

Subject: Public Hearing Comments

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From: DoNotReply@delaware.gov

To: HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources), jennifer.dusek@gmail.com

Comments on Docket #2025-R-WHS-0016 -- Solid Waste Regulations

Name: Jen Klotz

Phone: 6074256401

Email Address: jennifer.dusek@gmail.com

Organization: No

Comments:

My comments are in reference to composting operations. Almost one quarter of state landfills are food scraps. An easy way to fix that is community composting. Interest is there, but barriers like permit fees and antiquated regulations are preventing many from moving forward. With the current assessment for amendments, DNREC is positioned to make positive impact in 5 ways. The new year brought a new Climate Action Plan. Composting reduces harmful emissions and sequesters carbon, both of which apply to this plan and its 2030 and 2050 goals. For example, as stated in the Plan, transportation essentially contributes to 30% of emissions. The number of garbage trucks on the road and heavy landfill equipment will decrease with the increase of community composting sites. Plus, not only does compost itself capture and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, the soil that it makes healthier is then able to sequester better. And remember, even if this impact is “small” as compared to industrial energy efficiency for example, it is still going to help. We’re in dire straits so every avenue should be pursued if it will help. Small scale composting businesses are the first step toward larger food scrap composting. That means income for the First State via paying customers and landfill longevity. Job creation is surely included here and stands as its own positive impact in my opinion. Currently our surrounding states of Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania have better regulations around small scale composting. Why continue to make us spend money out of state for these services? Benefits to physical and mental health may not come top of mind when talking compost, but it’s there. When people feel a part of the solution, their mental health prospers. Serotonin soars and they want to do it again. They’ll even tell other people about it and encourage them to. Thus, growth of the other impacts listed here. Their physical health will receive some gains from it all too. Better soil, water, and air quality that comes from composting can’t be beat. The previous four impacts lead to the last- community building. Small business connects us and community sites require cooperation and collaboration, forcing neighbors to get outside of their bubble. This tends to lead to compassion, which is severely lacking these days. The best part of it all may be that there are no age restrictions. Children, teens, adults, and seniors can compost. And the younger groups build a stronger work ethic through these programs. To me, lifting sweeping large-scale restrictions and fees through exemption in support of small scale and community composting is the answer to a better neighborhood, state, and planet.