

# MINNESOTA

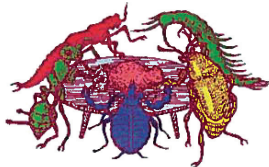
# WASTE FACTS

- The statewide recycling rate is 43.5%
- Food waste is another 11% of what we throw away. Much of this can be composted at home.
- Organic materials comprise of 25.4% of statewide residential waste (most of which is compost-able).
- Paper products make up 30.8% of statewide residential waste and should be recycled or composted.
- The amount of solid waste generated in Minnesota over the last 5 years grew twice as fast as our population.

- Currently, each person in Minnesota creates about 7 pounds of waste per day. That's enough to fill the Metrodome 11 times each year!
- Space is limited: Minnesota ships waste to neighboring state landfills.



# COMPOST HAPPENS HOW?



Organic material is processed (for FREE!) by numerous decomposers such as bacteria, fungi, snails, slugs, millipedes, sow bugs, pills bugs, mites, earthworms, flatworms, winged beetles, spring tails, centipedes, rove beetles, and ants and spiders. These common compost critters all function to help create compost!

# OH NO! PROBLEM SOLVING

## WHAT IF...

### The pile smells like rotten eggs?

- Not enough air, too much water
- Add brown material like dry leaves
- Pile should be damp like a wrung out sponge
- Turn more frequently

### The pile smells like ammonia?

- Too much nitrogen (greens), not enough air
- Add dry leaves, sawdust or straw
- Turn more frequently

# COMPOSTING

What Where  
**WHEN**  
**HOW**  
**WHY**



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**LEECH LAKE GREEN TEAM**

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# WHAT IS COMPOST?

com•post/'kämpōst/: decayed organic material used as a plant fertilizer

## WHY

### SHOULD I COMPOST?

Composting restores valuable nutrients to the ground. In essence, composting reduces or voids the need for man-made and chemical fertilizers and pesticides for a healthier garden.

## HOW

### DO I COMPOST?

Compost needs 3 essential ingredients:

**Green material** (weeds, vegetable trimmings, egg shells), **brown material** (leaves, wood chips, paper) and sufficient **moisture**.

You want the pile to remain damp, but not dripping wet. Turn the pile about once a week by shoveling the outside towards the middle and continue moving until the fresh compost is now exposed. You will know that your compost pile is right if it becomes hot in the middle and it smells earthy. If your pile heats up, gets moisture, and gets turned regularly, you should have dark, wonderful compost in about one–two months time.

**Did you know** that grass clippings are a great source of nitrogen for your compost pile?

Usually you have more clippings than needed for composting so just leave the rest on your lawn! Leaving the clippings returns nutrients to the soil.

# WHAT *Can Be*



## COMPOSTED?

Shredded Paper/Newspaper

Grass, Leaves & Yard Waste

Bread/Pasta/Crackers

Coffee Grounds/Filters

Tea Leaves/Bags

Cooked & Raw Fruits & Vegetables

Wood Chips/Sawdust

Dryer Lint

Egg Shells

Nuts

Livestock Manure

Paper Towels

Fish Scraps

& MUCH MORE!



# WHAT *Can't Be*

## COMPOSTED?

Disease or Insect Infested Plants

Evergreen Needles, Poison Ivy and other Poisonous Plants

Weeds that Contain Seeds

Meat & Animal Products

Fatty Foods/Dairy Products

Oil/Grease/Fatty Foods

Cat and Dog Manure

Leech Lake Division of Resource Management

6530 Hwy 2 NW • Cass Lake, MN 56633

218.335.7429 • air@lldrm.org

[www.lldrm.org](http://www.lldrm.org)

# BUILDING YOUR COMPOST PILE

The recommended size for a home compost pile is no smaller than 3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet, and no larger than 5 feet x 5 feet x 5 feet. A smaller pile may not heat up high enough for efficient breakdown, or it may lose heat and quickly slow down the process. A larger pile may hold too much water not allowing air into the center.



3'-4' Tall

# FINISHED COMPOST

Compost is complete when it is dark, crumbly, and has an earthy smell.

Avoid using unfinished compost, as organic acids may harm plant roots.

If compost is still hot, smells like ammonia or you can still identify much of the organic material it is not ready to use yet.

The volume of finished compost will have been reduced by 30-50 percent.