

BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING ORGANICS

WHAT ARE ORGANICS?

Waste material which comes from living organisms is organic. This includes vegetation, food waste, and dirty paper and cardboard, if composted under certain conditions. The organic waste breaks down under specific conditions to create compost.

BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING ORGANIC WASTE

- **It saves money!** Composting is recycling. In Minnesota, state and county solid waste fees do not apply to recycled waste, only to garbage. In addition, organics can make up a significant amount of a business's or organization's solid waste, so diverting this waste into recycling will save money on reduced hauling fees.
- **Organics includes more than just food.** Any kind of food waste donation or recycling is beneficial, however organics composting includes much more than food. If doing commercial composting under ideal conditions, paper products and some cardboard (often including waxed cardboard and frozen food packaging) are accepted. This diverts even more waste into the recycling stream, reducing hauling costs and solid waste taxes.
- **It closes the loop.** Composting addresses the cradle-to-cradle lifecycle of food and other organic waste.
- **In the solid waste hierarchy, organics composting is more environmentally friendly than land filling or burning for energy.**

FACTS & FIGURES

- It is estimated that 72% of material going into the municipal solid waste stream is organic, with 12% being food and 34% being mixed papers. (*U.S. Composting Council*)
- Composting can eliminate an estimated 99.6% of industrial volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the air. (*U.S. EPA*)

RESOURCES

U.S. EPA

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/rrr/composting/basic.htm>

U.S. Composting Council

<http://www.compostingcouncil.org/education/resources.php>

