

Washington Department of Ecology Organics Reduction Hierarchy

The infographic lists eight methods for reducing or recycling organics wastes, in order of preference from most to least preferable. Each method includes a What, How and Why section.

The methods are as follows:

1. SOURCE REDUCTION
 - a. WHAT: Reduce creation of organic waste by implementing source reduction educational outreach programs.
 - b. HOW: Create or support smart shopping and smart storage strategies or educational outreach campaigns like EPA's FOOD TOO GOOD TO WASTE and the FOOD RECOVERY CHALLENGE campaigns.
 - c. WHY: Less Waste to manage. Shows that government is proactive.
2. FEED PEOPLE
 - a. WHAT: Reduce amount of good food going to disposal options by supporting/creating programs that get edible food to people.
 - b. HOW: Create or strengthen partnerships with and between food producers and food collection organizations.
 - c. WHY: Less good food sent for disposal so less landfill methane created. More food for hungry people. Promotes good public relations.
3. FEED ANIMALS
 - a. WHAT: Reduce the amount of food scraps going to disposal by supporting/creating programs that send food scraps to animals.
 - b. HOW: Contact local health department to get guidance. Facilitate connections between generators and farmers.
 - c. WHY: Less food sent to landfills so less landfill methane created.
4. ON-SITE ORGANICS MANAGEMENT
 - a. WHAT: Food scraps, yard debris, land clearing debris, food processing, animal manure/bedding, forest biomass.
 - b. HOW: Contact Ecology, local government or a consultant to learn about implementing onsite composting, vermicomposting, and/or anaerobic digestion programs.
 - c. WHY: No hauling required so no hauling charges. Create soil amendment, liquid fertilizer, energy from food residuals.
5. OFF-SITE ORGANICS MANAGEMENT
 - a. WHAT: Food scraps, yard debris, food processing, animal manure bedding, forest biomass.
 - b. HOW: Contact hauler, or self-haul material to company that processes material into beneficial products.
 - c. WHY: Food residuals converted into beneficial products. Less methane produced. Possibly lower garbage bill.
6. DISPOSAL WITH ENERGY RECOVERY
 - a. WHAT: Landfill disposal, Incineration.
 - b. HOW: If possible, contract to have wasted material sent to a landfill or incinerator with methane or energy recovery.
 - c. WHY: A portion of the embodied energy is captured.

7. DISPOSAL WITHOUT ENERGY RECOVERY

- a. WHAT: Landfill disposal, incineration.
- b. HOW: Use public or private haulers to collect and deliver waste to the landfill or incinerator.
- c. WHY: Inefficient use of resources. If this is the only current option, keep landfill destination in mind during future contract negotiations.

8. OPEN BURN

- a. WHAT: Open Burn
- b. HOW: Reduce the occurrence of open burning by promoting alternative management methods like composting, anaerobic digestion, bio-char production.
- c. WHY: Outdoor burning is illegal in all urban growth areas in Washington. Outdoor burning creates air pollution and wastes resources.