

# Exclusive Commercial Franchise Solid Waste Collection Services

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Service Providers

**Q: *Who provides waste and recycling services in my community?***

**A:** Los Angeles County Public Works provides waste and recycling collection services to commercial customers within the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County through private waste haulers under contract with the County.

**Q: *Who do I contact with questions or concerns regarding my service?***

**A:** Customers should contact Los Angeles County Public Works at (888) CLEAN LA for questions or concerns regarding their services or to provide feedback regarding their waste hauling services. To schedule a bulky item pick up, discuss billing questions, or to adjust their service, customers can contact their waste hauler directly. Hauler contact information can be found at: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

**Q: *Who is my waste hauler?***

**A:** If you do not know who your waste hauler is or would like to confirm, please use our Waste Hauler Look Up Tool: <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/swims/Businesses/find-waste-hauler-esri.aspx>.

**Q: *Where can I find the map that shows the eight exclusive commercial franchise service areas?***

**A:** The service area maps are available on our Commercial Franchise System webpage: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

### Transition to the Commercial Franchise System

**Q: *When did the new solid waste collection services start?***

**A:** Most commercial customers began the new solid waste collection service with an exclusive waste hauler between October and November of 2022. Depending on your service area and waste hauler you should have two or three containers and one of those containers is specifically for the collection of organic waste. If you did not receive your new container(s), contact us on our Clean LA Hotline at 1 (888) Clean-LA (253-2652).

**Q: *Who does this new service apply to?***

**A:** This new service applies to certain customers located within the commercial franchise service areas of unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County such as:

- Businesses
- Multi-family properties with 5 units or more
- Multi-family properties with dumpster service (including those with a hybrid service of dumpsters and carts)
- Residential properties with dumpster collection services (except those in a Garbage Disposal District)

**Q: *Why did the County transition to an exclusive waste hauler system?***

**A:** Transitioning to an exclusive system was essential to comply with Senate Bill 1383, a State law that requires all jurisdictions to provide organic waste collection services to residents and businesses to keep organic waste from ending up in landfills. The exclusive system enables the County to ensure the waste hauler provides:

- Recycling and organic waste collection
- High quality customer service
- Efficient collection routes
  - Fewer collection trucks on the road
  - Less road wear and tear
  - Less traffic and pollution (such as gas emissions)
- Uniformed and transparent rates
- Capped rate increases

**Q: *Do we have a choice of going with another waste hauler?***

**A:** No, your exclusive commercial franchise waste hauler is the only designated waste hauler to provide service in your area, except for the collection of Construction and Demolition Debris (C&D) which may be provided by any County Authorized Non-Exclusive Commercial Franchise waste hauler, [linked here](#).

There is an exception for single-family homes, they may elect to opt out of dumpster service and receive waste collection services in carts from the exclusive residential franchise waste hauler in their service area, [linked here](#). To determine who is your residential franchise waste hauler use the [Who Picks Up My Trash?](#) tool.

**Q: *How was the exclusive waste hauler selected?***

**A:** The County utilized a competitive bidding process in selecting your waste hauler. A bid for a contract was released for several service areas in the County. All waste haulers were given the opportunity to submit proposals to the County for consideration. The proposals received were evaluated using criteria such as experience, rates, work plans, financial strength, and other factors. The proposal with the highest rating for its area was awarded a contract. The competitive bidding process promotes transparent quality service and is required by law for every government agency that issues a bid.

## Service Rates

**Q: *How were the rates determined under the new exclusive commercial franchise contract?***

**A:** Rates vary and are based on the services needed. For example, customers who prepare or serve food may need larger containers for organic waste or have waste picked up more frequently. Service rates proposed by the waste hauler are based on multiple factors such as fuel and labor costs, vehicle and other equipment costs, maintenance, and inflation, etc. Waste haulers cannot charge more than the rates approved by the County. Services such as Roll-out or Scout are considered extra and result in additional fees. Senior (65+) residents that meet the criteria for a Senior Discount may receive 25% off their services. Services and rates applicable to your account are detailed in your invoice provided by your waste hauler. Rate information for all services for each service area can be found on our Commercial Franchise webpage: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

**Q: *Why did the service rate increase when I went from my previous waste hauler to the exclusive commercial franchise waste hauler?***

**A:** As a mandatory requirement by the State under Senate Bill 1383, the County implemented the regulation for organic waste. This regulation included significantly more work and costs on the parts of both the County and its waste haulers. The necessary State compliance was not possible under the previous system, which allowed waste haulers to not always do what they were required to do and thus, they were able to offer lower rates previously.

With this change, the State requires you to separate your waste into 3 different containers (trash, recyclables, and organic waste), and it is very likely you could reduce the trash bin size you will need for trash when they are separated. We encourage you to evaluate what materials you generate and hopefully you can fully utilize the recycling and organic waste service to reduce your service level and get your overall bill lowered.

The new rate includes a 64-gallon organic waste cart at no additional charge and includes significantly more bulky item collection and a few other services. More information can be found here: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

Single-family residents and multi-family properties of 4 units or less may consider switching from dumpster service to cart services under the residential franchise service.

To find out who your residential franchise waste hauler is, visit: <https://pw.lacounty.gov/epd/swims/Residents/>.

**Q: When can the hauler increase my rate?**

**A:** Your hauler may increase the rate once a year. The rate increase is subject to County review and approval, and would become effective October 1<sup>st</sup> of every year.

The reason of the rate increase is due to the yearly Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI is a price that is weighted off the average market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households and businesses. CPI measures the changes in the purchasing power of the country's currency and accordingly is weighed upon the services provided, such as your waste hauler services. However, the County has capped the annual increase to 5% for this contract.

We encourage customers to evaluate what materials they generate and hopefully can fully utilize the recycling and organic containers to reduce their overall bill. If some of the trash bins could be changed out for recycling bins that will help reduce the cost as the rates for recycling bins are half of trash bins. Please reach out to your waste hauler to request a site visit to further assess your property's waste stream and what will be best for your location.

**Q: *Can I negotiate the rate with the waste hauler?***

**A:** You may request for your hauler to do a site visit and re-assess the services you currently have to possibly lower your bill. You are also welcome try to convince your waste hauler to provide you a lower rate than the maximum they are allowed to change per the County contract. Nothing prevents the waste hauler from offering a lower rate.

**Q: *Why do I need roll-out and/or scout service? And why isn't it included as part of the trash rate?***

**A:** Roll-out and scout are additional services that involve moving your dumpsters or carts from an on-site location to an area where it can be safely collected by the waste hauler's truck. Waste haulers may determine private roads are too narrow or unsafe to service and may require scout or roll-out to move the containers where they can be safely serviced, such as on the public street.

Roll-out and scout services, require waste haulers to send additional staff and vehicles to your property to move the containers for collection, resulting in more costs for labor, fuel, equipment, etc. The County thoroughly evaluated the pros and cons of including roll-out and scout service into the trash rate and determined the most equitable solution for all customers is to have all additional services charged as a separate cost, because these services are unique to the needs of a customer.

You may shop around for roll-out or scout services and obtain them from a third-party. If you use a third-party, then you are responsible for ensuring dumpsters and carts are placed in a pick-up location accessible to the waste hauler before your scheduled

collection time and return the containers to their on-site storage location in accordance with County Code.

**Q: *How is scout service calculated? The scout service rate is expensive, can you adjust the rate?***

**A:** When the contract underwent the competitive bidding process, every bid was evaluated for the best service at the lowest price against the market price, including fees for basic service and extra services such as scout service.

However, it is not necessary to use scout (and roll out) through your current hauler, you may hire a third-party scout service that may have a lower price.

**Q: *What is the billing cycle?***

**A:** The waste haulers mail the bill on the first week of the service month in advance and are due 30 days after.

## **Residential / Multi-family / Tenants**

**Q: *Does this service apply to all single-family homes?***

**A:** No, this service does not apply to all single-family homes. This service only applies to single-family homes who utilize dumpster containers.

**Q: *I am a resident in a single-family home and need a metal dumpster for green waste and plastics carts for trash, do I have to use the commercial waste hauler?***

**A:** Yes, dumpsters are only available from the exclusive commercial waste hauler. Residential waste haulers do not provide dumpsters other than for manure only. However, it may be more cost-effective to utilize multiple green waste carts from the residential waste hauler in lieu of a dumpster.

**Q: *If the property manager and/or landlord does not arrange for organic waste collection, will tenants be penalized?***

**A:** No, tenants will not be penalized if your landlord or property manager does not subscribe to service. If you rent or lease in an unincorporated community and you do not have organic or recycling services on-site, then you may notify us at 1 (888) Clean-LA (253-2652), so we may work with your property manager and/or landlord to ensure all tenants have access to the required organic waste collection service.

**Q: *Where can I get a kitchen food waste container (kitchen pail), and can I get more than one?***

**A:** Your waste hauler provided a kitchen food waste container (also known as a kitchen pail) to collect food scraps and organic waste, to residential and multi-family occupants (limit 1 per unit) in 2023. Property managers/owners were provided 1 kitchen pail/container per unit to distribute to their tenants. Additional kitchen pails/containers are available upon request for an additional cost. You can also utilize your own container or repurpose something such as an old coffee can/container, plastic food storage container, etc., if that works best for you.

**Q: *Can I, the property owner/manager, request a new kitchen pail each time a new tenant moves in?***

**A:** Yes, you may purchase additional kitchen pails from your waste hauler at a cost. Tenants may also use their own food waste container. Public Works is evaluating the option of providing additional kitchen pails to multi-family properties each year. Please contact Public Works if you need additional kitchen pails.

## Organic Waste Recycling

**Q: *What is the benefit of recycling organic waste?***

**A:** Separating your organic waste for recycling helps by keeping it from entering landfills where it would decompose, release methane gas, and pollute the air impacting the climate. So rather than decomposing in a landfill, recycled organic waste is converted to energy, fuel and/or compost. This has a significant impact on reducing climate change.

**Q: *Can I put my kitchen scraps (food waste) in plastic bags and put that in the organic container?***

**A:** The use of plastic bags is highly discouraged as it creates a challenge to ensure food waste is correctly processed and composted. However, if you must use plastic bags for the collection of food waste, then the use of plastic bags depends on the facility the processes your waste. Currently the facilities require the use of **clear** or **transparent** bags because it allows for the facility to easily inspect a bag's contents for contaminants or prohibited materials and keep rates as low as possible.

**Q: *Are there training or educational outreach materials available to train others on what materials are collected in the organic waste container?***

**A:** Yes, education and outreach materials about what is collected in your waste containers is available from your waste hauler. Your waste hauler also conducted a site visit and waste assessment making recommendations for improvement to your services. If you did not receive a site visit, you may request one from your waste hauler or ask the County at 1 (888) Clean-LA (253-2652), to coordinate the visit. Additionally, there are recorded community meetings on the [Clean LA](#) website specific to your waste hauler and service area. We also encourage you to visit [fightfoodwastela.org](http://fightfoodwastela.org) to learn more about organic waste management. The flyers below are also available for your use:

- [Single Family Residence Flyer](#)
- [Multi-family Residence Flyer](#)
- [Business Flyer](#)

**Q: *Do I need to separate manure from trash and place it in a separate container?***

**A:** Yes, manure must be collected in a separate manure waste container, manure containers are available upon request, at an additional cost. Please contact your waste hauler to find out the best service needs for your location.

## Waivers/Exemptions

**Q: *I don't produce a lot of organic waste; do I have to have a separate container?***

**A:** Residents and businesses with dumpster services must have a separate organic waste container unless they provide a **Self-Management Plan** to the County describing what they plan to do with all their organic waste such as composting it on-site or self-hauling it to a local community composter.

Businesses may have the contents of their waste containers checked for low amounts of organic waste by their waste hauler. Businesses that produce little to no organic waste may apply for a De Minimis Waiver that waives their subscription to organic waste collection and removes the separate organic waste container. To see if you qualify for a De Minimus waiver visit: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

**Q: *Are there any additional waivers or exemptions available?***

**A:** Yes, other than the De Minimis Waiver mentioned above, a business or residential property owner may apply for a Physical Space Waiver if they do not have adequate space for a separate organic waste container. Physical Space waivers are temporary waivers that allow a business or property owner to plan and implement changes to their property to accommodate the separate organic waste container. Details and waiver guidelines can be found here: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

**Q: *Who reviews and grants the waivers?***

**A:** The waivers are reviewed and issued by the County; however, your waste hauler may conduct site visits, waste inspections, or collect information on behalf of the County. Details and waiver guidelines can be found here: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

## Missed Collection

**Q: *How soon can the waste hauler collect a missed pickup?***

**A:** If you notify your waste hauler of a missed pickup, then the waste hauler collects the waste at no additional charge within the following timeframes:



- If you notify the waste hauler by 12 p.m., they will service same day by 7 p.m. If you notify the waste hauler after 12 p.m., they will service the next day.
- The waste hauler shall observe the following Holidays:
  - New Year's Day
  - Memorial Day
  - Independence Day
  - Labor Day
  - Thanksgiving Day
  - Christmas Day
- Collection will be delayed one day for the Holiday and the remainder of the Holiday week. The waste hauler may Collect on Saturday of the same week for Residential (residents with dumpster or multifamily complex) and on Sunday for Commercial Customers.

**Q: Why was my bin not serviced on the scheduled service day?**

**A:** The reason your containers were not serviced may vary. If the following reasons do not apply to you, call us at 1 (888) Clean-LA (253-2652) to report your missed service.

1. **Holiday** - If your scheduled collection day falls on or after a holiday, then collection is delayed by one day. Check your customer Bill of Rights to see observed holidays available here: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).
2. **Contamination** - If your waste hauler tags your container, it may be contaminated and not eligible for service. The tag has instructions to remove the contaminant, then call them to service.

**Bulky Items & Illegal Dumping**

**Q: How do I schedule a bulky item pickup?**

**A:** Directly contact your waste hauler at least 24-hours in advance to request removal of bulky items. Your waste hauler can confirm the types of acceptable bulky items. Wait until you receive a confirmation from your waste hauler before placing the items out for removal. Items are placed at the same set-out site as your waste containers on your regular service day. Waste hauler websites and phone numbers can be found here: [pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf](http://pw.lacounty.gov/go/cf).

Multifamily complex tenants must request bulky item pick up from their onsite manager.

**Q: How do I report and remove illegally dumped items?**

**A:** Illegally dumped items can be reported by phone, email, or online portal. Provide a location and description of the items (size and quantity), photos are helpful as well. To learn more visit <https://pw.lacounty.gov/epd/illdump/>.

Call: 1 (888) 8DUMPING (888-838-6746)  
 E-mail: [dumping@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:dumping@pw.lacounty.gov)



Online Submission: [Click Here](#)

## Contact Us

**Q: *How can I contact the County if I have any additional questions?***

**A:** You may call our hotline at 1 (888) Clean-LA (253-2652), Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or e-mail us at [CommercialFranchise@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:CommercialFranchise@pw.lacounty.gov).