



Restaurants

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.

Note: RecyclingWorks now breaks out all forms of estimating food waste by the NAICS code definition for limited and full-service restaurants. Limited-Service Restaurants ([NAICS 722211](#)) are defined as “establishments primarily engaged in providing food services ... where patrons generally order or select items and pay before eating.” Full-Service Restaurants ([NAICS 722511](#)) are defined as “establishments primarily engaged in providing food services to patrons who order and are served while seated ... and pay after eating. Actual food waste generation rates within each of these categories can vary widely. Factors such as whether your establishment prepares food from scratch, offers buffet-style dining, or has mostly patrons that eat-in can contribute to higher amounts of food waste. Take into account your restaurant’s operations when considering which metric to use.

	Average	Measurement	Material
Meals Served [Full-Service]	1	lbs/meal	Food Waste
Meals Served [Limited-Service]	0.5	lbs/meal	Food Waste
Employees [Full-Service]	3,000	lbs/employee/year	Food Waste
Employees [Limited-Service]	2,200	lbs/employee/year	Food Waste
Disposed Waste ¹ [Full-Service]	66	% of disposed waste by weight	Food Waste
Disposed Waste ¹ [Limited-Service]	51	% of disposed waste by weight	Food Waste

	# of Meals Served Weekly	Average Food Waste Measurement	TOTAL Estimated Food Waste Disposed Weekly (lbs)
Meals Served [Full-Service]		× 1 lbs/meal	
Meals Served [Limited-Service]		0.5 lbs/meal	

	# of Employees	Average Food Waste Measurement	Average Annual Food Waste Disposed (lbs)	1 Week Divisor	TOTAL Estimated Food Waste Disposed Weekly (lbs)
Employees [Full-Service]		× 3,000 lbs/employee/year		÷ 52	
Employees [Limited-Service]		× 2,200 lbs/employee/year		÷ 52	

	Amount of Disposed Waste Weekly (yd ³)	Average Weight of 1 yd ³ Disposed Waste (1 yd ³ = ~ 250 lbs)	Average Amount of Disposed Waste Weekly (lbs)	% Food Waste Disposed Weekly	TOTAL Estimated Food Waste Disposed Weekly (lbs)
Disposed Waste ¹ [Full-Service]		x 250 lbs		x 66% of disposed waste by weight	
Disposed Waste ¹ [Limited-Service]		x 250 lbs		x 51% 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 are a full-service restaurant serving **2,000 meals** in one week, then:

$$1 \text{ lbs/meal} * 2,000 \text{ meals served/week} = 2,000 \text{ lbs/week} = 1 \text{ ton of food waste per week}$$

If you are a limited-service restaurant serving **4,000 meals** in one week, then:

$$0.5 \text{ lbs/meal} * 4,000 \text{ meals served/week} = 2,000 \text{ lbs/week} = 1 \text{ ton of food waste per week}$$

If you are a full-service restaurant with **35 employees**, then:

$$3,000 \text{ lbs/employee/year} * 35 \text{ full-time employees} = 105,000 \text{ lbs food waste generated/year}$$

$$105,000 \text{ lbs/year} \div 52 \text{ weeks/year} = 2,019 \text{ lbs/week} = 1 \text{ ton of food waste per week}$$

If you are a limited-service restaurant with **48 employees**, then:

$$2,200 \text{ lbs/employee/year} * 48 \text{ full-time employees} = 105,600 \text{ lbs food waste generated/year}$$

$$105,600 \text{ lbs/year} \div 52 \text{ weeks/year} = 2,031 \text{ lbs/week} = 1 \text{ ton of food waste per week}$$

If you are a full-service restaurant and fill **1 trash dumpster at 8 cubic yards 2 times per week**, then:

$$250 \text{ lbs}^1 * (1 \text{ trash dumpster} * 8 \text{ yd}^3 * 2 \text{ pickups/week}) = 4,000 \text{ lbs of total disposed waste/week}$$

$$4,000 \text{ lbs} * 66\% \text{ of total waste} = 2,640 \text{ lbs/week} = 1.3 \text{ tons of food waste in one week}$$

If you are a fast-food restaurant and fill **1 trash dumpster at 8 cubic yards 2 times per week**, then:

$$250^1 \text{ lbs/yd}^3 * (1 \text{ trash dumpster} * 8 \text{ yd}^3/\text{trash dumpster} * 2 \text{ pickups/week}) = 4,000 \text{ lbs of total disposed waste/week}$$

$$4,000 \text{ lbs/week} * 51\% \text{ of total waste} = 2,040 \text{ lbs/week} = 1.0 \text{ tons of food waste in one week}$$

¹ The equation based on weight of disposed waste assumes a weight of 250 lbs/yd³ waste. It is the lower range of the EPA's standard conversion factor for uncompacted mixed MSW (residential, institutional, commercial): 1 yd³ mixed MSW = 250 to 300 lbs. You may choose to change this number to best represent your operations.