What is Thurston Food Rescue?

Thurston Food Rescue is a program organized by several food banks and community meal programs to safely collect unserved edible food for those in need by preventing good food from going to the landfill.

How does it work?

Connect with a local food bank or community meal program to identify foods to donate and to set a collection schedule. Start small and expand the types and quantities of food you rescue over time.

What types of organizations can donate food?

- Restaurants
- Schools
- Caterers
- Cafes
- Hospitals
- Grocery stores
- Food processors

Many organizations and catered events prepare food that does not always end up getting served. Almost any food item can be rescued, including pizza, buffet foods, unopened milk cartons, and platters of sandwiches.

Can organizations be held liable?

The Washington State Good Samaritan Act (RCW 69.80.031) allows for the following:

- Protection from civil or criminal liability when donating food in good faith to a non-profit organization distributing to needy individuals.

Why rescue food?

- **Saves money** - the most expensive way to manage surplus edible food is to throw it in the garbage. Rescuing food may reduce your organization’s disposal costs.

- **Helps families in need** - 1 in 6 families in Thurston County do not have a secure, consistent source of food.

- **Conserves resources** - food waste is the single largest item by weight in Thurston County’s garbage.

Thurston Food Rescue started as a pilot project with assistance from Thurston County Public Works, with project funding provided by a Washington State Department of Ecology Coordinated Prevention Grant.

To get connected with one of the partners contact the Thurston County Food Bank at 360-352-8597 ext. 102.