

**HOW TO GET STARTED WITH**

**ORGANICS RECYCING**

**IN THE VERY BEGINNING, TO TRY IT OUT:**

 **ZEROWASTE**

 ***Mankato***

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* Sign up to become members and receive valuable information/updates. For Mankato members, call 311 or 507-387-8600 or sign up at [www.mankatomn.gov](http://www.mankatomn.gov) under “City Services”, “Garbage & Recycling” and then “Organics Recycling”. For North Mankato residents, call City Hall at 507-625-4141. Lake Crystal residents sign up by calling City Hall at 507-726-2538.
* Bring all food waste except liquids and all food-soiled compostable paper waste, such as paper napkins, paper towels, tissues and pizza boxes to the drop-off sites at Mankato Public Works, 501 So. Victory Drive, North Mankato Recycling Center at 600 Webster Avenue. In Lake Crystal, the organics go to the dumpster at the drop off site at Lake Crystal Recreation Center, 621 West Nathan Street. Sites are open all day every day.

**Next:**

* **Find an acceptable container with a lid for your waste.** Some people use a plastic ice cream pail, others use something fancier. Some start with a smaller container and then transfer the contents to a larger container (such as a 5 gallon bucket) when the waste accumulates. Some use a vented container because air slows down decomposition. These are available on-line or you can make holes in your pail’s lid to give it a try.
* **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.

Adding a layer of dry stuff (items like facial tissues, paper egg cartons, 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.

* **See the extensive list of acceptable/unacceptable items** at that tab on the MZW website: [www.mankatozerowaste.com](http://www.mankatozerowaste.com). You will be surprised how many items are compostable!
* **Get a supply of bags**—paper grocery bags are acceptable. Cubs, Hy-Vee Hilltop, Lake Crystal Ace Hardware and St. Peter Food Coop all sell BPI certified compostable plastic bags in 13 gallon and 2- and 3-gallon sizes.

**Several 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 and cardboard waste instead of bringing it to the organics drop-off.**

For questions, please contact: mankatozerowaste@gmail.com or call Jane Dow at 507-469-5537.

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