

## **YARD TRIMMINGS MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR HOMEOWNERS\***

*What “yard trimmings” materials must I keep separate from my trash?*

“Yard trimmings” refers to “plant material resulting from lawn maintenance and other horticultural gardening and landscaping activities” and would include grass, leaves, prunings, brush, shrubs, garden material, Christmas trees, and tree limbs up to 4 inches in diameter.

*What are my options for getting rid of this material?*

The homeowner has 3 options:

- Keep the material on your property and manage it by composting, mulching, and grasscycling (leaving the grass on the lawn);
- Drop off the material at a yard trimmings processing facility; or
- Arrange to have the material picked up by a company that provides this service (for example, a private hauler or a landscaping company).

*If I cannot manage the material myself, how will I find someone to pick it up?*

Contact your trash hauler. If your hauler will not provide the service, contact other haulers or landscaping companies to find out who will pick up your material and at what price. These companies want your business, so you should be able to do some comparison shopping.

*How must I prepare the materials for pickup?*

Just as trash haulers have different requirements for how you set out your trash, your yard trimmings collector will set the requirements for how this material should be set out. The details of collection (method, frequency, cost, etc.) are business decisions that each hauler and landscaping company must make.

*How much will it cost me to have my yard trimmings picked up?*

It is impossible to know what the exact cost will be for each household but costs have been estimated to be between \$3 and \$7 per month. Private companies might charge more or less than that amount. The Delaware Solid Waste Authority charges \$3 per month for this service provided a homeowner also participates in the DSWA’s curbside recycling program. DSWA limits the amount of yard waste they will pick up to 4 bags per week. For additional information visit <http://dswa.com/>. Costs can be minimized through strategies such as co-collection (collecting both trash and yard trimmings at the same time but putting them in different compartments in the truck) or franchising of collection districts. Homeowners should compare the services and prices of different companies and choose the one that best meets their needs.

*Where will the material go for processing?*

There is substantial private sector interest in establishing facilities to process yard trimmings into marketable products such as compost and mulch. The establishment of such businesses is likely, but of course not certain. If these businesses do not materialize, the Delaware Solid Waste Authority will provide facilities to accept and manage the yard trimmings.

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\* The information contained herein applies to residents who contract with a private hauler for trash collection. Residents in municipalities that provide this service will be affected differently.