# In-home Food Waste System Grants – Application Support Guide

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## What do councils need to consider for in-home food waste systems?

### Container selection

Evidence shows that provision of kitchen benchtop containers to households increases the diversion of food waste from landfill. When combined with educational material and awareness-raising efforts, the containers act as a prompt located in the right place and time to encourage and enable effective and efficient food waste recycling practices.

Containers trialled in the 2009–10 *Valuing our food waste: SA's household food waste recycling pilot* included a ventilated caddy with a certified compostable liner, and a fully enclosed caddy with no liner. Both types of caddy were used as kitchen benchtop containers for residents to place food waste generated through food storage, preparation, and/or consumption. When the containers were full, residents placed the contents in their kerbside green organics bin for collection and processing.

The amount of food waste diverted will depend upon many factors, and performance of the ventilated and lined caddy will vary to that of the enclosed and unlined caddy. In the 2009–10 pilot, **3 times as much food waste was diverted via the ventilated caddy than the enclosed caddy.**

In enclosed caddies, moisture can affect the performance of liner, requiring more frequent replacement of liners. Council wishing to provide enclosed caddies should limit their distribution to only a small number of households and only upon request by householders. Householders should also be advised that enclosed caddies are designed to be used without a liner and that due to the lack of ventilation, any liners used may need to be changed frequently due to moisture build up.

Before applying for *In-home Food Waste System Grants*, councils should consider the outcomes of the 2009–10 food waste pilot (including market research findings and kerbside audit results) and the *SA Better Practice Guide: Sustainable Kerbside Services*.

### Lined container

The pilot showed the use of liners inside a benchtop container increases householder participation and quantities of food waste diverted. The use of certified compostable liners is most widely accepted by householders, increasing both participation rates and yield. Liners reduced the need for container cleaning, enabled easier transfer of the material to the green organics bin and reduced odours. Liners must be certified compostable to Australian Standard 4736-2006 and/or Australian Standard 5810-2010 and should be printed with certification details and educational message about correct use.

An initial supply of 75 liner bags provided with the ventilated container for each participating household is expected to last each household approximately 6 months, based on the use of 2 to 3 bags a week. This amount is considered a reasonable guide, although it may vary depending on the number of people per household, food storage, preparation and food consumption, and disposal habits.

A pilot supported by GISA and coordinated by the City of Holdfast Bay in 2018–19 trialled the use of compostable bags in fresh food retail outlets as a means of removing barriers for residents in accessing liner bags for food waste systems. The pilot resulted in household food waste diversion doubling in the council area, and the retail stores recognised the benefits of increased customers and ‘closing the loop’ in the circular economy by diverting food waste from landfill to be composted.

The September 2024 ban on single-use plastic barrier bags for loose fruits, vegetables, nuts and confectionery, and the subsequent uptake of certified compostable bags being made available for these purposes improved accessibility to suitable liners directly from supermarkets and other retailers, and therefore reduces the cost burden to council of replacement bags. Additionally, this measure encourages the continued use of food waste systems by householders who may not readily visit a council office or library for replacement compostable bags.

The council’s role in distributing an ongoing supply of certified compostable liner bags to residents is a matter that should be determined by council. GISA funding for certified compostable liner bags is limited to an initial roll of liners to support immediate use of the system. Councils are strongly encouraged to provide information to residents in supporting education materials on reusing certified compostable barrier bags for this purpose.




City of Marion developed a flyer for residents on using certified compostable bags and also undertaken awareness campaigns, involving social media and digital advertising at major shopping centres which resulted in a significant increase in people using these bags to divert food waste.

**Grant funding towards compostable liners will only be endorsed where containers are ventilated**. Applications should identify the type of container that will be offered as well as any costs related to their introduction, including the cost of the container itself, assembly (if required), labelling/branding – consistent with the requirement to recognise the state government (GISA), and distribution.

Financial support towards the rollout of unlined/non-ventilated food organics systems are a low priority as results have shown these systems do not achieve satisfactory diversion rates, primarily due to lower participation rates with these systems.

### Total system costs

Applicants are encouraged to review the *SA Better Practice Guide: Sustainable Kerbside Services* which provides practical information and tools to SA councils on introducing the service model. The guide is supported by a cost calculator to help councils identify potential costs (or savings) of moving to the Sustainable Kerbside Service model.

The guide does not replace a detailed business case or feasibility study, and councils should conduct appropriate due diligence before making any changes to kerbside services and contracts.

This report outlines assumptions on various aspects of introducing a food waste system, as well as forecasts on potential yields that could be achieved.

## GISA-approved branded education and information

Education is essential to raise and maintain awareness of the importance of food waste recycling and minimise contamination risks. Educational material must clearly define food and other organic material that can be diverted to the green organics bin, including certified compostable packaging, as well as materials that should not be placed in the green organics bin.

It is expected that councils undertake communications throughout the year to advise householders of the availability of food waste containers and certified compostable liners from fresh food retail outlets. As a minimum, councils are expected to:

- provide printed education material along with the food waste container, using GISA-approved branding, typically *Which Bin* branded materials available from GISA
- place articles in newsletters and deliver other printed materials at least twice per year, including where the food waste is processed and where resulting compost and soil improvement products are being used
- promote food waste recycling in social media and online communications throughout the year, with a minimum of one post per month
- use awareness raising initiatives such as outdoor banners and signage for libraries or community centres.




GISA's range of *Which Bin* resources have been developed based on market research. GISA will work with councils to co-brand resources, and can make further customisations to resources, or develop new resources as required. To request materials, councils can contact greenindustries@sa.gov.au

Available resources include but are not limited to:

- educational brochures
- flyers
- rate notice inserts
- pull-up banners
- street banners and outdoor digital displays.

Example of the available resources are provided below.

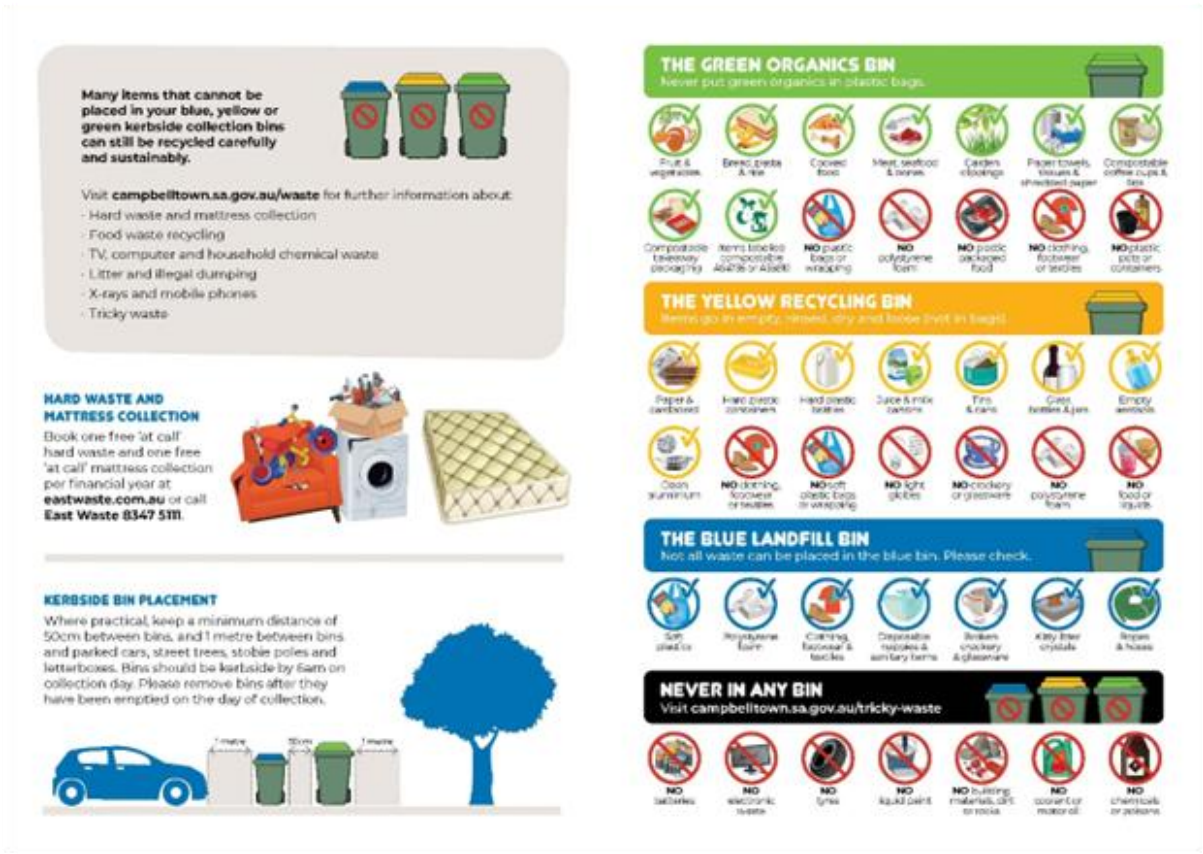



**Educational brochures**




**Council communications**




**Waste collection calendar**

## Guidance on completing application risk assessment

**1. Identify the risks:** Using the table in C11: Project risk assessment, list potential risks to the project (such as delays, budget overruns, safety issues, lack of participation).

**2. Assess inherent risk (before controls):** Using **table 1 (likelihood)** and **table 2 (consequence) below**, determine the *inherent risk rating* for each risk. Then apply **table 3 (risk matrix)** to assign a risk level (such as low, medium, significant, high, extreme).

**3. Identify and apply controls:** Outline practical control measures/mitigation strategies to reduce either the likelihood or consequence of the risk and add them to assessment criteria C11 Project risk assessment.

**4. Assess residual risk (after controls):** Reassess the likelihood and consequence after controls are applied, again using **tables 1 to 3**, to determine the *residual risk rating* you are required to add to assessment criteria C12 Project risk assessment.

**Table 1: Qualitative measures of likelihood**

| Likelihood | Level | Description | Explanation – Projects/ business case | FREQUENCY (Description) | Explanation – operations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Almost certain** | A | Over 99% probability, happens often (once or more a week), could occur within days to weeks | Could be expected to occur more than once during the study or project delivery | Event is expected to occur in most circumstances | It is **expected to occur** again, immediately or within a short period – likely to occur most weeks or months. |
| **Likely** | B | 50% probability, could easily happen (once or more a month), could occur within weeks or months | Could easily be incurred and has generally occurred in similar studies or projects. | Event could occur in most circumstances | **Will probably occur** in most circumstances – several times a year. |
| **Possible** | C | 10% probability, can happen, has occurred before (once or more a year), could occur after several years | Incurred in a minority of similar studies or projects | Event could occur at some time | **Could be incurred** within a 1-to-2-year period. |
| **Unlikely** | D | 1% probability, has not happened yet, but could (once or more every 5 years), could occur after several years | Known to happen, but only rarely. | Event could occur in circumstances | **Could be incurred** in a 2-to-5-year time frame. |
| **Rare** | E | <1% probability, conceivable but only in extreme circumstances (once or more every 10 years), exceptionally unlikely, even in the long term | Has not occurred in similar studies or projects. Conceivable but in extreme circumstances. | Event may only occur in exceptional circumstances | **May occur in exceptional circumstances**. Could be incurred in a 5-to-30-year timeframe. |

**Table 2: Qualitative Measures of Consequence**

| Impact area | Impact scale | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1 – Minimal** | **2 – Minor** | **3 – Moderate** | **4 – Major** | **5 – Severe** |
| **Financial loss** | Minimal financial loss (<$2K) | Minor financial loss ($2K to $5K) | Moderate financial loss ($50K to $100K) | Major financial loss ($100K to $1M) | Catastrophic financial loss ($1M+) |
| **Work health and safety** | No injuries or no injury requiring treatment | First aid treatment | Minor injuries requiring medical attention | Moderate injuries | Major or severe injuries including fatalities |
| **Effect on public image** | No adverse effect | Minor adverse effect: kept in-house, no media interest | Local media coverage, moderate adverse effect | State media coverage | International and/or national media coverage, leads to changes at Board or Executive level. |
| **Level of community concern** | No community interest | Limited community interest | One or two community complaints | Significant community interest | Community outrage |
| **Impact on stakeholder relationships** | Negligible adverse impact | Disadvantage for stakeholders (days-weeks) | Significant disadvantage to multiple stakeholders (weeks) | Multiple stakeholders severely disadvantaged (weeks) | Majority of stakeholders severely disadvantaged (months) |
| **Impact on objectives** | Limited impact on objectives | Impedes one or more objectives or causes inefficiencies in key processes | impedes achievement of important objectives/causes extensive inefficiencies in key processes | Serious process breakdown that substantially impedes the achievement of core objectives | Serious process breakdown that prevents the achievement of mission critical objectives. |

**Table 3: Risk matrix**

| | | CONSEQUENCE | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Minimal** | **Minor** | **Moderate** | **Major** | **Severe** |
| **LIKELIHOOD** | | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **Almost Certain** | **E** | Medium | Significant | High | Extreme | Extreme |
| **Likely** | **D** | Medium | Medium | Significant | High | Extreme |
| **Possible** | **C** | Low | Medium | Significant | High | High |
| **Unlikely** | **B** | Low | Low | Medium | Significant | High |
| **Rare** | **A** | Low | Low | Medium | Significant | Significant |

# Frequently asked questions

## Will my application be accepted following the closure date?

No - late applications will not be accepted.

Future funding rounds will be considered by GISA alongside budget availability, interest and uptake in previous rounds.

## Can council seek funding for a redistribution of free bags?

No - funding is only available for an initial supply of 75 certified compostable bags per tenement when distributed with a **ventilated** container and educational material.

On 1 September 2024, bans on single-use plastic barrier bags for unpackaged fruit, vegetable, nuts and confectionery came into effect in South Australia. This has resulted in significant uptake of certified compostable bags in fresh food retail outlets, improving accessibility to suitable liners across the community.

Outside of this grant program, GISA will work with councils to develop educational materials and information for residents to promote availability of certified compostable bags for kitchen containers. To access this service, contact greenindustries@sa.gov.au.

## What if council's proposal cost is more than $10 per serviced tenement?

The grant payment will provide 50% of the total costs, up to $10 per serviced tenement. GISA will meet 100% of the cost of an initial roll of 75 compostable bags provided with approved caddies and educational materials.

## Do I need to provide organisational approval as part of the application?

Applicants should seek the appropriate organisational approval (e.g. a council resolution) in support of the project prior to submitting an application wherever possible. However, where approval is not available at the time of application, it does not need to be submitted with the application. Details of the approval must be provided within 3 months of receiving initial notification of the funding application outcomes, or within 3 months of a funding agreement being executed, and before any payment is made, to confirm that the project can proceed.

## What is a 'serviced tenement'?

A serviced tenement is usually a household but may be a business if it is using the same kerbside waste and recycling service as surrounding households. The incentive payment will be calculated and based on the serviced tenements receiving food waste organics services if systems are being rolled out area-wide.

Where a council applies for a top-up when expanding or reinvigorating an existing service (e.g. moving from an opt-in or staged / geographic area roll-out to area-wide roll-out or extending provision to new tenants). The incentive payment will be based on the number of households and/or small businesses requiring a new or replacement system.

## Why is an audit required for grants with a total amount over $200,000 (excluding GST) across one or more funding rounds under this program?

Access to accurate, reliable, and consistent data through the conduct of kerbside audits helps councils and GISA to plan future waste reduction strategies. Important reasons for undertaking a kerbside audit include:

- providing feedback to the community on their recycling efforts
- reviewing the performance of a new system
- reviewing an existing system prior to tendering for a new kerbside contract (or at a mid-term review)
- validating kerbside yields to GISA.

Audits are to be undertaken in alignment with the new South Australia's kerbside waste audit guidelines, which are currently in development and anticipated to be available in early 2027. Applicants are to consult with GISA should the proposed methodology for conducting kerbside waste and recycling audits differ from the new guidelines.