



## HOW TO GET STARTED WITH ORGANICS RECYCLING

### IN THE VERY BEGINNING:

**Sign up.** The organics dumpsters are available to all, but do sign up to use a dumpster. If you intend to use one of the Mankato dumpsters, call 311, or 507-387-8600 or sign up at [www.mankatomn.gov](http://www.mankatomn.gov) under “City Services”, and then “Organics Recycling”. If dropping your organics in North Mankato, call April at city hall, 507-625-4141. In Lake Crystal call the City at 507-726-2538. Each city hall has starter kits available for those who sign-up.

**Next:** Start collecting your food waste and all food-soiled paper waste, such as paper napkins, paper towels, pizza boxes and much more... **See the extensive list of acceptable/unacceptable items** on the MZW website: [mankatozerowaste.com](http://mankatozerowaste.com) You will be surprised how many items are compostable at a commercial facility but you don't have to know it all. Simply collecting your food scraps and food soiled papers is a great start.

### HOW?

**Find an acceptable container with a lid for your waste.** Some people use a plastic ice cream pail with a lid, others use something fancier. Some start with a smaller container and then transfer to a larger container (such as a 5 gallon bucket) when the waste accumulates.

**Decide on a good place for your container.** Some keep it right on the counter or under the counter, others in the refrigerator or freezer. In hot weather keeping the container in the refrigerator or freezer can help slow the mushiness factor.

**Discover a system of bagging the waste that works for you.** Some people line their pail with a 2 to 3 gallon compostable plastic bag and when that is full, tie it and place it in their larger container. Others keep the waste un-bagged and dump it into bags (either certified compostable plastic or paper) just before coming to the drop-off site. **And**, don't let your collected sit too long. We suggest dropping them off at a dumpster weekly.

**Note:** Adding a layer of dry stuff (items like facial tissues, paper egg cartons, shredded paper, soiled paper towels and napkins) in the bottom of the pail or bag will absorb moisture that can break down the bag. Layering such items into your scraps will help, too.

**Get a supply of bags**—paper grocery bags are acceptable. Or you can find BPI certified compostable plastic garbage bags in 13 gallon and 2-3 gallon sizes at Cubs, Hy-Vee, St.Peter Coop and Ace Hardware in Lake Crystal.

**Drop off your bagged organics** during daylight hours at your city organics dumpster—2 in Mankato and one each in North Mankato and Lake Crystal.

### General rules to remember:

- **All organics are to be dropped off in paper or certified compostable plastic bags (no regular plastic bags please).**
- **Larger items such as pizza boxes and paper egg cartons don't have to be bagged.**
- **No yard waste is accepted.**
- **Recycle clean paper waste instead of bringing it to the organics drop-off.**

For questions, contact: [mankatozerowaste@gmail.com](mailto:mankatozerowaste@gmail.com) or call Jane Dow at 625-5092.

**Good luck, we know you can do it! The Mankato Zero Waste Team**