



Paul St. Cyr
DPW Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas A. Golden Jr., City Manager 

FROM: Paul St. Cyr, Commissioner
Chris Sullivan, SW&R Director

DATE: July 23, 2024

SUBJECT: MOTION RESPONSES – C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Provide A Report On Existing Educational Programs By The Solid Waste & Recycling Division Of The DPW To The Lowell Public Schools And To The Residents On Recycling/Sustainability Efforts, And To Explore Feasibility Of Additional Programs With The Schools And The Community

Since the COVID Crisis, single stream recycling of plastics has nearly ceased due to the exporting of scrap plastics to China has come to a screeching halt. This has caused everyone to pivot and develop different strategies aimed at reducing waste wherever possible.

Looking forward, and in anticipation of the 2030 Waste Zero requirements, our plan is to implement a pilot composting program at Lowell High School, The STEM Academy and The Greenhalge School. The projected launch date is August 27, 2024 – The first day of school for Lowell Public Schools. We have completed a survey with a consultant from the MassDEP School Green Team where the division has completed school walkthroughs and developed an action plan. Our hope is to reintroduce Single Stream recycling initiatives at all schools that are carried out into every classroom. MassDEP is supporting this program by providing free totes and bins to every location. As part of this effort, we hope to establish a liaison at every school dedicated to implementing "best practices" of recycling and composting. Additionally, several forms of media will be distributed to students and families in multiple languages to support this endeavor. The successful execution of this program will reduce our overall volume and contamination city wide.

Additionally, we are in the process of establishing a partnership with composting vendors that can provide Lowell residents with weekly subscription service. Residents will be able to pay for a subscription for curbside composting. If they opt to participate in the program, they will also receive compost rich in humus that nurtures beneficial micro-organisms, is free of any viable weed seeds, and contains an abundance of immediate slow-release nutrients.

Since November, the city has realized a reduction in the contamination rate between November 2023 and April 2024 from 25% to 17.13% respectively (once we complete the pilot program currently in place, we will provide an update on contamination rates); mostly due to fierce attention to the audit process, code enforcement and education through distribution throughout the city of literature to residents shown in the examples below:



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1365 Middlesex Street • Lowell, MA 01851

P: 978-674-4111

www.LowellMA.gov

Paul St. Cyr
DPW Commissioner



PLEASE LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT!



**Do Not Bag
Recyclables
(no garbage)**

No empaque bolsas



No Plastic Bags
No bolsas plásticas



No Food or Liquid
No comida ni líquidos



**No Clothing
or Linens**

No ropa ni ropa de cama



**No Tangles
(no hoses, wires, chains,
or electronics)**

*No enredos (sin mangueras,
cables, cadenas o dispositivos)*



**No Big Items
(wood, plastic,
furniture, or metal)**

*No artículos grandes
(madera, plástico,
muebles, o metal)*

Correct this and we will collect next time

Corrija esto y recogeremos la próxima vez

NOTES (NOTAS)

NO PLASTIC BAGS IN THE RECYCLING CART



**DO NOT
BAG
Recyclables**

Collecting recyclables in a bag? Empty the contents into the cart.

 Return plastic bags to retailers.

Solid Waste & Recycling Office, DPW
(978) 674-4309

www.LowellRecycle.org

Thank you for recycling! Printed in part by MassDEP. Mass DEP recycled paper.

The City of **LOWELL** *Alive. Unique. Inspiring.*