



Elementary and Secondary Schools

You can use this fill-in threshold estimation guide to identify if your facility may be subject to the Commercial Food Waste Disposal Ban. If you have any questions, please contact RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts by email (info@recyclingworksma.com) or by calling 1-888-254-5525.

	Average Measurement		Material
Students	0.5	lbs/student/week	Food waste
Disposed Waste	45	% of disposed waste by weight	Food waste

	# of Students	Average Food Waste Measurement	TOTAL Estimated Food Waste Disposed Weekly (lbs)
Students		× 0.5 lbs/student/week	

	Amount of Disposed Waste Weekly (yd ³)	Average Weight of 1 yd ³ Disposed Waste (1 yd ³ = ~450 lbs)	Average Amount of Disposed Waste Weekly (lbs)	% Food Waste Disposed Weekly	TOTAL Estimated Food Waste Disposed Weekly (lbs)
Disposed Waste		× 450 lbs		× 45% of disposed waste by weight	

If the “TOTAL Estimated Food Waste Disposed Weekly” in the final column is greater than 2,000 lbs, then your facility may be subject to the Commercial Food Waste Disposal Ban. If you do not have a food waste diversion program in place, contact RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts [by email](#) or by calling (888) 254-5525, or visit the [RecyclingWorks website](#) to learn how to begin a program today!

If you have **4,000 students** enrolled, then:

$$0.5 \text{ lbs/student/week} * 4,000 \text{ students enrolled} = 2,000 \text{ lbs/week} = 1 \text{ ton of food waste per week}$$

If you fill **1 trash dumpsters at 4 cubic yards 3 times per week**, then:

$$450 \text{ lbs} * (1 \text{ trash dumpsters} * 4 \text{ yd}^3 * 3 \text{ pickups/week}) = 5,400 \text{ lbs of total disposed waste/week}$$

$$5,400 \text{ lbs} * 45\% \text{ of total waste} = 2,430 \text{ lbs/week} = 1.2 \text{ tons of food waste in one week}$$

Note: A school's food waste disposal could be higher if it serves more than 1 meal per student per day, has a culinary education program, or has a centralized kitchen serving other locations. It is recommended that you adjust the equations above to best fit your operations.

Note: These average measurements are based off of waste audit findings from 2007 to 2013 conducted at 7 public elementary, middle, and high schools in MA.

Note: The equation based on weight of disposed waste (above) assumes a weight of 450 lbs/yd³ for mixed commercial waste materials. It was derived using the median value of EPA's standard conversion factor: 1yd³ of commercial-industrial waste = 300 to 600 lbs. You may choose to change this number to best represent your operations.