

COMPOSTING TIPS

As soon as decomposition begins, the volume of the pile will decrease. Don't be tempted to add more materials at this point, as this resets the clock on that batch.

You will maximize your composting efforts if you aerate by turning or mixing the heap about once a week.

Finished compost is usually less than half the volume of the materials you started with, but it's much denser. When finished, it should look, feel and smell like rich, dark soil. You should not be able to recognize any of the items you originally placed in the pile.

Common Problems

- If the compost is too wet, turn it more frequently or add dry brown material.
- If the pile doesn't heat up, add more green material to the compost, or you may need to aerate or add water.
- If there is an ammonia or rotten egg smell, turn the compost or add brown material to dry it out.
- If large amounts of dropped apples or kitchen scraps attract wasps or other unwelcome pests, turn more frequently.

Using Finished Compost

- Mix compost into the soil to improve it.
- Spread compost on lawn to fill in low spots.
- Use as much mulch for landscaping and gardening.
- Mix compost into pots for potted plants.



FOR SALE

Assembled Compost Tumbler - \$85 (seasonally available)
55 gallon used food grade barrel
To buy an assembled compost bin contact Kim:
kimberly@riverkeepers.org or 701.356.8915

CONTACT US

River Keepers
kimberly@riverkeepers.org
701.356.8915
riverkeepers.org

Clay Soil & Water Conservation District
amanda.lewis@clay.mnswcd.org
218.287.2255
claycountymn.gov/272/Soil-Water-Conservation-District

SUPPORTERS



RESILIENT YARD SERIES: COMPOSTING



MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST TUMBLER WORKSHOP

Create a resilient yard to sustain the Red River by making your own compost tumbler. Composting can save water, money, time and maintenance costs by using yard waste to benefit you and your soil. This workshop will cover the basics of composting and provide instruction to construct various composting systems. By tumbling this composter around the yard once a week, you could have a barrel full of compost by the end of the season.

2023 Workshop

April 18, 2023

6:00-8:00 p.m.

At a Moorhead Park

Fee: \$59 (includes supplies)

\$54 for Moorhead residents

Come prepared to carry home an empty 55-gallon compost bin.

Pre-registration required: Contact Moorhead Community Education at moorheadschoools.org/schools/alternative-schools/community-education/ or call 218.284.3400.



WHAT IS COMPOST?

Compost is decomposed organic material, such as leaves, grass clippings, and kitchen waste. It provides many essential nutrients for plant growth and therefore is often used as fertilizer. Compost also improves soil structure so that soil can easily hold the correct amount of moisture and air. Compost improves the texture of both clay soils and sandy soils, making either type rich, moisture-retentive, and loamy.



Benefits

- Reduce phosphorus levels in the Red River. Food scraps put down garbage disposals contribute to phosphorus in our wastewater effluent, which is released into the Red River.
- Enhances water retention in soils
- Decreases the need for costly treated water
- A rich, natural fertilizer, cuts back on the use of chemical fertilizers
- Improves soil aeration
- Helps control weeds
- And many more!



WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?

Key materials are nitrogen-rich 'greens' and carbon-rich 'browns,' water, and air.

Examples of greens are:

- Green leaves
- Coffee grounds/filters
- Tea bags
- Plant trimming
- Fruit (including dropped apples) and vegetable scraps, egg shells and fresh grass clippings



Examples of browns are:

- Dead plants
- Sawdust from untreated lumber
- Twigs
- Dried grasses, weeds, straw and leaves

Water allows microbes in your compost to grow and help decompose material. The compost should be moist. Air adds in decomposition and controls odors.

A RECIPE IS 1 PART GREEN TO 4 PARTS BROWN.

WHAT NOT TO COMPOST

Meat, fish, and animal fats

These materials may attract unwanted visitors to your compost pile.

Shredded newspapers or office paper

The paper may contain chemicals that are not good for your compost. Recycle them instead.

Ashes from your grill

Wood ashes can be useful in small quantities, but BBQ grill ashes never go into your compost pile.

Dog and cat feces

These materials can add diseases to your compost and they have an unpleasant odor.

Sawdust from treated lumber

Sometimes lumber is treated with harmful chemicals.