

What can I do with my yard waste?

Options at home and for collection



LOUISVILLE METRO PUBLIC WORKS & ASSETS DEPARTMENT
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION
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Introducing: Angela Kessans

Public Education Coordinator



Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government
Waste Management District

Focus Documents

Solid Waste Management Plan

Public Works Strategic Plan

Office of Sustainability, Sustain Louisville

General Functions:

- Work in cooperation with related entities to create a “consistent message” of reduce-reuse-recycle among business, community organizations, government, and the citizens of the community.
- Assist in planning, organizing and implementing solid waste management plans
- Develop education programs, to include:
 - household hazardous waste collections
 - recycling programs
 - composting opportunities
 - solid waste collection rules
 - environmental events
- Identify grant opportunities and assist in developing plans for attaining them.

Campaign Timeline:

Now:

- Begin messaging, through letters, e-mails, brochures, and public service announcements.

September-December:

- Begin in person outreach, through distribution of paper bags, presentations, articles in newsletters, meetings with stakeholders, media interviews, etc.

January-March:

- Continue messaging/pause outreach campaign during winter.

January:

- End soft launch. Waste haulers cease picking up non-compostable plastic bags containing yard waste.

March:

- Begin reinforcement messaging and outreach through messaging, presentations, articles, media interviews, etc.

Identified Stakeholders:

- Residents of Louisville Metro
- Metro Government Administration and Department of Public Works
- Metro Council
- Jefferson County League of Cities
- Homeowner associations
- Retail outlets
- Waste haulers
- Compost facilities

Current Messaging:

- Citizen Guides/FAQs (Complete)
- Information packets to retail outlets for point of purchase/shelf signage (Complete)
- Newsletters (Ongoing)
- E-blasts (Ongoing)
- TV/radio interviews (Ongoing)
- Presentations (Ongoing)

Current Outreach:

- Distribution of free paper bags (Coming soon)
- Automated voice messaging script and pre-recorded voice message (Coming soon)
- Informational website/toolbox (In process)

Campaign Focus:

Love ‘em and Leave ‘em Louisville

“**LELE**” is the practice of utilizing the waste your yard generates to fertilize and make your yard healthier.

Changes to yard waste collection

Best Management Practices (BMP’s) for collecting and setting out yard waste for collection

LELE started in 2010 by a group of volunteers in New York with a vision to reduce organic yard waste.

The initiative has expanded to many areas nationwide and currently offers information to homeowners, landscapers, and municipalities.

<http://www.leleny.org/>

It's really pretty simple... and free

Love 'em and Leave 'em Louisville

Helpful Tips for Handling Yard Waste at Home



Leaf mulch and grass clippings offer a number of benefits for your lawn!

- Provides a natural fertilizer for a greener, healthier lawn
- Improves soil structure providing better drainage, better water retention, and fewer weeds

Recommendations for a Healthier, Greener Lawn¹:

Set your mower on maximum height! The higher you mow your grass, the healthier it will be. The roots will be deeper, allowing your lawn to stay green with less water. Deep roots also prevent soil erosion and promote thicker grass growth. Taller grass helps stop weeds from growing by creating more shade to prevent weed germination. Follow the one-third rule: never cut more than one-third of the total height of the grass when you mow. Your lawn will thank you for it!



Or even better...grow more, mow less! If you feel like mowing your lawn

is a constant battle, try replacing your turfgrass with plants you don't have to mow. Low-mow landscaping can save you time, money, and hassle. There are lots of options to choose from, such as trees, shrubs, flowers, groundcover, edible plants, and even low-mow grasses. For more low-mow tips, visit: www.louisvilleky.gov/APCD/growmore.

Don't bag those clippings! A common misconception is that clippings left on the lawn will promote thatch buildup. This is not true. Clippings do not make significant contributions to thatch and should be returned to the lawn whenever possible. Leaves and grass contain mostly water and break down rapidly, releasing nutrients back into the soil.

Mulch leaves into your lawn! Mowing tree leaves in the autumn and returning them to the turf system is an outstanding alternative to raking and bagging. Studies have shown the positive effects of mowing tree leaves into lawns. To do this, take the grass catcher off your mower and mow over the leaves on your lawn. You want to reduce your leaves to dime-size pieces. You'll know you're done when about half an inch of grass can be seen through the mulched leaf layer.



And one last tip! Before mowing your lawn, trim your shrubs and clean your flower beds and landscaping. Place the trimmings on your lawn and cut your grass like normal. You may need to do a couple of passes over the extra materials, but when complete, you will never know they were there. Plus, you saved time and money by not bagging. To avoid hazards while mowing, make sure shrub trimmings are no larger than a pencil.



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A Division of Asset Development

¹ Michigan State University Turfgrass Science program and Scott's Miracle-Gro.

For more information, visit www.louisvilleky.gov/solidwaste or call MetroCall at 311.

Research on Turfgrass Management:

Michigan State University Turfgrass Science Studies

- Academic program on urban agriculture to prepare students for career opportunities in lawn management, athletic field, golf course, and parks and grounds maintenance
- Provides information on lawn care studies and techniques, including a program called “Lawncare University” focusing on every aspect of turfgrass maintenance.

<http://www.turf.msu.edu/home-lawn-articles>

Scott’s Miracle-Gro recommendations for handling leaves.

- Scott’s is an industry leader in caring for lawns.
- Provides information on how to save time and help your lawn by mulching leaves.

<http://www.scotts.com/smg/goART2/InfoHowTo/mulching-leaves/11800002/>

What are my options if I choose to have my yard waste collected?

- **Best:** Reusable container
- **Next best:** Paper yard waste bag
- **Still good:** Compostable bag

For additional information on collection:

<http://www.louisvilleky.gov/SolidWaste/Yard+Waste.htm>

CHANGES TO YARD WASTE COLLECTION



In May 2014, the Louisville - Jefferson County Waste Management District adopted a yard waste container regulation (51.507R) clarifying collection procedures. Residents who utilize yard waste collection services must use one of the following containers: reusable bin, paper yard waste bag, or compostable plastic bag meeting ASTM D6400 standards.

Answers to common questions

What is yard waste?

Yard waste includes organic waste generated during regular household landscaping and gardening activities. Rocks, dirt, gravel, flower pots, and pot liners are not considered yard waste.

Are there alternatives to setting out yard waste for collection?

Yes. Mulching and/or composting at home is often the fastest and cheapest way to manage your yard waste.

What are my options if I need to have my yard waste collected?

- **Best:** Reusable containers are often cheaper than using single-use bags in the long run. Bins should have sturdy handles for collection crews, a capacity between 20 and 40 gallons, weigh no more than 60 pounds when filled, and be covered with a secure lid.
- **Next Best:** Paper yard waste bags that are not over filled and are folded closed.
- **Still Good:** Compostable plastic bags should clearly state they meet ASTM D6400 standards for composting. Bags marked "biodegradable" do not meet the requirement for this regulation. The compostable bags should be securely tied.

Why is using compostable bags important?

After your yard waste is collected, it is delivered to a compost facility. Regular plastic bags are not compostable and must be separated from the yard waste. Removing plastic bags increases processing costs and remaining shreds reduce demand for the compost. Compostable bags or reusable containers greatly reduce the amount of plastic sent to local compost facilities. This reduces processing costs and enhances the quality of the finished compost.

Can I still bundle my branches? Yes.

Does this affect my regular garbage collection?

No, this change only impacts yard waste collection.

What happens if I set my yard waste in a regular plastic bag?

Beginning January 1st, 2015, yard waste in plastic bags will not be collected and the homeowner may be subject to fines.

What can I do in peak yard waste seasons?

First reduce the volume of leaves by chopping them with your mower. Then, if you still have large amounts, use one of our free fall drop off sites.



LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

For more information, visit www.louisvilleky.gov/solidwaste or call MetroCall at 311.

Acceptable Containers



Reusable Bins



Paper Bags



Compostable Plastic



Reusable Container & Bundling:

Best and least expensive option

- Should have sturdy handles
- Capacity between 20-40 gallons
- Weigh no more than 60 pounds
- Be covered with a secure lid



Requirements:

- No longer than 4' long
- No greater than 2" diameter
- Must be tied
- Weigh no more than 60 pounds

Paper Yard Waste Bags:

- More durable than conventional bags
- Tops folded closed, not stapled or taped
- Will withstand rain events, if closed



These are the kind that will be distributed during outreach campaign.



Each product will display the labeling language via printing, embossing, or compostable adhesive stickers and using, when possible, the color green or brown that contrasts with background product color for easy identification.

Compostable Bags:

- Must be labeled “compostable”
- Biodegradable does not always mean compostable
- Should be securely tied

Check to see if a product is compostable by going to Biodegradable Products Institute
<http://products.bpiworld.org>

Seasonal Drop-off Locations:

- Great idea if you have a large amount
- Reduce volume by chopping or shredding first

10500 Lower River Road
(corner of Bethany Lane)
Tuesday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

East District Public Works Yard
595 Hubbards Lane
Tuesday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Waste Reduction Center

636 Meriwether Avenue
Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.



Helpful Tips to Reduce Yard Waste:

Before mowing: blow or rake leaf debris and small bush trimmings from your flower beds, hard surfaces, and landscaping onto the lawn instead of bagging them. Once you have mowed they will be gone.



Mulch mow to reduce volume during peak season. Mulching leaves reduces the volume at a ratio of up to 16:1. This will result in less containers or yard waste bags needed for collection



Enforcement:

Violation: Containers for the collection of yard waste shall meet the requirements of LMCO Chapter 51.507. As an alternative yard waste may be set out in paper yard waste bags or certified compostable bags meeting ASTM D6400 standards.



Penalty: 51.999 (B) Any person who violates 51.405, 51.500, 51.504, 51.505, 51.506, **51.507 (A)(2) through (A)(6)**, 51.508, 51.509 and/or who fails to perform any of the duties imposed by these sections, **or who violates any** determination, permit, administrative regulation, or **order of the Waste Management District** or the Department promulgated pursuant thereto **shall be liable for a civil penalty of not less than \$50 per day or per occurrence, and not more than \$2,500 per day or per occurrence.** Each day upon which a violation occurs shall constitute a separate violation. For a first offense within a two year period, a specific fine of \$50 per day will be imposed for each offense if the person who has committed the offense does not contest the citation. For each subsequent offense committed within a two year period from the date of payment or conviction on the first offense, a specific civil fine of \$100 per day will be imposed for each offense if the person who has committed the offense does not contest the citation.

Process: Reported>Inspected>Violation
Notification>Correction Period>Citation/Removal

Concluding thoughts:

This will be an ongoing outreach and education campaign.

Educational materials will continue to be created.

For more information:



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