

## **A-24: Commercial Composting**

The following best management practices (BMPs) apply to commercial receiving and composting wastes.

In addition to other King County requirements, all commercial composting operations must comply with Public Health-Seattle and King County requirements. Commercial composting operations require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and/or a State Waste Discharge permit from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Potential pollutants can include but are not limited to fecal coliform bacteria, metals, nutrients, oxygen demanding substances, PCBs, sediment, and other pollutants.

BMPs are required by King County Water Quality Code (KCC 9.12). If the BMPs included here are not enough to prevent contamination of stormwater, you will be required to take additional measures.

### **Required BMPs**

- All composting facilities shall obtain the appropriate state and local permits. Contact Public Health – Seattle and King County for more information.
- Screen incoming waste for dangerous materials and solid waste. These materials may not be accepted for composting and must be properly disposed of.
- Locate composting areas on impervious surfaces.
- Drain all leachate from composting operations to the sanitary sewer, holding tank, or on-site treatment system. Leachate may not go to the stormwater drainage system or groundwater.
- Collect the leachate with a dike or berm, or with intercepting drains placed on the down slope side of the compost area.
- Direct outside runoff away from the composting areas.
- Collect runoff from uncovered finished compost and blending areas and discharge to the sanitary sewer. If that is not feasible, then discharge to surface or ground waters according to the condition of a Washington State Industrial Stormwater General or Individual permit or a State Waste Discharge Permit.
- See Washington Administrative Code 173-350-220 (Composting Facilities) for additional requirements.

### **Required Routine Maintenance**

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

### **Supplemental BMPs**

- Install catch basin inserts to collect excess sediment and debris if necessary. Inspect and maintain catch basin inserts regularly to ensure they are working correctly.
- Cover compost storage areas.

### **Additional Information**

- *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual*, Chapter 3: Commercial and Multifamily BMPs
  - [A-4: Outdoor Storage of Soil, Sand and Other Erodible Materials](#)
- *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual*, Chapter 5: Information Sheets
  - [Catch Basin Inserts](#)
  - [Containment](#)
  - [Disposal](#)
- Contact Public Health-Seattle and King County at 206-263-9566
- Washington Administrative Code 173-350-220 (Composting Facilities)
- Washington State Department of Ecology's *Siting and Operating Composting Facilities in Washington State: Good Management Practices*  
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1107005.pdf>

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*For more information or assistance contact the King County Stormwater Services at 206-477-4811 and visit [kingcounty.gov/stormwater](http://kingcounty.gov/stormwater).*