



City of Tualatin

CITY OF TUALATIN Staff Report

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
THROUGH: Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager
FROM: Lindsay Marshall, Management Analyst II
DATE: September 26, 2022

SUBJECT:

Republic Services - Informational Presentation and Guidance Regarding Recycle + Program and Residential Organics Possibilities

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff would be in support of offering both Recycle + and Residential Organics as options for Tualatin residents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Recycle +

In April 2022, the Washington County Board of County Commissioners approved “Recycle+” as a new addition to curbside recycling. This optional service, which would be offered by the City’s sole franchised hauler, Republic Services, would provide an opportunity for Tualatin Customers to recycle materials not included in standard recycling.

Customers who sign up for Recycle+ would receive a specific lidded bin for convenient home pickup of a variety of items, such as: plastic film and bags, plastic #1 clamshell containers, compact fluorescent light bulbs, and textiles such as clothes, sheets and towels. Customers would sort all materials by type and put Recycle+ materials in the plastic bags provided and place them in the purple bin. Why plastic bags? Each category of items needs to be kept separate and dry during collection. The plastic bags will be recycled once materials are at their final destinations.

Recycle+ charges include a small base fee and a pickup fee for each requested pickup. Customers can set out Recycle+ “curbside” (defined as within five feet of a public or private road) or at another “non-curbside” location on a customer’s property, such as at the doorstep or porch (additional fees apply).

While exact fees for Tualatin are to be determined, rates would be similar to those in unincorporated Washington County:

- Base charge (billed monthly to subscribers): \$2.50
- Curbside pickup when requested by customers (each pickup): \$9.25
- Non-curbside pickup 5-150 feet (each pickup): \$11.70
- Non-curbside pickup over 150 feet (each pickup): \$12.02

Customers can cancel Recycle+ service at any time; no continuing subscription is required. For customers who do not want to subscribe to Recycle+, dropping these materials off at a recycling depot remains a no-cost recycling option for all community members. If customers qualify as a person with a disability as

identified by Oregon state law and does not share a household with an individual capable of placing the container curbside, they can request non-curbside pickup at no extra charge.

Residential Organics

Residential organics collection, also known as curbside composting, would allow Tualatin customers to begin adding food waste to their yard debris bins. The cost of the composting program would be covered by an increase in Republic Services rates for Tualatin customers (the rate increase is to be determined, but would be minimal). The rate increase would apply to all households using a 35- gallon-or-larger yard debris cart. There would be no change to customers' collection schedules or frequency. All solid waste (garbage), recycling, and yard debris would continue to be picked up weekly. Education and outreach efforts to customers would be joint between Republic Services and the City and be implemented before collection began.

What counts as “organics” or food waste in this sense? The basic rule of thumb is, if “it goes in your mouth, it can go in the bin.”

Items for the bin would include:

- All food, inclusive of meat, bones, dairy, fats, grease, etc.
- Coffee grounds, including the filter (in fact, these are encouraged as coffee grounds help minimize the smell) and tea bags
- Take-out pizza boxes
- A limited number of food-stained paper products. Used napkins and paper towels cannot be recycled, so if they are used to wipe up food, they can go in the yard debris bin on a limited basis. However, if they have household cleaners on them, they should be thrown away in the trash.

Concerns may include:

- Contamination of the yard debris cart with potentially confusing items that should actually be left out, such as any bags/bin liners, boxes, or silverware labeled “compostable.”
- Smell - Vents on the top of the yard debris bins are designed to minimize odor. The decomposition process requires a warm, moist environment to get started, but the vents ensure that the bins remain cool and dry, so the food doesn't start decomposing while it's still sitting in the bin. Tualatin has regular weekly service for all customers (rather than bi-weekly like in other Cities), which ensures that food waste would not be sitting for very long in between collection.
- Pests – The biggest deterrent for pests is regular collection by Republic Services. Given that collection is weekly in Tualatin for all customers, there shouldn't be much time for pests to move in. Tactics like occasionally spraying vinegar or peppermint oil in in the bin can help deter pests as well.
- Including meat and dairy products – While not recommended for inclusion in backyard composting, the composting facility where residential organics would be taken have the processing capabilities to handle the proper breakdown of such materials.

OUTCOMES OF DECISION:

Staff are looking for Council guidance as to whether to move forward with implementing education and rate adjustments for these two programs.

ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:

Council can choose to not recommend one or both of these additional services for Tualatin customers at this time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

As Recycle + is an optional service, there would be no economic impact to Tualatin customers who do not

sign up. For those who wish to participate, services are able to added for an additional cost. Residential organics collection would apply a rate increase to all customers using a 35 gallon or larger yard debris cart.

ATTACHMENTS:

-Presentation by Republic Services