



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

BUREAU OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

DIVISION OF MUNICIPAL and RESIDUAL WASTE

GENERAL PERMIT WMGM052

FOOD WASTE COLLECTION AND TRANSFER PRIOR TO  
FURTHER PROCESSING

**Issued: February 28, 2025**

**Expires: February 28, 2035**

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**A. Description:**

This general permit authorizes collection of food waste and transfer to a permitted food waste processing facility for subsequent beneficial use. The approval herein is limited to establishing and operating a food waste collection location in accordance with the terms and conditions of this permit. The waste streams authorized for collection under this general permit for shall be non-liquid waste<sup>1</sup> (solid) and limited to the following categories of unpackaged and uncontaminated residential household generated, source separated foods: fruit, vegetables, breads/grains, meat and fish.

**B. Registration Requirements:**

A person or municipality that proposes to conduct food waste collection and transfer under the terms and conditions of this general permit after the date of permit issuance must obtain a registration from the appropriate Department Regional Office (see attached list) prior to commencing authorized activities under this general permit. This registration shall only authorize operation of a single collection location. Additional registrations would be necessary to operate additional collection locations. A completed application on forms provided by the Department must be submitted electronically to the appropriate Department Regional Office. Additionally, the application fee should be submitted to the appropriate Department Regional Office. Checks shall be made payable to the "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania". No activities shall commence unless approved, in writing, by the Department.

**C. Operating Conditions:**

1. An operational plan for the collection facility must be developed prior to operation and implemented throughout the life of the facility. The operational plan must include the following information:
  - a. Location of the operation,
  - b. Property owner of the operation,
  - c. Hours of operation,
  - d. How the operation will be secured,
  - e. Size of the collection area,
  - f. Which types of food waste will be accepted,

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<sup>1</sup> EPA Method 9095 (Paint Filter Liquid Test) as described in the EPA Publication No. SW-846

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- g. Criteria for accepting food waste from residents (i.e. education program, sign-up, etc.),
  - h. Contact information for the permittee or a designee responsible for addressing nuisances, overfilled containers or spills of food waste,
  - i. Frequency of scheduled maintenance or inspection of the operation,
  - j. Number and type of food waste collection containers and how they will be secured (i.e. staging of incoming collected materials prior to transfer),
  - k. Anticipated volumes of food waste to be collected annually,
  - l. Frequency of the schedule for transfer of waste from collection container to the processing site,
  - m. Transporter or hauler name who will be transporting the collected food waste to the processing site,
  - n. Name and permit number of the facility to which collected food waste will be sent.
2. Waste shall be transferred from the collection container(s) to a processing facility at least once each week. Transportation of collected food waste material to a processing facility may be required by DEP to occur at a more frequent interval to prevent odors or the attraction of disease vectors, or other nuisances, if determined to be necessary, or to otherwise protect human health and the environment. More frequent transportation of waste to a processing facility may be necessary to ensure the container(s) aren't filled to capacity in a manner that would render the facility unable to accept waste during times that users expect the facility to be operational, and could lead to mismanagement of waste.
3. Collection containers will be cleaned at a frequency that prevents routine nuisance odors and harborage of vectors. The permittee may contract the transporter or further processor of the food waste to clean the containers at the food processing facility to which collected food waste is sent or ensure the containers be cleaned onsite where food waste is collected. Regardless of where the containers are cleaned, all wash water should be properly managed. This permit does not authorize the discharge of wash water to the land or waters of the Commonwealth.
4. The facility may collect food waste in one or multiple containers, but the maximum combined capacity shall not exceed 2 cubic yards (approximately 404 gallons).
5. Unauthorized wastes and incompatible materials shall be separated from the incoming wastes intended for further processing, by the permittee, and shall be managed properly at an appropriate permitted processing or disposal facility or recycled on a weekly basis.

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6. The permittee shall control access to the food waste collection facility to prevent unauthorized access. Access control may include fencing, lockable containers or 24-hour video or in-person surveillance.
7. Signage shall be posted prominently at the facility identifying the operating hours, contact information and types of food waste that can be collected at the facility required by Conditions C(1)(c), C(1)(f) and C(1)(h), respectively.
8. The permittee shall require that all users of the facility obtain approval from the permittee prior to use of the facility. At minimum, approved users of the facility must provide the permittee with their name, phone number, address. The permittee may require additional information as outlined in their operational plan. Educational materials shall be provided to each approved user that provides information on use of the facility. At a minimum, that educational information shall provide the information required by Condition C(7), above.
9. Food waste collected under this authorization is not eligible for direct beneficial use as animal feed or for land application.
10. The permitted facility shall not be located within the following siting restrictions:
  - a. In the 100-year floodplain of a water of this Commonwealth;
  - b. In or within 300 feet of an exceptional value wetland;
  - c. In or within 100 feet of a wetland other than an exceptional value wetland;
  - d. Within 100 feet of a sinkhole or area draining into a sinkhole;
  - e. Within 100 feet of a perennial stream;
  - f. Within 300 feet of a water source unless the owner has provided a written waiver consenting to the facility being closer than 300 feet;
  - g. Within 50 feet of a property line, unless the owner of the adjacent property has provided a written waiver consenting to the facility being closer than 50 feet. The waiver shall be knowingly made and separate from a lease or deed unless the lease or deed contains an explicit waiver from the owner.
11. Hazardous waste, special handling waste, and other waste may not be received, mixed and/or stored or beneficially used with the food waste.
12. Any waste generated from the collection, storage or transport of food waste prior to further processing shall be managed in accordance with the Solid Waste Management Act of July 7, 1980, as amended, P.L. 380, No. 97, 35 P.S. §§6018.101 et seq. and the regulations promulgated there under.
13. Upon cessation of permitted operations at the facility, the permittee shall assure removal of all wastes and provide for the processing, recycling, beneficial use,

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or disposal of wastes in accordance with the SWMA, the environmental protection acts and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

14. Surface water runoff from the food waste collection system shall be controlled and not cause surface water pollution or groundwater degradation and shall be managed in accordance with the Clean Streams Law and regulations promulgated thereunder and Chapter 102.

Nothing in this permit shall be construed to supersede, amend or authorize the discharge of any industrial waste, wastewater, leachate or runoff from the waste storage areas or enclosed vessels to the waters of the Commonwealth.

The activities authorized by this permit shall not cause or allow conditions that are harmful to the environment, public health or safety, including but not limited to, odors, noise or other public nuisances. The permittee shall not cause or allow the attraction, harborage, or breeding of vectors.

15. The local police, fire department, or other appropriate state or local emergency response agencies shall be contacted immediately in the event of a fire, spill, or other hazard arising from the storage threatens public health, safety, and welfare, or the environment, and whenever necessary in the event of personal injury related to such storage.
16. All activities conducted under the authorization granted in this permit shall be conducted in accordance with the permittee's application. Except to the extent the permit states otherwise, the permittee shall utilize materials as described in the permit application.
17. The permittee shall comply with the fugitive emissions regulations under 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 123 (relating to standards for contaminants) issued under the Air Pollution Control Act, the Act of January 8, 1960, P.L. 2119, 35 P.S. §4005, and shall comply with all the applicable provisions of 25 Pa. Code §§123.1 and 123.2 (relating to prohibition of certain fugitive emissions and fugitive particulate matter).
18. Nothing in this permit shall be construed to supersede, amend, or authorize a violation of any of the provisions of any valid and applicable local law, ordinance, or regulation, providing that said local law, ordinance, or regulation is not preempted by the Solid Waste Management Act (SWMA), 35 P.S. §§ 6018.101—6018.1001; and the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act of 1988, 53 P.S. §§4000.101, et seq.
19. As a condition of this general permit and of the permittee's authority to conduct the activities authorized by this general permit, the permittee hereby authorizes and consents to allow authorized employees or agents of the Department, without advance notice or search warrant, upon presentation of appropriate credentials and without delay, to have access to and inspect all areas on which solid waste management activities are being, will be, or have been conducted. This authorization and consent shall include consent to collect samples of waste, soils, water, or gases; take photographs; perform measurements, surveys, and other tests; inspect any monitoring equipment; inspect the

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methods of operation and inspect and/or copy documents, books, and papers required by the Department to be maintained. This permit condition is referenced in accordance with Sections 6018.608 and 6018.610(7) of the SWMA, 35 P.S. §§ 6018.608 and 6018.610(7). This condition in no way limits any other powers granted under the SWMA.

20. Any independent contractors or agents retained by the permittee in the completion of activities authorized under this general permit shall be subject to compliance history review by the Department prior to performance of any activities, as specified by the SWMA.
21. Failure of measures herein approved to perform as intended, or as designed, or in compliance with the applicable laws, rules, and regulations and terms and conditions of this permit, for any reason, shall be grounds for the revocation or suspension of the permittee's approval to operate under this permit.
22. The activities authorized by this general permit shall not harm or present a threat of harm to the health, safety, or welfare of the people or environment of this Commonwealth. The Department may modify, suspend, revoke, and reissue the authorization granted in this general permit if it deems necessary to prevent harm or the threat of harm to the public health, and the environment or if they cannot be adequately regulated under the conditions of this general permit.
23. The permittee shall comply with the terms and conditions of this general permit and with the environmental protection acts to the same extent as if the activities were covered by an individual permit. The Department may require an individual permit be obtained if the permittee cannot comply with the conditions of this general permit or is conducting an activity that harms or presents a threat of harm to the health, safety, or welfare of the public or the environment of this Commonwealth.
24. This permit does not authorize and shall not be construed as an approval to discharge any waste, wastewater, or runoff from the site of processing to the land or waters of the Commonwealth.
25. Best Management Practices shall be implemented to divert storm water run-on from the storage area. Storm water runoff shall be managed in accordance with The Clean Streams Law and regulations promulgated thereunder. Prior to beginning operations at the facility, the operator must obtain all necessary storm water management permits.
26. Equipment used for the processing and storage of the food wastes accepted for collection shall be maintained in good operating condition. During active facility operations and other than weekends and observed holidays, daily inspections of the storage area and surrounding environs shall be conducted to determine compliance with the terms and conditions of this general permit and for evidence of failure.
27. Storage of the food wastes accepted for collection by the permittee shall be in a manner that complies with the requirements set forth in 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 285 (relating to storage, collection and transportation of municipal waste).

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28. The food wastes accepted for collection shall not be mixed with other types of solid wastes, including hazardous waste, other municipal waste, special handling waste, or other residual waste, as the terms are defined in 25 Pa. Code § 287.1.
29. Analytical testing required by this general permit shall be performed by a laboratory accredited under the Pennsylvania Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Act, Act of 2002, 27 Pa. C.S.A. §§ 4101-4113.

**D. Recordkeeping:**

1. The permittee shall maintain records of all analytical evaluations conducted in accordance with this permit, and records shall be made available to the Department upon request. Required records shall be retained for a minimum of 5 years. Records of analytical evaluations must include, at a minimum, the following for each sample: the dates of sampling and testing, sampling procedures utilized, name of the individual who collected the sample, the volume or weight of the sample, each parameter tested, the analytical results, the name of the analytical laboratory used, and the analytical methodologies employed.
2. The permittee shall maintain records of all food waste accepted by the facility, and records shall be made available to the Department upon request. Required records shall be retained for a minimum of 5 years. Records of each source of incoming waste must include, at a minimum, the following: the name, address, and phone number of each user approved to bring waste to the facility; and the name, address, and phone number of the destination of each outgoing shipment of waste. Records of all outgoing food waste transferred from the facility shall include the date and quantity of waste transferred for further processing in either weight or volume. The permittee shall also maintain records of spills or releases that include, at a minimum, the following: the location, date, time, identification, and quantity of spilled or released material, and a description of how the material was cleaned up. The permittee shall also maintain records of all reports submitted to the Department or to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
3. The facility operator shall maintain records of unacceptable wastes that are disposed of from the facility. The records shall include the disposal location and volume or weight of the waste that is disposed.
4. The facility operator shall provide record of the educational materials that are utilized to inform users of this facility about its proper use.

**E. Reporting Requirements:**

1. Any person that operates under the provisions of this permit shall immediately notify the Department via certified mail, or e-mail with confirmation of receipt and acceptance from DEP personnel, of any changes in: the company name, address, owners, operators, and/or responsible officials of the company,

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compliance status, and the status of any permit issued by the Department or federal government under the environmental protection acts.

2. Persons operating under the provision of this general permit shall submit to the appropriate Department Regional Office (see attached list), an annual report on the beneficial use activities conducted under this permit by March 1 for the preceding calendar year. This report shall include the information required by Conditions D.1. through D.4.
3. The permittee shall immediately notify the Department's Emergency Hotline by telephone at 800-541-2050 and the waste management program in the appropriate DEP regional office (see attached list) of any accidental spills and shall take appropriate immediate action to protect the health and safety of the public and the environment.

**F. Renewal:**

A permittee that plans to continue the operations authorized under this general permit, after the expiration date indicated on the approval for coverage page, shall file a complete application for permit renewal at least 180 days before the expiration date of this general permit unless permission has been granted by the Department for submission at a later date. The renewal applications shall be submitted to the appropriate DEP Regional Office (see attached list) and include, at a minimum, the following:

1. General Information Form (Authorization Application for a Residual or Municipal Waste General Permit Application),
2. Form B (Professional Certification),
3. Form 20 (Application for a Municipal or Residual Waste General Permit), and
4. Form 27M (Acceptance of General Permit Conditions).

Additionally, a renewal application fee in the amount identified in Section A (General Information) of the Form 20 must be sent to the appropriate DEP Regional Office. A check shall be made payable to the "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

In the event that a timely and complete application for renewal has been submitted and the Department is unable, through no fault of the permittee, to reissue the general permit or approval for coverage before its current coverage expiration date, the terms and conditions of the approved coverage will automatically continue and will remain fully effective and enforceable pending the issuance or denial of the renewal for permit coverage, provided the permittee is, and has been, operating in compliance with the terms and conditions of the general permit.

**Department of Environmental Protection  
Regional Offices  
(and Counties Served)**

- I. Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia.

**Southeast Regional Office**

2 East Main Street  
Norristown, PA 19401  
Phone: (484) 250 - 5960

- II. Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming.

**Northeast Regional Office**

2 Public Square  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711-0790  
Phone: (570) 826 – 2516

- III. Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, York.

**Southcentral Regional Office**

909 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-8200  
Phone: (717) 705 – 4706

- IV. Bradford, Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, Union.

**Northcentral Regional Office**

208 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street - Suite 101  
Williamsport, PA 17701  
Phone: (570) 327 – 3653

- V. Allegheny, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland.

**Southwest Regional Office**

400 Waterfront Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4745  
Phone: (412) 442 – 4000

- VI. Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango, Warren.

**Northwest Regional Office**

230 Chestnut Street  
Meadville, PA 16335-3481  
Phone: 814-332-6848