

### New State Waste Ban Will Affect Most of LMA

Coming this October, 2014, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Environmental Protection will enact a new waste ban on food waste. Any organization that produces one ton or more of food waste per week must find ways to divert it from trash. Options include reducing food waste at the source, donating food, and processing food waste on-site or off-site in the form of composting, anaerobic digestion or other means.

"The new waste ban has the potential to significantly reduce the amount of solid waste that reaches landfills and incinerators. Most of our members will be subject to the ban and it will result in operational changes for those institutions not already composting food waste," said Ulla Hester, senior planner at MASCO. "We've been facilitating best practices and information sharing amongst our members' sustainability coordinators to help them be ready for the regulation when it goes into effect next year," she added.

"We started composting in the front of the house three years ago to get rid of Styrofoam," said Amy Lipman, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's sustainability coordinator. "We wanted to eliminate Styrofoam, but it didn't make sense to get rid of Styrofoam, spend the extra money on compostable materials and not have a formal program in place," she said. "When we started with the back of the house, we worked closely with our sanitation staff to devise a plan. They know their workflow best, and it was an easy transition. The challenge is and will continue to be the front of the house. It's a continuous training process of introducing composting to staff, visitors, new residents, etc., as our population is constantly changing," said Lipman.

Lipman added that their program has grown consistently and as of September 2013, they have composted 60 tons of organic waste, and are on track to surpass their 2012 twelve month total of 61 tons.

Massachusetts College of Art and Design began their composting in the back of the house in March of 2012. According to Assistant Director for Sustainability/Environmental Health and Safety Jamieson Wicks, it's the easiest place to start. "The processes for waste removal are in place, and it is an easier transition for the food prep workers," he said. MassArt contracts with EOMS Recycling to remove their compostable waste once a week. Wicks reports the effort is cost neutral, and they are exploring expansion to the front of the house over the next year.

"Harvard Medical School started composting post-consumer kitchen waste about 6 years ago, so we feel we are in really good shape when the regulation becomes permanent," explains Jeff Barnhart of Restaurant Associates, the vendor for HMS dining facilities. "In 2011, for Earth Week, we rolled out our post-consumer program where our guests could compost in the dining halls, with compostable containers. We focused heavily on signage to communicate to our diners about composting, and the HMS Office of Sustainability was a key component in helping us to change habits and introduce new waste disposal policies," said Barnhart.

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Most of the LMA organizations are composting at some level, and are in good position to meet the regulation when it becomes law in 2014. The Winsor School is proud to be Green Certified by the Green Restaurant Association of Boston for their composting program and Brigham and Women's Hospital plans to roll out its program in the next 4-6 months.

Pictured on right, BIDMC employees display the new composting and recycling bins.

Here's to continuous greening of the LMA!