



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

SOLID WASTE ADVISORY

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Solid Waste Advisory No. 17-001

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Alternative Yard Waste Recycling Systems for Townhouse Communities

The purpose of this Solid Waste Advisory is to explain the process by which townhouse communities may obtain approval to establish an alternative yard waste recycling system in lieu of having the waste collected at the curb. ***Approval of alternative recycling systems for yard waste in communities that include both townhouses and single-family homes will only be approved if the single family homes in the community continue to receive curb-side pickup of yard waste.***

Background

Chapter 109.1 requires that residents in single-family homes and townhouses separate their yard waste from refuse and other recyclables for collection at the curb. A complementary portion of this law requires that solid waste collectors separately collect this yard waste and deliver it to a recycling facility. However, Chapter 109.1 also allows townhouse communities to implement and maintain an alternative yard waste recycling system under the following circumstances:

- The community contracts with a landscape company to maintain all lawns and common areas, and this company recycles the yard waste as part of the service;
- The community produces minimal amounts of yard waste due to no significant green areas; and/or
- The community recycles yard waste on-site through communal composting or similar practice.

Townhouse communities that do not have yard waste collection at the curb must have written approval from the County for an alternative yard waste recycling system. If a written approval is not obtained, the community is required by Chapter 109.1 to arrange for separate curbside yard waste collection.

How to Obtain Approval for Alternative Yard Waste Recycling Systems

Communities wishing to obtain approval for an alternative yard waste recycling system must demonstrate how yard waste is to be recycled (as opposed to having it picked up at the curb). Suitable alternatives include:

- Contracting with a grounds maintenance or landscaping firm that will *remove* the yard waste to a location where it will be reused or recycled;



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Page 2 of 2

- Providing communal yard waste grinding, mulching, and/or composting at one or more designated locations within the townhouse community; and/or
- Demonstrating that the community generates an insignificant amount of yard waste.

Applicants for approval (typically, the HOA or property manager) must complete the application form attached to this document. The County's Solid Waste Management Program will review the application and return a written decision within 30 days of receipt. A copy of the written approval must be provided by the homeowners association to the community's refuse and recycling company and any company hired to manage yard waste.

Alternative yard waste recycling system approvals do not need to be renewed, but must be updated whenever any of the following occur:

- A new grounds maintenance or landscaping firm is hired;
- A new refuse and recycling collection company is hired; or
- If the community no longer wishes to use the approved alternative system.

Communities operating an approved alternative yard waste recycling system must retain a valid, written County approval and be able to furnish a copy of the approval to the County upon request.