



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
SANITATION DISTRICTS  
*Converting Waste Into Resources*

# FOOD WASTE RECYCLING



**E**very day, approximately 4,000 tons of food waste are generated in Los Angeles County. This food waste includes dinner scraps as well as spoiled fruit and vegetables from grocery stores and restaurants. To reduce the amount of food waste going to landfills and the associated greenhouse gases produced from landfilling, California has passed a number of new laws. One of these, Senate Bill (SB) 1383, requires food waste to be put to productive use instead of being landfilled.

## The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts are Here to Help

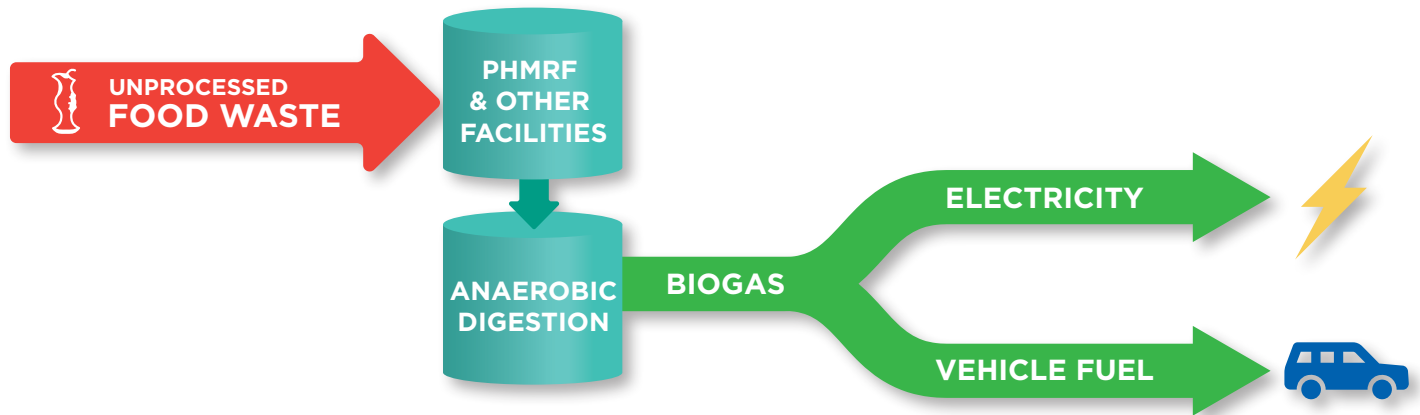
Wastewater treatment plants like our Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) provide a cost-effective option for recycling food waste because they already have much of the needed

infrastructure to recycle food waste, like anaerobic digesters. This infrastructure can be used to convert food waste into biogas, which can be used for energy. Using existing facilities avoids significant construction and lets us pass those savings on to our customers.



Our food waste recycling program is available now to help cities and businesses cost-effectively meet these mandates.

# How Our Food Waste Recycling Program Works



## Accepting Food Waste

The first step in recycling food waste is for waste haulers to collect food waste that has been placed in separate bins by their customers. Loads of food waste are delivered to our Puente Hills Materials Recovery Facility (PHMRF) in Whittier. At PHMRF, the food waste is processed using specialized equipment that removes contaminants like plastic bags and forks and blends the food waste into a slurry. The PHMRF can process up to 165 tons of food waste per day.

## Creating Biogas

We then transport food waste slurry from PHMRF to the JWPCP. We also accept slurry at the JWPCP directly from waste haulers who have their own processing equipment. Overall, we can recycle up to 600 tons per day of slurried food waste. The slurry is added to the plant's anaerobic

digesters, which are large, sealed tanks where microorganisms convert food waste and solids removed during wastewater treatment into biogas.

## Converting Biogas into Energy

The biogas is used in two ways. Some is sent to the JWPCP's power plant where the biogas is converted into electricity that run the treatment plant. The remaining biogas is sent to a gas purification system to make fuel-grade renewable natural gas. The purification system is capable of producing the renewable natural gas equivalent of 2,000 gallons of gasoline per day. This renewable natural gas is dispensed at the Sanitation Districts' nearby compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station that is open to the public. By fueling cars, buses and trucks with renewable natural gas, this program reduces the need for fossil fuels.



To learn more about our program, contact us at [FOODWASTE@LACSD.ORG](mailto:FOODWASTE@LACSD.ORG) or 562-908-4288 Ext. 2431.