



METRO

Metro Solid Waste Regulatory Guidance Bulletin

GB 5

March 2010

Organic Materials at Composting and Reload Facilities

All composting and reload facilities located in the Metro region are required to either obtain a Metro Solid Waste Facility License, or a Metro Solid Waste Facility Franchise, depending on the type and volume of feedstocks accepted. A Solid Waste Franchise is required for most food waste composting because food waste is putrescible and, if not managed properly, can cause odor, health and environmental problems. This *Metro Solid Waste Regulatory Guidance Bulletin* (Bulletin) is intended to provide an outline on what kinds of organic materials can be currently accepted at different categories of Metro-authorized facilities.

Definitions

The following are informal definitions used by Metro in licensing and franchising solid waste operations and will be useful in understanding and applying the concepts in the Bulletin:

Clean wood waste means solid waste consisting of wood pieces and particles that do not contain paint, laminate, bonding agents or chemical preservatives.

Creosote-treated wood waste means solid waste consisting of wood pieces and particles containing creosote or creosols such as railroad ties and telephone poles.

Painted wood waste means solid waste consisting of wood pieces and particles containing paint, bonding agents, laminate or stain. This includes manufactured wood debris such as plywood, particleboard and oriented strand board.

Mixed food waste means solid waste consisting of source-separated, commercial, pre- or post-consumer mixed food waste, residential post-consumer mixed food waste, meats, fats or manures.

Treated wood waste means solid waste consisting of wood pieces and particles containing chemical preservatives such as pentachlorophenol or chromated copper arsenate (CCA).

Vegetative food waste means solid waste consisting of source-separated, commercial, vegetative pre-consumer food waste. In this context, vegetative means fruit, vegetables or plant material.

Yard debris means vegetative or woody material generated from residential or commercial landscaping activities. Yard debris includes landscape waste, grass clippings, leaves, hedge trimmings, stumps and other vegetative waste having similar properties, but does not include demolition debris, painted or treated wood.

General Discussion

Metro applies two levels of authorizing documents to different organics processing facilities: a solid waste license or a solid waste franchise. A license is issued by staff under the direction of the Metro Chief Operating Officer (COO) for non-putrescible waste processing activities,

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including processing hogged fuel feedstocks, reloading yard debris and composting yard debris. The Metro Council can issue a franchise for activities involving putrescible waste, which has a higher risk for creating nuisances, degrading the environment and attracting vectors. The two compost feedstocks that require a franchise are vegetative food waste and mixed food waste.

Through its license and franchise documents, Metro regulates and establishes operating conditions for facilities that accept organics according to the following categories:

- Yard Debris Reload
- Yard Debris Compost Facility
- Vegetative Food Waste Compost Facility
- Mixed Food Waste Compost Facility

Yard Debris Reload and Yard Debris Composting Facilities

Facilities that reload or compost yard debris are authorized to accept “clean” compostable feedstock, which includes clean wood, landscape debris, commercial or residential yard debris, and other wastes specifically authorized in writing by Metro.

Many compost facilities, yard debris reloads and material recovery facilities (MRFs) also perform hogged fuel processing. This activity includes the collection, sorting/separation, processing and delivery of clean, painted, treated or creosote-treated wood to be burned for energy recovery. The acceptance of painted wood, treated wood, or creosote-treated wood requires explicit authorization in the Metro-authorizing document. For more information, consult *Metro Solid Waste Guidance Bulletin No. 3: Painted and Treated Wood at MRFs, Yard Debris Reload Facilities and Yard Debris Composting Facilities*.

Vegetative Food Waste and Mixed Food Waste

In order to help meet regional and state mandated waste reduction goals, Metro and its local government partners are now focusing on increasing recovery of food waste and diverting it away from landfills. Management strategies include source-separation, collection, and composting food wastes at properly authorized facilities. Options are being explored that will include recovery of both vegetative and mixed food waste generated from many sources including: grocery stores, restaurants, cafeterias, food processors, and eventually residential sources. These efforts are not without challenges; especially difficult is communicating to generators where food waste may be delivered and processed for composting.

As more emphasis is placed on recovery and diversion of food waste, both vegetative and mixed, more scrutiny will be placed on haulers, processors and reload operations. Yard debris facilities located inside the Metro region that wish to accept food waste as a composting feedstock, must have land use approval before applying for a Metro franchise. Additionally, a DEQ permit must also be obtained prior to accepting any mixed food wastes.

Facilities accepting vegetative or mixed food waste will have to meet more stringent operational standards than those that only receive yard debris. For example, Metro-franchised compost facilities will be required to cover compost piles (either within a building or otherwise contained), collect and treat runoff and leachate, aerate compost piles, and manage compost piles in a manner that prevents odors and other nuisance conditions.

The following chart lists the various types of organic materials that may be accepted at Metro-authorized composting or reload facilities under standard license and franchise conditions:

Type of Organic Material Accepted		Metro License		Metro Franchise	
		Yard Debris Reload	Yard Debris Compost Facility	Vegetative Food Waste	Mixed Food Waste
WOOD	Clean dimensional wood.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Stumps, landscape wood debris.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Painted wood and treated wood*.	No	No	No	No
	Creosote treated wood*.	No	No	No	No
YARD DEBRIS	Residential yard debris.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Commercial yard debris.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Residential vegetative food waste from a home garden and fruit trees (may include pumpkins from Halloween).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
VEGETATIVE FOOD WASTE	Commercial vegetative food waste (source-separated pre-consumer).	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Small amounts of manure mixed with bedding material.	W	Yes	Yes	Yes
MIXED FOOD WASTE	Commercial post-consumer (mixed) food waste.	No	No	No	Yes
	Residential post-consumer (mixed) food waste.	No	No	No	Yes
	Meats and fats from businesses.	No	No	No	Yes
	Large amounts of manure.	No	W	W	Yes
OTHER ORGANIC AND INORGANIC MATERIAL	Such as paper pulp, bio-solids, gypsum wallboard, etc.	W	W	W	W

* Painted wood, treated wood, and creosote-treated wood are not acceptable as compost feedstock. These materials may only be accepted for other uses such as for hogged fuel production. The acceptance of these materials requires written authorization from Metro.

“W” means that the facility may accept the specified material only with written authorization from Metro.

If you have any questions about managing organics, please call Metro’s Solid Waste Compliance & Cleanup Division at (503) 797-1666.

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