

# WHY COMPOST?

Solid waste/recycling laws adopted by Oneida and Herkimer Counties in 1988 require the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority to compost green waste. Although the law does not require home composting, it is the simplest and most economical way of handling these materials.

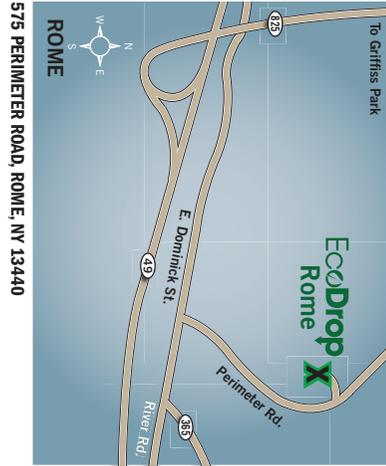
Oneida and Herkimer County residents have worked hard to make recycling a reality. The Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority urges residents to compost, in addition to the recycling programs already in place. Composting organic material is just as important as glass, plastic, metal and paper recycling. All of these efforts help reduce our reliance on landfills.

Composting can be done easily at home. Many residents already have backyard compost piles or units where they compost green waste and some household waste. The Authority also operates a green waste composting facility that produces finished compost for the residents of Oneida and Herkimer Counties. Finished compost is nutrient-rich and fuels plant growth and restores vitality to depleted soil.

A basic understanding of the composting process can produce a high quality, usable product. All it takes are a few simple steps and a little time. Composting is nature's way of recycling.



Scan the QR Code or visit [ohswa.org](http://ohswa.org) for more information on the Regional Green Waste Composting Facility.



575 PERIMETER ROAD, ROME, NY 13440



80 LELAND AVENUE, UTICA, NY 13502



**US Composting Council**  
Seal of Testing Assurance

The Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority's green waste compost has been certified by the US Composting Council under its Seal of Testing Assurance Program as consistent, high-quality compost. This means the Authority's compost has been tested by third party laboratories to ensure that it meets all state and federal environmental requirements.

ONEIDA & HERKIMER COUNTY RESIDENTS  
MAY DROP OFF GREEN WASTE AND  
PURCHASE COMPOST AT AUTHORITY  
ECODROP LOCATIONS.



1600 Genesee Street  
Utica, New York 13502



ONEIDA-HERKIMER SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY

# BACKYARD COMPOSTING





Residents may deliver green waste and purchase compost at the Authority's EcoDrop locations.

**EcoDrop | Utica**  
80 Leland Avenue  
Utica, NY 13502

**HOURS OF OPERATION**  
Mon–Fri: 8am – 4pm

Sat: 7am – 2pm

Sun: CLOSED

**EcoDrop | Rome**  
575 Perimeter Road  
Rome, NY 13440

**HOURS OF OPERATION**  
Mon–Fri: 8am – 4pm

Sat: 8am – 12pm

Sun: CLOSED

LOCATION MAP ON REVERSE

## HOW TO COMPOST

Compost is what you get when yard and garden waste, kitchen scraps and other organic materials have completely broken down into a rich, dark, crumbly material. Composting begins by mixing yard and household organic waste in a pile or bin and providing conditions that encourage decomposition. The decomposition process is fueled by millions of microscopic organisms (bacteria, fungi) that take up residence inside your compost pile and continuously devour and recycle it to produce an organic fertilizer and valuable soil amendment. After the organisms have finished their food source, they generate finished compost, which has various minerals and micronutrients in an easily accessible form for plants.

A basic understanding of the composting process can produce a high-quality, usable product. All it takes are a few simple steps and a little time.

## COMPOST FORMULA

### COMPOSTABLE WASTE

- Waste material can be either green waste and/or certain household waste.
- An ideal size for the pile is 3' x 3' x 3'.
- Large pieces of waste material should be broken up by hand or shredded.
- Check COMPOST INGREDIENTS list before adding waste materials.

### OXYGEN

Turning the pile (moving the materials from the sides into the middle and from the bottom to the top) will allow oxygen to reach the organisms which break down the material.

### MOISTURE

- The pile should be moist, like a wrung-out sponge. Dry or wet piles will slow down the decomposition process.
- Check compost moisture by squeezing a handful. A few drops should come out.
- Adjust moisture by adding water to a dry pile or adding dry material to a wet pile.

### TEMPERATURE

- For optimum composting, the compost temperature should be 90° to 140°.
- Consider checking the center of the pile periodically using a thermometer with a probe.

### C:N RATIO

- The pile needs a good balance of Carbon and Nitrogen materials to decompose properly.
- The ideal C:N ratio is 30:1 (30 parts carbon to 1 part nitrogen) or 30 parts leaves to 1 part grass clippings.

## COMPOST INGREDIENTS

### GREEN WASTE

- Leaves
- Garden Waste
- Wood Chips and Sawdust
- Evergreen Needles
- Cornstalks
- Grass Clippings  
(Can also be left on the lawn)

### HOUSEHOLD WASTE

- Vegetable Waste
- Coffee Grounds with Filters
- Egg Shells
- Fruit Peels and Rinds
- Tea Bags

## NON-COMPOSTABLE

### HOUSEHOLD WASTE

- ⊘ Bones
- ⊘ Grease or Oils
- ⊘ Mayonnaise
- ⊘ Peanut Butter
- ⊘ Butter, Cheese, or Milk
- ⊘ Meats or Fish Scraps
- ⊘ Pet Manure

## COMPOST APPLICATION RATES

Compost should be used as a soil additive to develop or improve moisture retention and add important organic matter. Compost worked into clay or sandy soils improves texture, helps with compaction and aerates the soil, thereby facilitating grass and turf root development. It can also be used as a substitute for landscaping mulch or peat moss.

### LAWN ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE

**Establishment:** Apply 1 - 2 inches of compost to the new lawn area. Incorporate into the soil to a depth of 5–8 inches. Rake soil surface smooth prior to applying seed. Apply seed as required. Lightly water the newly seeded area.

**Maintenance:** Apply fine layer of ¼ to ½ inch of compost and rake evenly across the lawn. Reseed if needed and lightly water.

### FLOWER BED AND GARDEN SOIL MAINTENANCE

Apply about 2 inches of compost to the garden. Blend with existing soil to a depth of 6–8 inches.

### LANDSCAPING DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Apply 1–3 inches of compost around planting beds, trees and shrubs.

### TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING

Excavate a hole slightly shallower and 2 to 3 times the width of the root ball or container. Uniformly blend compost with the excavated soil at 1 part compost to 2-3 parts soil. Back-fill and firm the soil/compost blend around loose roots and root ball within the planting hole. Water trees and shrubs thoroughly after planting.

## COMPOST MAINTENANCE

### FOR A HOLDING UNIT

- ✓ Add material to the holding unit in batches from stockpiled material, or as materials become available
- ✓ A week after adding material, the pile should be turned
- ✓ The pile should be turned again the following week and whenever the pile starts to cool
- ✓ Add a few shovels of soil
- ✓ Check moisture

### FOR A TURNING UNIT

- ✓ Thoroughly mix compostable material within the unit
- ✓ When the pile cools off, it should be moved into the second bin
- ✓ A new pile should be started in the first bin
- ✓ The process should be repeated with the compost being mixed together in the third bin
- ✓ Add a few shovels of soil
- ✓ Check moisture

### GENERAL

- ✓ The compost process is finished in about 12 months, when the pile cools to within 10 degrees of the air temperature
- ✓ When finished, the compost (humus) should be dark brown, crumbly and have a slightly earthy odor
- ✓ During the winter, insulate your container by placing chips or straw on the sides of the pile to help retain heat
- ✓ Compost kitchen wastes carefully! Put kitchen wastes deep in the center of the pile to help keep pests away

**COMPOSTING IS EASY, AND ALONG WITH YOUR NORMAL RECYCLING, HELPS DRASTICALLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF MATERIAL THAT GOES INTO OUR LANDFILL.**

## PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

PROBLEM	POSSIBLE CAUSE	SOLUTION
Rotten Odor:	Too much moisture	= Turn pile or add dry materials
	Compaction	= Turn pile or make pile smaller
Ammonia Odor:	Too much nitrogen	= Add a high carbon material such as sawdust, wood chips or straw
Low Pile Temperature:	Pile too small	= Make pile larger or insulate with straw
	Pile too dry	= Add water while turning pile
	Lack of air in pile	= Turn pile

## FINISHED COMPOST AVAILABLE

In addition to dropping off green waste, residents may purchase Authority compost at both EcoDrop Utica and EcoDrop Rome. The compost is made from green waste only. It makes a great soil amendment for gardens and landscape applications. Compost can be purchased in convenient 45 lb. bags, or in bulk (pick-up truck or trailer required, we load).

### GREEN WASTE DROP-OFF FEES

Bagged or Car Load	No Charge
Truck Load/Trailer	\$15 per ton

### PURCHASE COMPOST

Bags (1.2 cubic feet)	Per Bag \$2/3 Bags \$5
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### Bulk Compost Loads (Pick-up or trailer)

Small Load (Up to 2 buckets)	\$15
Full-Size Load (3 buckets)	\$20