

Food Waste Diversion Law

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Issue

Summarize Connecticut's food waste diversion law. This report updates OLR Report [2022-R-0229](#).

Summary

Connecticut law requires certain facilities that generate a large amount of organic material to (1) separate the material from other solid waste and (2) have it recycled at an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility, such as an anaerobic digester that can convert food waste to energy. Most facilities that compost or treat the materials on-site are exempt from this requirement ([CGS § 22a-226e](#), as amended by [PA 23-170](#) and [PA 24-45](#)).

By March 1, 2025, the entities subject to the law's requirements generally must begin electronically submitting to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) an annual summary of its amount of (1) donated edible food and (2) food scraps recycled, and the organics recyclers and associated collectors used.

The law also requires DEEP to have a voluntary pilot program for any municipality that seeks to (1) separate organic materials from other materials and (2) have the organic materials recycled at authorized composting facilities that have capacity and will accept them ([CGS § 22a-226e\(d\)](#)).

These provisions apply to organic material that is separated at the point or source of generation from nonorganic material, and includes such things as food scraps, food processing residue, and soiled or unrecyclable paper ([CGS § 22a-207\(30\)](#)).

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By law, certain facilities that generate at least 26 tons of organic material per year (on average, one-half ton per week) must separate the organic material from the solid waste and ensure that it is recycled at an authorized organic material composting facility with available capacity. The law currently applies to the following types of facilities if they are located within 20 miles of the composting facility, an authorized transfer station, or an authorized collection location: commercial food wholesalers or distributors, industrial food manufacturers or processors, supermarkets, resorts, and conference centers ([CGS § 22a-226e](#), as amended by [PA 23-170](#) and [PA 24-45](#)).

Beginning January 1, 2025, the 20-mile radius requirement no longer applies, thus requiring all of these facilities to have their organic material separated and recycled, and the law's requirements also apply to the following: institutions that provide hospitality, entertainment, or rehabilitation and healthcare services; hospitals; higher education buildings and facilities; and correctional facilities.

And beginning July 1, 2026, school buildings and educational facilities where K-12 students are enrolled that generate at least 26 tons of source-separated organic materials and are located within 20 miles of an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility must separate the organic material from other solid waste and have it recycled at the same types of facilities described above that have capacity and will accept that material.

Facilities, other than the K-12 schools, that compost or properly have their source-separated organic materials treated onsite are deemed to comply with the separation and recycling requirements.

Additional information about composting and organics recycling is available on DEEP's [website](#), including [guidance](#) for large food waste generators on how to comply with the food waste diversion law.

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