

June 2007

Regulations for Community and Commercial Food Scrap Composting Facilities

At nearly 96 million tons, food scraps are the third largest segment of waste generated each year. Unfortunately, less than three percent of this waste is diverted from landfills to more environmentally friendly disposal options such as composting.

Food scraps include leftover portions of meals (post-consumer food scraps) and trimmings from food preparation activities (pre-consumer food scraps).

Diverting this material from landfills creates environmental and financial benefits. Successful composting projects may also help educate the community and encourage waste reduction.

To ensure that operations do not cause pollution or create a public health problem, composting facilities must comply with state regulations. This document provides an overview of Ohio's regulations for composting food scraps.

Composting Facility Classification

Ohio EPA categorizes composting facilities into four classes based on the type of material the facility can accept.

Class II facilities are eligible to receive and process food scraps from external sources. Class II facilities may also accept yard and animal waste.

The remaining classes, as well as some examples of materials they can accept, are:

Class I – all municipal solid wastes

Class III – yard waste and animal waste

Class IV – yard waste only

Establishing a Class II Composting Facility

The three steps needed to establish a Class II composting facility are registration, license and financial assurance.

Registration

Composting facilities must register with Ohio EPA and the local health department at least 30 days before the business plans to start composting. There is no fee for registration. Copies of the registration form are available online at www.epa.state.oh.us/dsiwm/document/guidance/gd_461.pdf.

License

Composting facilities must submit a solid waste license application to Ohio EPA or the local health department at least 30 days before the business plans to start composting. Local health departments often administer Ohio EPA's solid waste regulations and are the licensing authority. The annual fee for licensing depends on the amount of material accepted daily as shown on the table below.

Daily Max (tons)	Annual Fee
12 or less	\$ 300
13 to 25	\$ 600
26 to 50	\$1,200
51 to 75	\$1,800

Financial Assurance

Financial assurance is required to ensure that funds are available to pay for closure, clean up and after closure care, where needed. These funds are available if the facility is unable or unwilling to pay at the time of closure.

Calculation of the closure cost estimate is part of the license and registration process. Applicants must submit a draft of the financial instrument, such as a Letter of Credit, to Ohio EPA with the license application.

Operating a Class II Composting Facility

After obtaining a registration and license, Class II facilities may begin accepting and composting materials. To ensure proper site management and avoid potential problems, facilities must follow specified operational requirements. Examples include using an approved composting method; developing a contingency plan; and keeping a daily log of operations.

In addition, a composting facility should contact the Division of Air Pollution Control and Division of Surface Water to identify applicable regulations. Contact information for both divisions can be found online at www.epa.state.oh.us.

More Information

For more information and specific requirements for establishing and operating a Class II composting facility, please consult the Class II Composting Facility Requirements guidance document, available online at www.epa.state.oh.us/dsiwm/document/guidance/gd_667.pdf.

For general questions about food scrap composting or starting a composting facility, contact the Division of Solid and Infectious Waste Management at (614) 644-2621 or your local health department.

