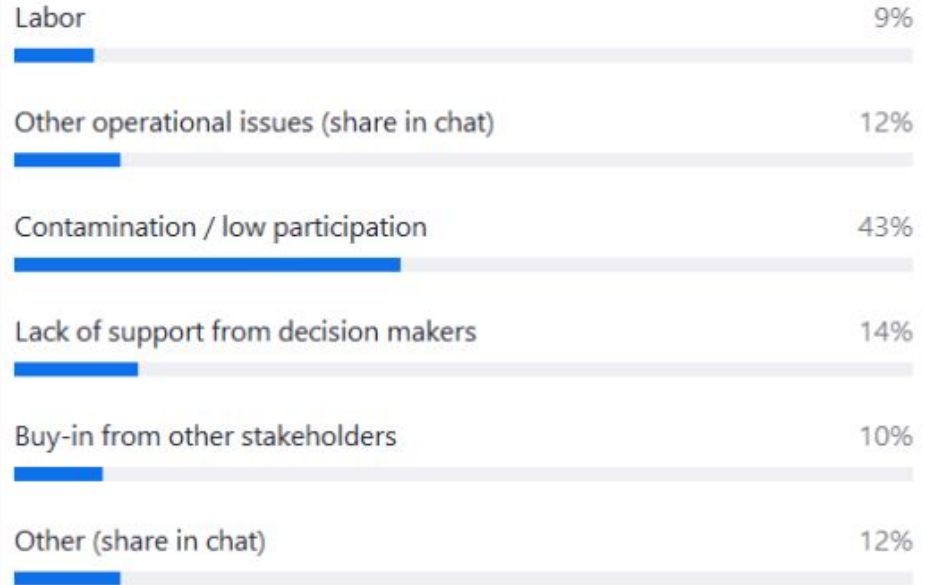
Comprehensive - Well established 12%

Your answer: N/A - No current program or near-term plans

# Response to Live Poll Question #1:

## Live Poll #1

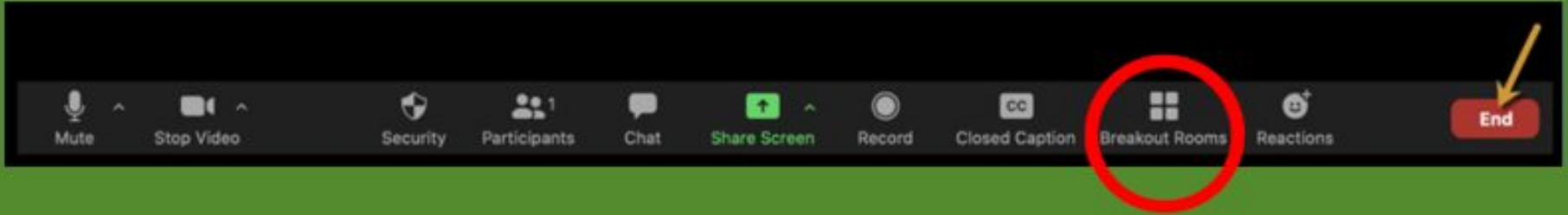
1. What is your #1 challenge for organics collection? (choose one)  
(Single Choice) \*



Your answer: Other (share in chat)

# Select Room Now

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- If you have trouble, leave note in the chat / stay in Main room and someone will help you.
- Turn on Cameras in breakout room.



# *Discussion Notes & Resources*



# Main Room: Q&A w/ Amy Marpman + “Other” topics (*Stay here*)

- Tech support
- Other topics / General discussion related to organics:
  - Working w/ non-labor stakeholders
  - Compostable packaging
  - Start up planning
  - Paper towels
  - ?

# Main Room: Q&A + “Other” topics

## Notes

- QUESTION: Space issue (adding recycling and compost in additional to trash bin) and concerns from procurement team on high prices for switching to the only vendor in LI that does compost vs, what we have now (no compost, mixed waste processing, only cardboard recycling)?
  - If you have the budget, a combined console type bin - multiple streams in not as much space. As for cost - that can be difficult when there are not too many options yet in your area. If you're able to do a waste audit to see what the compost potential will be, you can see how much you may be able to divert from the trash stream and potentially reduce that cost.
- GENERAL TIPS!:
  - Defer to hauler/collection facility for questions about bags/liners/accepted materials/what can actually be composted
  - Have conversations with local businesses to pursue partnerships if you find takeout/outside waste coming into your facility is causing contamination issues and/or could be composted instead of heading to the landfill
  - Communicate the WHY - reasons behind the program, which materials are accepted/processed, the importance of the initiative
    - Especially important when some items that people think SHOULD be compostable ARE NOT - have the discussions publicly and internally about the WHY and be straight forward about what is and is not accepted

# Main Room: Q&A + “Other” topics

## Notes

- Space-saving tip: Slim profile bins or consolidated consoles can be a good solution for tight spaces
- Interesting new thing to keep an eye on - people are starting to look for alternatives to trash/recycling/compost bags - currently searching for reusable bags that can be emptied upon collection and then replaced back into recycling containers
- TIP: Sometimes making sure that organics collection is only in areas where food and beverage are allowed or are served can help reduce labour and pest concerns [link](#)
  - more frequent collections, regular bin cleaning and bins with lids can help with pests and labour concerns too!
- Problem = mismatch between foodservice ware and programs
  - Trying to coordinate and have discussions with things you can control on site, like take away containers and cups from cafeterias, and making sure what is purchased is accepted down stream. These changes can take a while, but can help reduce contamination.
- SMALL OFFICE - it is hard if you have a smaller office and don't have enough volumes to justify a pick-up. Depending on your location there may be boutique services that cater to smaller office settings for compost pick-up?
  - There are also more and more appliances designed for home-use and in-kitchen composting that you may be able to test out in a small office setting for food scraps?

# Room #1: Labor / Custodial

*Moderator: Julie Muir*

## Potential discussion topics:

- Collection routines
- Managing workload / Integration with other waste collections
- Labor / union relations
- Contracted service providers
- Training procedures
-

# Room #1- Labor / Custodial

## Notes

Issue: Challenges motivating the custodial company. (ex. One custodial company servicing several sites - different experiences at each).

- Supervisors engaged more
- Regular engagement. More involved with staff
- Performance standards - clearly defined and agreed upon by both parties.
- Identifying main contaminants - addressing those first
- Intern to help run zero waste program
- Color bag system. If a clear bag is in the compost bin, it's not in the right bin. Clearly identifying bag contamination in the dumpster bins. Bags match the bins - compostable bags are a green color and so are the bins. Clear bag for landfill - you can see what's in it.

Issue: Paper towel contamination. More education? Signage?

Issue: Seasonal staff & younger staff.

- Incentive program? Relationships - make them feel appreciated and that their work is very important.
- Asking more questions - engaging in conversation rather than telling.
- Could come with rewards for ideas. They are the ones on the ground - listen to their feedback and suggestions.

Issue: City of Olympia: In-house staff as well as other buildings that have contracts. City staff there is more interaction and those collections seem to work better.

# Room #1- Labor / Custodial

## Notes

- Centralized collection as “motivation” or at least making the job a bit easier than deskside collection.
- Regular inspections to see how things are going - perhaps put some rewards in with those inspections. Lunch? “We appreciate that everything looks great!”
- Positive reinforcement for “passing” the inspection.
- Friendly competition between campuses (or between locations if not a school).
- Arrange for tours of recycling facilities.

### Issue: Language Barriers

- Not only language barriers but different countries sort differently so it might not just be the language but the way of sorting that is confusing for them.
- Suggestions: Images as much as possible; visual demonstration; props for training

Issue: Implementing a new program - separating brown paper towels. Difficulting is explaining to the different departments so everyone is on the same page with the implementation of the new program.

- Idea: Ask more questions instead of “telling” them how to do their job; get them involved with the program during implementation/before it launches

# Room #1- Labor / Custodial

## Notes

General ideas for acknowledgement:

- Give and take - if you are adding more to their job, try to take something else off their plate or change something to make their job easier.
- Attend *their* meetings/training rather than asking them to come to your meeting or setting up a new one
- Understand that they know where contamination is coming from so ask them questions - they also know where bins should be based on how they are used. Be sure to tap their expertise.



# Room #2: Other Operational Issues & Infrastructure

*Moderator: Lin King*

## Potential discussion topics:

- Collection equipment, bags
- Bin design - operationally-related features
- Managing odors, bugs, cleaning bins
- Working with haulers / Collections to off-site facilities

# Room #2 - Other Operational Issues & Infrastructure

## Notes

- Currently yellow bins converted to green - Santa Cruz; sorting own trash. Some pieces of waste in the wrong place from time to time. Large square building, bathrooms located in center. Not collecting enough food waste containers; struggles for others to pick up protocols that are trying to be pushed forward. Stickers on top of lid on “Slim Jim” units. CWSS Central Waste Sorting Station; same waste in different bags
- Looking to have facility “True” certified. Conversion rate to 90%. Hoping compost program can obtain goals. Large office, cafeteria, multiple small break rooms with only trash bins. Early phases to switch out waste vendors. No compost, mixed waste processing. Any non cardboard recyclables placed in trash. Only one vendor that composts in Long Island. Challenges included scope of work, space and cost; switching vendor will be higher cost, need to justify for initiative. Requires many individual compost bins in spaced out break rooms
- Missouri Dept Natural Resources
  - Using green for trash, blue for recycling, orange as primary food waste colour; could change in the future
  - PG County using a bright green for 35 gallon cart for curbside pickup, could work in DC as their carts are forest green
  - Looking to stay consistent on colours everywhere (ZWCC)
- Multiple recycling units at school at St. Joseph’s in Alberta. Looking to add compost as well. Previous caretakers had concerns over smells. Working on mapping out spaces for bins.
- Strong recycling division of diversion from landfill; Recycle Everywhere focus on recovering beverage containers. Looking to start promoting compost bins. Looking to go from dual stream to a triple stream on education and promotions

# Room #2 - Other Operational Issues & Infrastructure

## Notes

- Waste audit in DC, pretty good for diversion. 15% compostables, primarily bathroom waste (paper towels). Will continue waste audits, looking at bins for restroom and break room. Desk side trash bins; fear of compost going in trash instead of compost. Need hauler to deal with paper towels and not food waste. Cost a concern as being federal agency.
- Towson U.
  - Different bins across campus. Most buildings with compost bins have green bins; older ones are yellow. Goal is to ensure compost bins in every building as well as adding to outdoor spaces. Hoping to refresh and redistribute existing bins to meet new needs
- Maryland Dept. of Env.
  - Passed food diversion, requirement for universities and large inst. To divert food waste and recycling. Looking to address issues while implementing program.
- “How do you handle lining and/or cleaning bin?”
  - Ensuring compostable liners equal to trash bin system (saves time on cleaning and easier to transport)
- Use a green bag to keep can/liner clean, compostable bag on top

# Room #3: Education / Behavior

*Moderator: Gina Whisenant*

## Potential discussion topics:

- Addressing contamination
- Labels & signage - what information to display
- Best practices - Bin design, placement & service to guide behavior
- Communication platforms (ex: monitors, posters, SM/ email, tabling)
- Outreach strategies (ex: green teams, launch events, contests)

# Room #3: Education / Behavior

## Notes

- USC Interior collection program 4<sup>th</sup> day, a common complaint is that smells but they forget that the same material was in there before.
- Ryan Lark, U. Kentucky – paper towels compost program finding plastic contamination with plastics including bottles, female products...
- Amanda Whittingham – Fanshawe College no contamination found in the paper towels compost program. Green bins and labels roll out campus-wide. Diversion rate improvement because of the compost program. College size: 22000 students and 8000 employees
- Amy Parrish – Boise State University how to start a compost program?
- Virginia Leary: works for Boston Public Schools and they have students monitoring bins to get community service hours and pick out contamination. She is looking for a good software program to help manage volunteer sign ups that automates the sign up process and maybe helps track when they volunteer (so like a way that it takes attendance)

# Room #3: Education / Behavior

Notes

## Advice / Key Comments:

- Put trash right outside the bathroom, female products inside the stole, and only paper towel collection.
- Constant communication and education to make it an expectation
- Constant audits to track what is being produced
- Seattle Public Utilities paper towel composting sticker file folder:  
[https://www.mediafire.com/file\\_premium/k4bb5b8u994m80g/SPU\\_Decals\\_Paper\\_Towel\\_Composting\\_8.5x14.pdf/file](https://www.mediafire.com/file_premium/k4bb5b8u994m80g/SPU_Decals_Paper_Towel_Composting_8.5x14.pdf/file)  
<https://www.mediafire.com/foodpluscompostables#an5p0tfbh73w5>
- Nicole Berg- U Michigan – start with pre-consumer Paper towels only fills trucks quickly
- If you have the capacity do it across the board
- Food waste mixed with a paper towel – high tolerance in bathrooms for smells
- Communication and education are key to any successful compost program
- Focus on weights – what is the heaviest first and then move to low-hanging fruit
- Communicate with your hauler on what is accepted before you start
- Characterization studies to see what is being produced and use specific products in the signage.
- The program needs to be easy for the users to be successful
- Integrate the program to the campus culture
- U Michigan Standards: <https://ocs.umich.edu/programs/waste-reduction/waste-bins/>
- Communicate the progress and the contribution to diversion

# Get Involved w/ ZWCC

## Monthly “Meet Up, Waste Down”

- Networking event with hot topics and breakout rooms to discuss your real experiences in the field.
- Occurs the last Tuesday of the month.



Sign up for Slack channel:

[https://join.slack.com/t/zwcampuscouncil/shared\\_invite/zt-1o4e39kwh-zlRw63HJ05lVLbBbQePskQ](https://join.slack.com/t/zwcampuscouncil/shared_invite/zt-1o4e39kwh-zlRw63HJ05lVLbBbQePskQ)

Contact: [zerowastecampuscouncil@crra.com](mailto:zerowastecampuscouncil@crra.com);  
<https://www.crra.com/zwcc-technical-council>

Attend [California Resource Recovery Association \(CRRA\)](#) annual conference August 13-16, 2023, Burlingame, CA (just south of San Francisco) for zero waste campus sessions and tours.

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# Give Us Feedback

Look for email with survey following webinar:

How can we make discussion / info exchange  
more productive?

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