

Organics to Energy

Organics diversion and recycling isn't just for restaurants and resorts. California special events and venues are now required to divert their food waste and other compostables away from the landfill. This organics stream accounts for some 30-40% of the total waste stream and represents the largest piece of the landfill pie at 30%. Additionally, some 20% of our methane emissions originate from landfills. Wasted organics, however, also represent a significant opportunity to capture and donate food to needy local communities, create compost material (a potential carbon sink), and even capture biogas through anaerobic digestion to produce renewable electricity.

Three pieces of California legislation are holding special events and venues accountable: 1.) [AB 341](#), which sets the state's total waste diversion goal at 75% or higher; 2.) [AB 2176](#), which requires large special events and venues to have a recycling plan and report annual progress; and 3.) [AB 1826](#), which requires organics capture and diversion for commercial properties generating four yards or more of organics per week, with decreasing thresholds over time.

[The Offset Project](#) works with dozens of businesses, special events, and venues on organics diversion and food donation programs. For example, the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am donated nearly 7,000 lbs of food [and composted via anaerobic digestion](#) approximately 33,000 pounds of food scraps at its 2017 event. This year TOP will also submit a food recovery grant request to [CalRecycle](#) in order to recover food waste from Salinas Valley agriculture processors and shift that stream to the Food Bank for Monterey County in Salinas.

For more about TOP's organics diversion programs:

<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/Food/Compost/SpecialEvent/TOP.htm>

<https://www.theoffsetproject.org/portfolio-item/edible-inspiration-spring-2013/>