






## Commercial Composting

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This activity applies to you if you are engaged in receiving and composting wastes as a commercial service. This typically refers to businesses that have numerous compost piles that require large open areas to break down wastes. Composting can contribute nutrients, coliform bacteria, and suspended solids to stormwater runoff. When stormwater is allowed to contact any active composting area, it becomes leachate. Leachate should be separated from stormwater runoff as much as possible. All commercial-composting operations must satisfy Seattle-King County Health Department requirements. In addition, the Department of Ecology may require a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for commercial composting operations. The BMPs listed below are intended to complement other regulatory requirements.

### **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

**The following BMPs, or equivalent measures, methods, or practices are required if you are engaged in composting wastes:**

-  1 Ensure that wastes do not contain dangerous materials that belong in a hazardous waste facility, or solid wastes that do not break down by composting. Employees must be trained to screen these materials in incoming wastes.
-  2 Locate composting areas on impervious surfaces.
-  3 Drain all leachate from composting operations to a sanitary sewer, holding tank, or on-site treatment system.  
 See BMP Info Sheet 2 in Chapter 5 for information on disposal options. Because biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) or fecal coliform bacteria are significant pollutants in compost runoff, drainage must be routed to a sanitary sewer or holding tank, regardless of whether a process treatment system is used.
-  4 Contain the compost pile leachate. Containment of leachate will

probably be best accomplished with a dike or berm, or with intercepting drains placed on the down slope side of the compost area.



See BMP Info Sheet 5 in Chapter 5 for information on containment. See the King County Health Code for full compliance.

Required Routine Maintenance:

- Clean up debris from yard areas as needed to prevent stormwater contamination.

**ADDITIONAL BMPs**

**The following BMPs are optional unless the above minimum required BMPs do not provide adequate source control:**



A catch basin insert, configured for debris and sediment removal, may remove some of the pollutants in runoff from this activity. Catch basin inserts require frequent maintenance to be effective. Carefully consider this when considering your options.



See BMP Info Sheet 10 in Chapter 5 for more information.

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For more information or assistance in implementing these best management practices, contact the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks Water and Land Resources Division at 206-296-1900.

Reader Note: The above requirements are the minimum required BMPs. If these BMPs fail to prevent discharges to the storm drainage system, you will be asked to take additional measures to correct the continued pollution discharges.