

The composting process converts organic waste to a product that can be used as a soil conditioner or fertiliser. The scale and type of composting operation can vary considerably from home or community composting to large scale in-vessel mechanised schemes.

Centralised composting schemes can utilise waste that has been bought in from a variety of sources such as garden waste delivered by householders to Civic Amenity sites. These schemes are usually commercially operated by specialist companies. *Planning permission will always be required.*

On-farm composting is a process whereby materials such as shredded garden waste, other vegetable matter or animal manure is composted in situ by the farmer prior to being spread on the land. *Planning permission is normally required for the composting of waste materials at a farm if, those materials do not originate wholly within that farm or property; and / or the resulting compost is used anywhere other than on that farm or property.*

Community composting schemes involve the pooling of garden waste by members of a local community. Typically this operation is carried out on a small scale at locations such as allotments or parish playing fields. Householders bring their garden waste to these sites where it is composted by volunteers. The participants may then take away the resulting compost for use in their own homes. *Planning permission may be required for this type of composting; it is recommended that you get in touch with a planning officer at the County Council to discuss this.*

Home composting provides a good opportunity for the householder to take responsibility for the organic fraction of their household and garden waste. Many District Councils can provide composting bins at subsidised prices for local residents. *This type of composting does not normally require planning permission.*

Information you will need to submit as part of a planning application.

All applications will require the appropriate fee and a plan showing the exact location of the proposed composting operation. In addition, the following information should be included in a supporting statement:

- Details of the amount of green waste material that will be composted and how it will be stored (including the dimensions);
- Details of the origin of the material, the method of transporting it to the composting site including the proposed route, the number and type of vehicles to be used and the time period during which deliveries will be made;
- The nature of any processing that will be undertaken prior to and after delivery of the material to the farm (e.g. shredding, open or in-building windrows, turning);
- The measures to be taken, where appropriate, to avoid any harm or nuisance arising from traffic, drainage, noise, odours and visual intrusion during the delivery, shredding and composting (including turning/aerating) stages;
- In the case of sites within 250 metres of a workplace or the boundary of a dwelling, a site-specific risk assessment will be required as part of an application. This should identify any possible risks, the severity of these and any mitigation measures that will be adopted. For example this assessment may discuss the potential risk from bio-aerosols. (Where an assessment has also been required by the Environment Agency, it will normally be acceptable to use this for the purposes of a planning application);

- An explanation of the agricultural or other benefits that will accrue from the use of the compost; and
- The intended user of the compost material, e.g. is it for public resale or for sole use by the farm or property.

Do I need any other form of approval?

In addition to requiring planning permission, a composting operation will also require the approval of the Environment Agency. Small scale schemes which compost no more than 1,000 cubic metres of waste are exempt from Waste Management Licensing. Larger schemes will need a licence to compost material. You should get in touch with the Environment Agency to obtain both a waste or waste exemption licence.

For further information and application forms please contact;

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