

Organics Recycling Working Group Meeting

Date: Thursday, August 6, 2026 1:00- 2:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Contact/Chair: Michael.Wonsidler@sdcounty.ca.gov

Agenda

1. Introductions

- Ashley Swauncy
- Carmen Romo-Diego, City of San Diego
- Rosemarie Chora, City of Oceanside
- Chloe Cost, Republic Services
- Dana Laosiri, Republic Services
- Dave Didonato, City of Chula Vista
- Diana Jamaledine, City of Solana Beach
- Jenna Dotson, Republic Services
- Dr. Craig Kolodge, San Pasqual Valley Soils
- Emily Schuetz, CalRecycle
- Fernando Moreno, City of Escondido
- Gio Cortes, City of Escondido
- Heather Holland, Master Gardeners SD
- Jessica Toth, Solana Center
- Julia Gallaway, County of San Diego
- Kenneth Prue, City of Oceanside
- Kim Silva, WM
- Michael Wonsidler, County of San Diego
- Priscilla Flores, City of Oceanside
- Rich Flammer, Hidden Resources
- Risa Baron, Republic Services
- Wbaldo Arellano, City of Imperial Beach

2. SB 1383 (General, Education/Outreach, Procurement, etc.)

- a. Members discussed the enthusiasm farmers have for applying to the County voucher program and noted that many have been approved, however there appears to be a disconnect afterwards with relatively few orders placed. Would be beneficial to identify the barriers or factors contributing to low follow-through after voucher approval. It was suggested that timing issues, such as planting season, could influence participation.
- b. Cities provided case study insights regarding parks and golf courses interested in applying compost as a top dressing but have encountered significant contamination issues. Due to these concerns, facilities are reluctant to use the product again.
 - i. Top contaminants: plastic film, glass, compostable woodchips – need to be particularly careful about pieces that could pose injury risks to athletes.
 - ii. One solution suggested was to separate the feedstocks from self-haul and landscapers (which is usually less contaminated) from those collected during regular service of residential/commercial bins. It is possible to study the routes, tracking the route numbers and which days cleaner stock is delivered. This could help determine which feedstocks coming in are less contaminated and therefore the compost product is cleaner. The goal is to create greater demand from the entities with cleaner material.
- c. San Pasqual Valley Soils offers a program to assist jurisdictions with SB 1383 procurement compliance requirements and obtaining credit via compost

application on their property: <https://spvsoils.com/sb1383-compliant-compost-and-mulch/>

- d. Republic's Yard Signs – Republic introduced a new program placing compost-use signs highlighting where composted food is turned into soil amendments. It's subtle but informative. Nice educational tool that has been placed at Petco Park and other properties.

3. Compost & Mulch

- a. Giveaway Events
 - i. Fall Regional Event Dates: Sept 12 - Oct 25
 - ii. Promotion: Please contact Julia Gallaway (Julia.Gallaway@sdcounty.ca.gov) with details on your events for regional promotion.
- b. 10/21-22 Compost Caravan in San Diego- targeting farmers and ranchers
 - i. <https://www.healthysoil.org/events>
 - ii. [Call for Compost Champion Nominations](#)
 - iii. On October 21st, the [Compost Caravan](#) is coming to San Diego
 - 1. To bring together those in the compost and the healthy soils movement, Association of Compost Producers and People, Food and Land will be hosting a farm-to-table fundraiser to honor the amazing work being done by the people who help this coastal region thrive. They'll be granting five awards to represent the multifaceted ways people have leveraged compost to uplift the health of their communities and bolster our state's economic and climate resilience. These are the compost champions that are moving the needle and building the bridge between healthy soils, healthy food, and healthy communities.
 - 2. Share this [Call for Nominations](#) with your network to help recognize compost champions in the San Diego area. **Nomination submissions open through August 30th.**
- c. Countywide Resource Hub by Jurisdiction
 - i. County and Master Gardens to partner. Send Julia Gallaway info on upcoming events about a month before: Julia.Gallaway@sdcounty.ca.gov
- d. Application
 - i. Use in Fire Prevention
 - 1. Consider a fire prevention social media campaign teaching people about use of mulch and fire suppressant actions households can take.
 - 2. [The Combustibility of Landscape Mulches](#)
 - 3. More info: <https://www.healthysoil.org/compost-and-fires>
 - ii. Guidance, Trainings & BMPs
 - 1. Tip sheets and specifications
 - a. [Compost and Mulch Use Toolbox](#)
 - 2. Social media campaigns
 - a. No update
 - 3. Education at Schools
 - a. Group discussed involving schools in more compost and mulch activities. Class lessons advocating for growing healthy plants, where

compost comes from, and encouraging compost and mulch in the garden are great initiatives students can take home to their families. Lessons with worms are always exciting for children.

- b. Master Gardeners host a database showcasing school gardens on their website.
- c. Master Composter Program - Solana Center teaches an extensive Master Composter residential course as well as On-Farm composting course, through our contract with the County and others.
- 4. Guidance on managing manure and composting manure is still needed locally due to volumes disposed.
- 5. Chula Vista offers 3-pronged approach – flyers, classes/workshops, community compost events to educate the public on how proper organic waste disposal in the green bin connects to better compost created for local use. The Living Coast Discovery Center also offers composting classes to the community.

4. Member Topics:

- a. Compostable Plastics
 - 1. City of San Diego completed a 5-month study on the disintegration of compostable items in open windrows – final report to come out soon.
- b. Agritourism & educational demonstration sites
 - 1. Consider implementing educational demonstration sites with signage describing benefits of diverting organics and applying compost at a high traffic public area: library, fire department, schools, etc.
 - a. Experimental bed with 2 sections: one using compost vs one without.
 - b. Encouraging demonstration gardens that use compost and/or mulch so people can see firsthand.
- c. Healthy Soil connections
 - i. No update.

5. Legislative Updates

- a. North Carolina passed legislation to include composting within its statutory definition of agriculture. This is a positive development and a critically important distinction for compost infrastructure establishment, management and public perception. Could be a model for other states to follow:
<https://www.biocycle.net/north-carolina-composting-agriculture-farm-act-2026/>
- b. Chapter 4 of SB 54 is on compostables. Comment period closes soon:
 - i. [California Program Plan Public Comment Period — Circular Action Alliance](#)

6. Roundtable, News & Events

- a. CRRRA conference San Diego 8/30-9/2
 - 1. Panels including:
 - a. 8/31 3:45-5:00pm - Compost Use in Fire Recovery & Remediation

- b. 9/1 at 2:45-4:00pm – Behind the Scenes of Organic Processing Facilities in San Diego

7. Adjournment- next meeting (first Thursday 1:00- 2:30 p.m.)