

## Waste disposers in the kitchen deal with compost

**The inhabitants of Smedjebacken can now use waste disposers in the kitchen to deal with their compost. This leads to simple handling and lowers the municipality's environmental impact. Carbon dioxide emissions from the transportation of domestic refuse have decreased by 123 tonnes per year, and a formerly oil-fired treatment plant is now heated with biogas.**

The energy and water company in Smedjebacken offered to deal with its customers' compostable waste using a waste disposer instead of them doing their own composting or having the refuse truck take their compost away. The project was implemented in 2000 and 2001, assisted in part by grants from the local investment programme (LIP).

The project is a good example of how a municipality can save money by reducing its environmental impact and simultaneously offering members of the public a new and simple way of separating their refuse.

### POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- Carbon dioxide emissions decreased by 123 tonnes per year.
- Biogas replaced 450 MWh per year of oil-fired heating. Oil consumption decreased by 40 tonnes per year.
- The municipality saves money through reduced refuse transport.

### IMPLEMENTATION

Smedjebacken had already worked on increasing the separation of domestic refuse, and the municipality wanted to continue this work. The municipality chose to install waste disposers in a number of apartment blocks owned by the

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municipal housing company, as it was a technology that appeared to offer promise. The waste disposers are located under the sink and grind up the compostable waste. They are the size of a large thermos and very reliable.

Installation was simple and did not require any further modifications after the waste disposer had been installed. The ground waste accompanies the wastewater to a treatment plant, where it is digested. The biogas from digestion is used for heating. The digestion residues are mainly used today as soil on which to grow grass.

The municipality upgraded the treatment plant concerned in conjunction with the project.

### POTENTIAL AND FUTURE BENEFIT

There are environmental objectives to increase biological treatment for food waste. Waste disposers can provide an efficient way of managing organic waste, replacing the need for waste transport. Food waste becomes a raw material for biogas, which is an important element in the switching of society from fossil to renewable fuels.

Biogas produced from waste and residues offers several benefits. It eliminates a waste management problem with possible adverse effects on the environment, and production does not lead to conflicts over the use of land, for example to produce foods.

### WHY BEST PRACTICE

The project was one of the first in Sweden in which waste disposers were installed in apartment blocks.

The municipal housing company is continuing to install waste disposers, and some housing cooperative associations have followed suit. However, installation of waste disposers has not spread as quickly as was initially hoped.

The waste disposers allow for easy compost management, which elderly people in particular have appreciated. Without the project they would probably not have known that the possibility existed.

The project has led to greater involvement and trust in environmental efforts in the municipality, and to the municipality maintaining the sewer network more carefully than previously. The municipality is installing a gas-fired boiler which is to produce electricity from biogas, as a direct consequence of the municipality installing the waste disposers.

Other municipalities and property companies have shown interest and have come on study visits.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Contractors/providers:

The waste disposers were supplied by Disperator AB

For further information on Best Practice:

[www.swedishepa.se/bestpractice](http://www.swedishepa.se/bestpractice)  
[www.naturvardsverket.se/mir](http://www.naturvardsverket.se/mir)

### FACTS

LIP Smedjebacken 1999

Action 3

Environmental investment: SEK 11m

Grant: SEK 3.4m

