



Assembly Bill 1045 (Irwin) Statewide Compost Policy

SUMMARY

AB 1045 establishes a statewide policy to promote the use of compost by requiring state entities to work together to establish a coordinated effort for the development and deployment of compost in order to achieve multiple state goals.

BACKGROUND

Although California leads the nation in waste reduction and recycling, the state continues to dispose of more than 15 million tons of compostable organic waste each year. The state has adopted numerous goals that will encourage recycling of this waste and will ultimately lead to more compost production in the coming years.

The Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 specifies a state policy goal to divert 75 percent of solid waste generated from landfills by 2020.

In 2014, the California Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, two laws that will lead to the diversion of more organic waste from landfills. Both AB 1826 (Chesbro) and AB 1594 (Williams) will both ultimately lead to more organic waste being turned into compost.

In addition to waste diversion goals, the state's climate change goals also address compost. The Economic and Technology Advancement Committee that was formed under the California Global Warming Solution Act of 2006, identified composting as a cost effective technology for reducing greenhouse gases.

Further, the application of compost in agriculture and landscaping has been shown to offer significant soil carbon sequestration and water quality benefits, provide erosion control, reduce the need for synthetic and fertilizers and pesticides, and conserve water and energy required for irrigation.

NEED FOR THE BILL

Despite the fact that composting and the appropriate use of compost will help the state reach numerous policy goals, there is no unified policy to promote

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compost use. Currently, 3 state entities have jurisdiction over compost and compost facilities: CalRecycle, the State Water Quality Control Board, and the Air Resources Board.

To reach state policy goals, a more coordinated effort is needed among state entities to promote the use of organic waste materials and their conversion to compost. Additionally, it is necessary to begin to identify how compost should be used to maximize soil carbon management.

AB 1045 establishes a statewide policy to promote the development and deployment of compost. It recognizes that there are multiple agencies involved in the policy-making regarding the feedstock, transportation, development, and ultimate use of compost.

AB 1045 identifies the need for the state to view compost as a valuable resource; one that benefits agriculture and the rural economy, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and helps our state meet its waste diversion goals.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

Specifically, this bill provides authority the Secretary of Cal EPA to work with CalRECYCLE to ensure the state has a comprehensive compost policy in place to promote our waste diversion and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

In addition, AB 1045 states that the Secretary, in coordination with California Department of Food and Agriculture, will promote the goal of deploying enough compost to reduce greenhouse gases by 5 million metric tons per year.

Finally, the measure requires the Cal EPA Secretary to work with the departments and boards within the agency to make sure that the various policies and regulations are developed to support the goals of the bill.

SUPPORT

None at this time



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OPPOSITION

None at this time

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