

What Happens?

Written by Asia Jones-Carr

Illustrated by Teresa Riojas



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT

Financed with funds from TCEQ through AACOG for use in the City's Recycling Education/Outreach Program.

© Copyright City of San Antonio. All Rights Reserved.

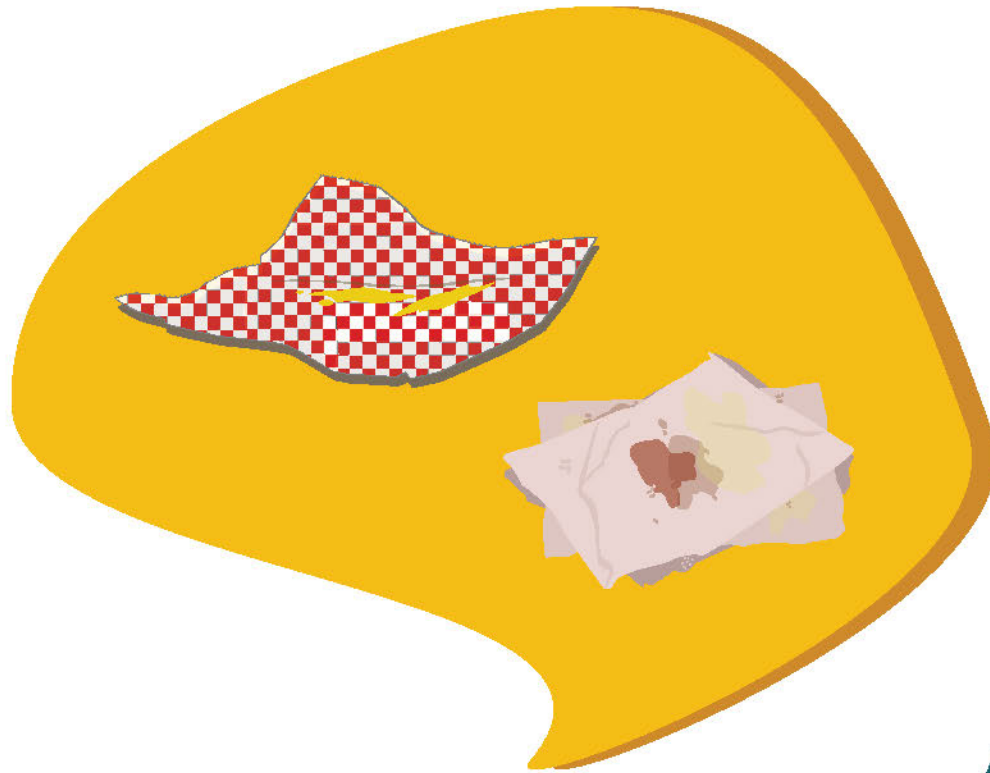


Hi, I'm Tyler.
Have you ever wondered what happens to
the material in the green cart after
it leaves your house?



Let's begin here in the neighborhood where San Antonio families place yard waste, food waste and food soiled paper into the green organics cart.

Food-soiled paper? Yes, the food-soiled paper is paper that gets greasy, saucy or cheesy. Like a burger wrapper, paper napkins, and pizza boxes.



Did you know food scraps like banana peels, apple cores, and even old moldy food can go in the green cart?



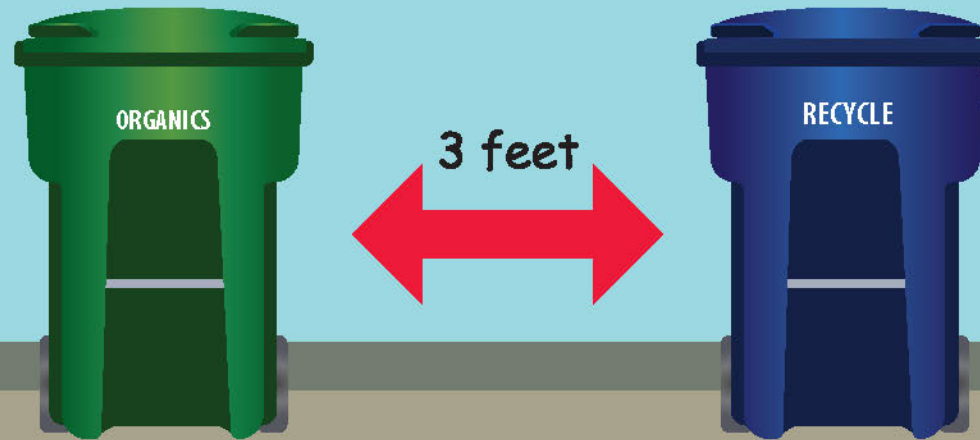
Yard waste is anything that was growing in the yard like grass, weeds and plants.





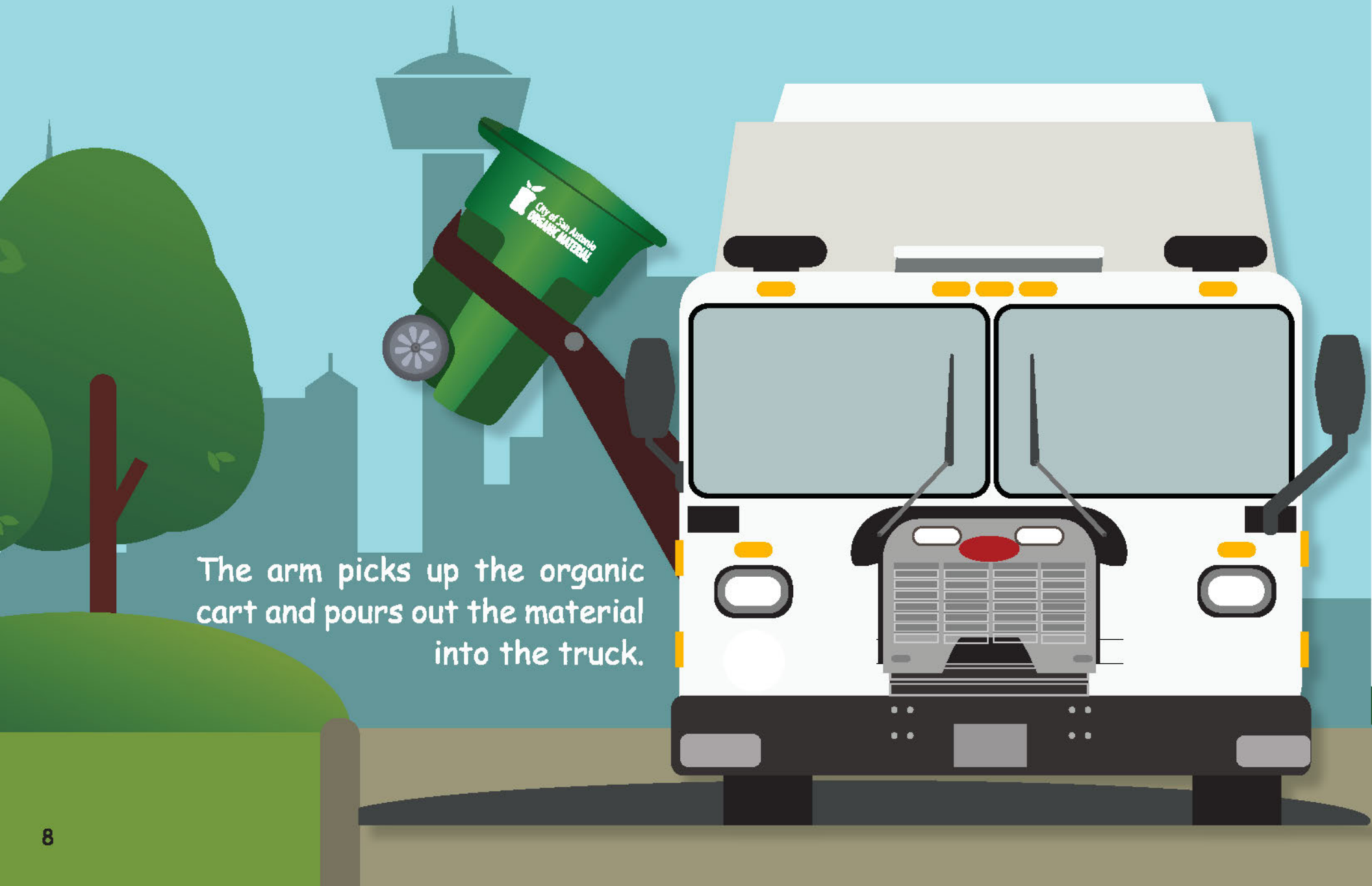
Families place their yard waste, food waste, and food-soiled paper in paper bags or loosely into the green organics cart.

On collection day, place the green cart at the curb at least 3 feet from the blue cart and before 7 a.m.



Make sure the wheels of the cart are facing the curb.

Our friendly organics driver enters the neighborhood driving an organics truck that uses a special arm to reach out and grab the green cart.



The arm picks up the organic cart and pours out the material into the truck.



To make sure we are collecting only organic material the truck has a camera that can see what is being poured out of the cart.

If the driver spots anything other than organic material, a reminder tag is left on the cart.



When the truck is full, it comes here, to the composting facility where compost is made.



What is compost?



Compost is dark and crumbly
just like dirt.



It is full of rich nutrients for plants, flowers and trees.



Materials are dumped out and inspected.



If the inspectors see diapers, trash, or plastic, it is moved to the side and taken to the landfill.



The pile of good materials is scooped up and placed into a grinding machine.



This machine crushes and shreds the material into smaller pieces.



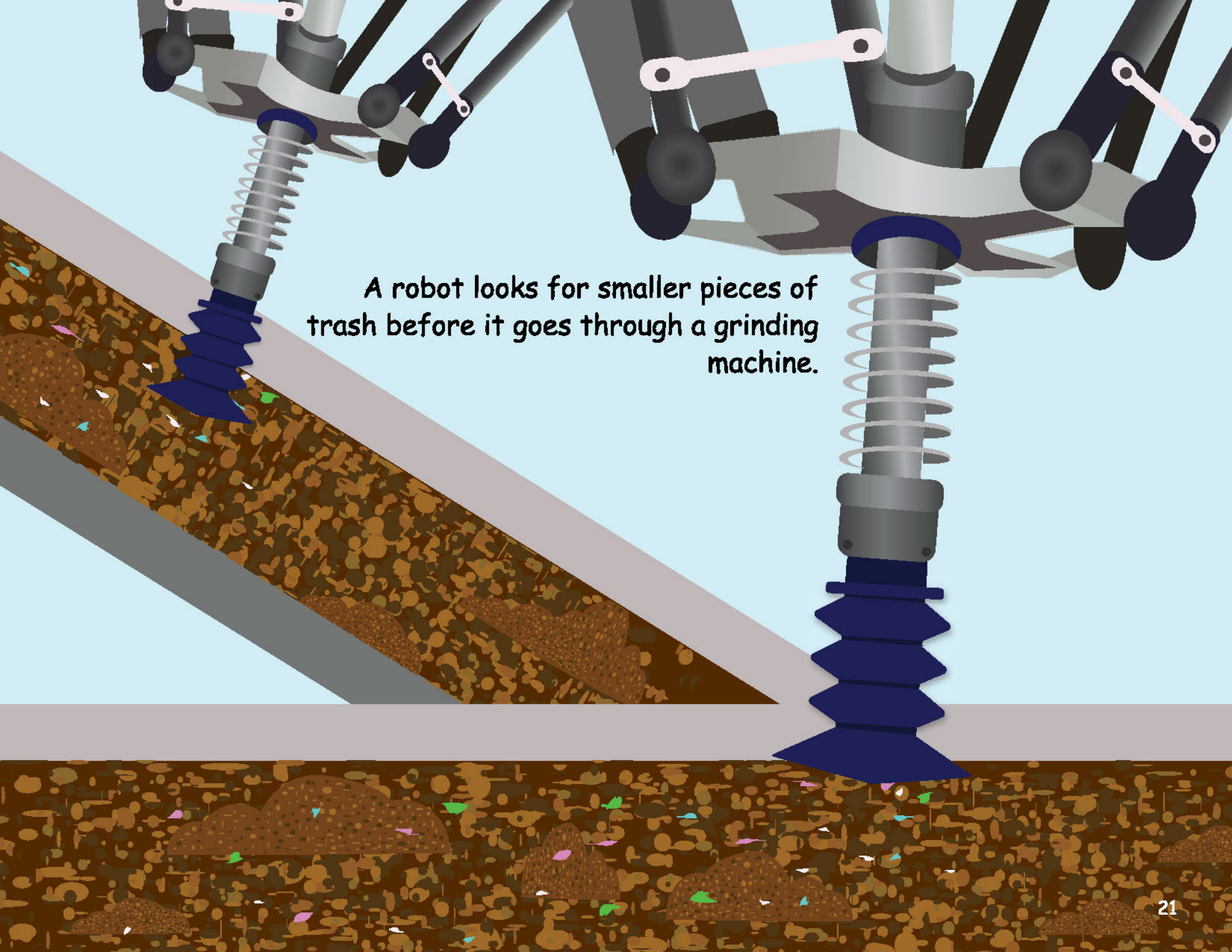
Smaller pieces help speed up the composting process.





The piles are hand sorted to remove any trash that was hidden.



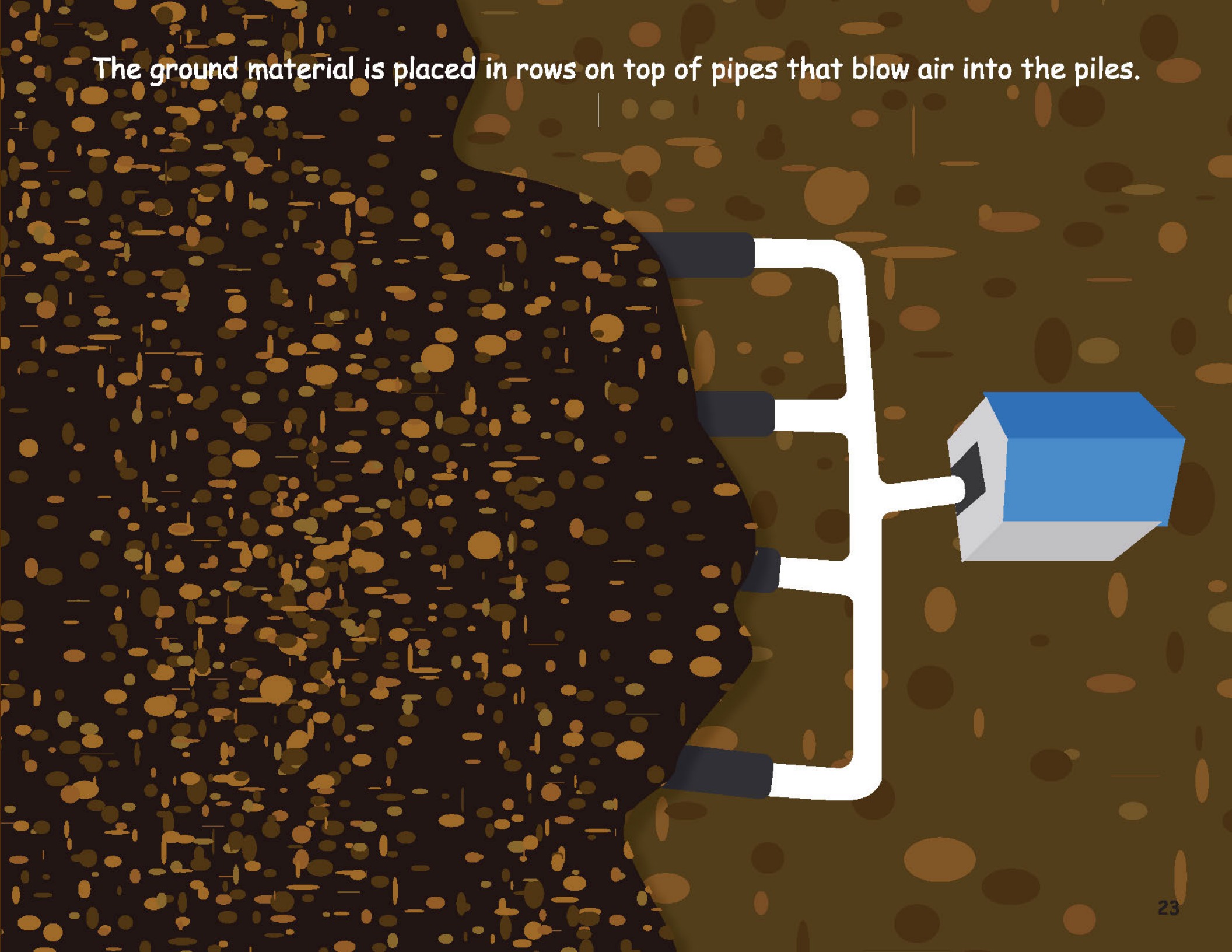


A robot looks for smaller pieces of trash before it goes through a grinding machine.

There is more...the ground materials are scooped up by a tractor and moved to the composting area.



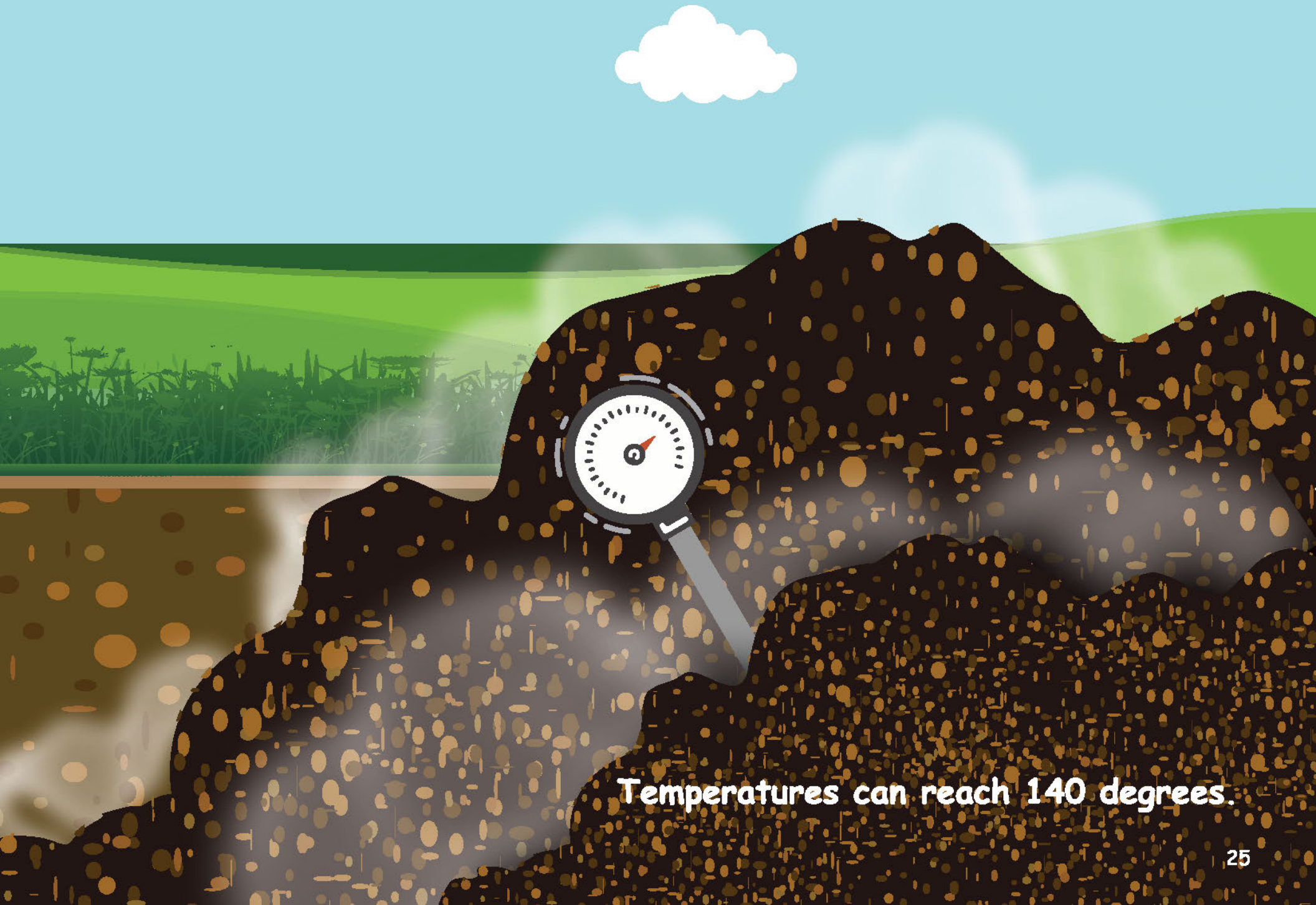
The ground material is placed in rows on top of pipes that blow air into the piles.



The compost piles are sprinkled with water.



The compost piles naturally get hot and can begin to cook.



Temperatures can reach 140 degrees.

Microorganisms in the pile begin breaking down the yard waste, food waste, and food-soiled paper.



Fungi

Actinomycetes

Bacteria

In two months, the compost is ready to go through a screen.



This screen separates the good stuff from the bad stuff.



Now all the yard waste, food waste, and food-soiled paper is compost!



Some of the compost is put into bags and sold at your neighborhood garden nursery or the patio section of the local store.



We also see it when new trees are planted in parks and near the highways.



So, let's do our part and use the green cart!





CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



ORGANICS

ORGANICS

Financed with funds from TCEQ through AACOG for use in the City's
Recycling Education/Outreach Program.

© Copyright City of San Antonio. All Rights Reserved.