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Chapter 3.1. Compostable Materials Handling Operations and Facilities Regulatory Requirements

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Article 1. General

Section 17850. Authority and Scope.

(a) This Chapter is adopted pursuant to and for the purpose of implementing the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Act) commencing with section 40000 of the [Public Resources Code](#), as amended. These regulations should be read together with the Act.

(b) This Chapter implements those provisions of the Act relating to composting. Nothing in this Chapter is intended to limit the power of any federal, state, or local agency to enforce any provision of law that it is authorized or required to enforce or administer.

(c) Biological decomposition of organic material can be both a naturally occurring or artificially controlled process. This Chapter establishes standards and regulatory requirements for intentional and inadvertent composting resulting from the handling of compostable materials, including but not limited to feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground materials as defined in section 17852.

(d) Nothing in these standards shall be construed as relieving any owner, operator, or designee from the obligation of obtaining all required permits, licenses, or other clearances and complying with all orders, laws, regulations, or reports, or other requirements of other regulatory or EA, including but not limited to, local health entities, regional water quality control boards, air quality management districts or air pollution control districts, local land use authorities, and fire authorities.

(e) Nothing in these standards precludes the EA or the board from inspecting an activity, operation or facility to determine if it is subject to these standards.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17852. Definitions.

(a) For the purposes of this Chapter:

(1) "Active Compost" means compost feedstock that is in the process of being rapidly decomposed and is unstable. Active compost is generating temperatures of at least 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) during decomposition; or is releasing carbon dioxide at a rate of at least 15 milligrams per gram of compost per day, or the equivalent of oxygen uptake.

(2) "Additives" means material mixed with feedstock or active compost in order to adjust the moisture level, carbon to nitrogen ratio, or porosity to create a favorable condition. Additives include, but are not limited to, fertilizers and urea. Additives do not include septage, biosolids, or compost feedstock.

(3) "Aerated Static Pile" means a composting process that uses an air distribution system to either blow or draw air through the pile. Little or no pile agitation or turning is performed.

(4) "Aerobic Decomposition" means the biological decomposition of organic substances in the presence of oxygen.

(5) "Agricultural Material" means material of plant or animal origin, which result from the

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production and processing of farm, ranch, agricultural, horticultural, aquacultural, silvicultural, floricultural, vermicultural, or viticultural products, including manures, orchard and vineyard prunings, and crop residues.

(6) "Agricultural Material Composting Operation" means an operation that produces compost from green or agricultural additives, and/or amendments.

(7) "Amendments" means materials added to stabilized or cured compost to provide attributes for certain compost products, such as product bulk, product nutrient value, product pH, and soils blend. Amendments do not include septage, biosolids, or compost feedstock.

(8) "Anaerobic Decomposition" means the biological decomposition of organic substances in the absence of oxygen.

(9) "Biosolids" means solid, semi-solid, or liquid residue generated during the treatment of domestic sewage in a treatment works. Biosolids includes, but is not limited to, treated domestic septage and scum or solids removed in primary, secondary, or advanced wastewater treatment processes. Biosolids does not include ash generated during the firing of sewage sludge in a sewage sludge incinerator or grit and screenings generated during the preliminary treatment of domestic sewage in a treatment works.

(10) "Chipping and Grinding Operations and Facilities" means an operation or facility, that does not produce compost, that mechanically reduces the size or otherwise engages in the handling, of compostable material and:

(A) The site does the following:

1. The site handles only material, excluding manure, allowed at a green material composting operation or facility as set forth in section 17852(a)(22); and
2. Each load of green material is removed from the site within 48 hours of receipt. The EA may allow a site to keep green material on-site for up to 7 days if the EA determines that the additional time does not increase the potential for violations of this Chapter.

(B) If the site fails to meet the definition of green material because it exceeds the contamination limits in section 17852(a)(21), the site shall be regulated as set forth in the Transfer/Processing Regulatory requirements (commencing at section 17400).

(C) If the site fails to meet the definition of this section because the green material remains on-site for a longer period of time than allowed, then the site shall be regulated as a compostable material handling operation or facility, as set forth in this Chapter.

(11) "Compostable Material" means any organic material that when accumulated will become active compost as defined in section 17852(a)(1).

(12) "Compostable Material Handling Operation" or "Facility" means an operation or facility that processes, transfers, or stores compostable material. Handling of compostable materials results in controlled biological decomposition. Handling includes composting, screening, chipping and grinding, and storage activities related to the production of compost, compost feedstocks, and chipped and ground materials. "Compostable Materials Handling Operation or Facility" does not include activities excluded from regulation in section 17855. "Compostable Materials Handling Operation or Facility" also includes:

- (A) agricultural material composting operations;
- (B) green material composting operations and facilities;
- (C) research composting operations; and
- (D) chipping and grinding operations and facilities.

(13) "Curing" means the final stage of the composting process that occurs after compost has undergone pathogen reduction, as described in section 17868.3, and after most of the readily metabolized material has been decomposed and stabilized.

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(14) "Domestic Sewage" means waste and wastewater from humans or household operations that is discharged to or otherwise enters a treatment works.

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(15) "Disposal" means:

(A) stockpiling of compostable material onto land for a combined period of time greater than six months, or agricultural and green material for twelve months on prime agricultural land as defined in [Government Code section 51201](#), unless the RWQCB in consultation with the EA makes a written finding that the material may remain within the operations area for a period of time greater than specified.

(B) disposal does not include the use of compostable material for alternative daily cover material at a solid waste landfill. Notwithstanding this section, use of compostable organic material as a alternative daily cover material shall still require approval for use pursuant to Title 27, California Code of Regulations, section 20680 and may require additional approvals from other governmental agencies, including, but not limited to RWQCB and Air Districts.

(C) disposal does not include land application of compostable organic material. "Land Application" means the application of compostable material, excluding food material or mixed solid waste for the following applications: to forest, agricultural, and range land at agronomic rates; in accordance with California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) requirements for beneficial use as authorized by [Food and Agricultural Code section 14501](#) et seq.; or for beneficial uses that may be otherwise exempt or excluded from regulation by CDFA.

(D) Should the EA have information that a compostable material handler is engaging in other activities that meet the definition of disposal, the burden of proof shall be on the land owner or operator to demonstrate otherwise.

(E) If the activities at a site meet the definition of disposal, the site shall be regulated as set forth in the Consolidated Regulations for Treatment, Storage, Processing or Disposal of Solid Waste (commencing at Title 27, California Code of Regulations, section 20005).

(16) "Dry Weight Basis" means weight calculated on the basis of having been dried until reaching a constant mass, that results in essentially 100 percent solids content.

(17) "Enclosed Composting Process" means a composting process where the area that is used for the processing, composting, stabilizing, and curing of organic materials, is covered on all exposed sides and rests on a stable surface with environmental controls for moisture and airborne emissions present.

(18) "EA" means enforcement agency.

(19) "Feedstock" means any compostable material used in the production of compost or chipped and ground material including, but not limited to, agricultural material, green material, food material, biosolids, and mixed solid waste. Feedstocks shall not be considered as either additives or amendments.

(20) "Food Material" means any material that was acquired for animal or human consumption, is separated from the municipal solid waste stream, and that does not meet the definition of "agricultural material." Food material may include material from food facilities as defined in [Health and Safety Code section 113785](#), grocery stores, institutional cafeterias (such as, prisons, schools and hospitals) or residential food scrap collection.

(21) "Green Material" means any plant material that is separated at the point of generation, contains no greater than 1.0 percent of physical contaminants by weight, and meets the requirements of section 17868.5. Green material includes, but is not limited to, yard trimmings, untreated wood wastes, natural fiber products, and construction and demolition wood waste. Green material does not include food material, biosolids, mixed solid waste, material processed from commingled collection, wood containing lead-based paint or wood preservative, mixed construction or mixed demolition debris.

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(22) "Green Material Composting Operation" or "Facility" is an operation or facility that composts green material, additives, and/or amendments. A green material composting operation or facility may also handle manure and paper products. An operation or facility that handles a feedstock that is not green material, manure, or paper products, shall not be considered a green material composting operation or facility. "Green Material Composting Operation" or "Facility" does not include activities excluded from regulation in section 17855.

(23) "Handling" means the processing, transfer, and storage of compostable materials. Handling of compostable materials results in controlled biological decomposition. Handling includes composting, screening, chipping and grinding, and storage activities related to the production of compost, compost feedstocks, and chipped and ground materials.

(24) "Insulating Material" means material used for the purpose of minimizing the loss of heat from a compost pile undergoing the "Process to Further Reduce Pathogens" (PFRP), as described in section 17868.3. Insulating material includes, but is not limited to, soil and stabilized compost.

(25) "Manure" is an agricultural material and means accumulated herbivore or avian excrement. This definition shall include feces and urine, and any bedding material, spilled feed, or soil that is mixed with feces or urine.

(26) "Mixed Solid Waste" means any material that is part of the municipal solid waste stream, and is mixed with or contains non-organics, processed industrial materials, or plastics. A feedstock that is not separated or contains 1.0% or more physical contaminants by weight is mixed solid waste. Compostable material that contains mixed demolition or mixed construction debris shall be considered mixed solid waste.

(27) "Mushroom Farm" means an activity that produces mushrooms. The handling of compostable material at a mushroom farm prior to and after use as a growth medium is subject to regulation pursuant to this chapter and is not considered mushroom farming.

(28) "Operations Area" means the following areas within the boundary of a compostable material handling operation or facility:

(A) equipment cleaning, maintenance, and storage areas;

(B) feedstock, active, curing and stabilized compost processing or stockpiling areas; and

(C) process water and stormwater drainage control systems.

(29) "Operator" means the owner, or other person who through a lease, franchise agreement or other arrangement with the owner, becomes legally responsible for the following:

(A) complying with regulatory requirements set forth in this Chapter;

(B) complying with all applicable federal, state and local requirements;

(C) the design, construction, and physical operation of the site; and

(D) site restoration.

(30) "Owner" means the person or persons who own, in whole or in part, a compostable material handling operation or facility, or the land on which these operations or facilities are located.

(31) "Pathogenic Organism" means disease-causing organisms.

(32) "Physical Contamination" or "Contaminants" means human-made inert products contained within feedstocks, including, but not limited to, glass, metal, and plastic.

(33) "Process Water" means liquid that is generated during or used in the production of compost or chipped and ground materials.

(34) "Research Composting Operation" means a composting operation, that is operated for the purpose of gathering research information on composting.

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(35) "Separated At The Point of Generation" includes material separated from the solid waste stream by the generator of that material. It may also include material from a centralized facility as long as that material was kept separate from the waste stream prior to receipt by that facility and the material was not commingled with other materials during handling.

(36) "Stabilized Compost" means any organic material that has undergone the Process to Further Reduce Pathogens (PFRP), as described in section 17868.3, and has reached a stage of reduced biological activity as indicated by reduced temperature and rate of respiration below that of active compost.

(37) "Static Pile" means a composting process that is similar to the aerated static pile except that the air source may or may not be controlled.

(38) "Vector" includes any insect or other arthropod, rodent, or other animal capable of transmitting the causative agents of human disease.

(39) "Vermicomposting" means an activity that produces worm castings through worm activity. The EA may determine whether an activity is or is not vermicomposting. The handling of compostable material prior to and after use as a growth medium is subject to regulation pursuant to this chapter and is not considered vermicomposting.

(40) "Windrow Composting Process" means the process in which compostable material is placed in elongated piles. The piles or "windrows" are aerated and/or mechanically turned on a periodic basis.

(41) "Within-vessel Composting Process" means a process in which compostable material is enclosed in a drum, silo, bin, tunnel, reactor, or other container for the purpose of producing compost, maintained under uniform conditions of temperature and moisture where air-borne emissions are controlled.

(42) "Wood Waste" means solid waste consisting of wood pieces or particles which are generated from the manufacturing or production of wood products, harvesting, processing or storage of raw wood materials, or construction and demolition activities.

(43) "Yard Trimmings" means any wastes generated from the maintenance or alteration of public, commercial or residential landscapes including, but not limited to, yard clippings, leaves, tree trimmings, prunings, brush, and weeds.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17853.0. Approval of Alternatives.

(a) Approvals, determinations and other requirements that the EA is authorized to make in this Chapter shall be provided in writing by the EA to the operator. The operator shall place a copy of these approvals, in addition to those records identified in sections 17869, in the operating record.

(b) Some of the provisions of this Chapter allow the EA to approve a reduced inspection frequency. The EA shall only approve a reduced inspection frequency if the EA finds that it is as protective of the public health and safety and the environment as the standard inspection frequency.

(c) Some of the standards contained in this Chapter allow the EA to approve an alternative method of compliance with the standard. These provisions are not intended to allow the EA to change the particular standard, but are intended to allow the EA flexibility to approve, in advance, an alternative method of meeting the existing standard. For facilities that require a full solid waste facilities permit, the EA may choose to include the approved method as a term and condition of the solid waste facilities permit, rather than in the manner authorized by subdivision (a) of this section. If the method is included in the Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit, a change to the method may require a revision to the solid waste facilities permit in accordance with the procedures set forth in Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 3, Articles 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21570).

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Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Article 2. Regulatory Tiers for Composting Operations and Facilities

Section 17854. Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit Requirements.

Except as specified in this Article, all compostable materials handling activities shall obtain a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit pursuant to the requirements of Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3 and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) prior to commencing operations.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17855. Excluded Activities.

(a) The activities listed in this section do not constitute compostable material handling operations or facilities for the purposes of this Chapter and are not required to meet the requirements set forth herein. Nothing in this section precludes the EA or the board from inspecting an excluded activity to verify that the activity is being conducted in a manner that qualifies as an excluded activity or from taking any appropriate enforcement action.

(1) An activity is excluded if it handles agricultural material derived from an agricultural site, and returns a similar amount of the material produced to that same agricultural site, or an agricultural site owned or leased by the owner, parent, or subsidiary of the composting activity. No more than an incidental amount of up to 1,000 cubic yards of compost product may be given away or sold annually.

(2) Vermicomposting is an excluded activity. The handling of compostable material prior to and after use as a growth medium is not an excluded activity and is subject to the requirements of this chapter. Handling of agricultural material on the site of a vermicomposting activity, for use as a growth medium on that same site, is an excluded activity if it complies with section 17855(a)(1).

(3) Mushroom farming is an excluded activity. The handling of compostable material prior to and after use as a growth medium is not an excluded activity and is subject to the requirements of this chapter. Handling of agricultural material on the site of a mushroom farm, for use as mushroom bedding on that same site, is an excluded activity if it complies with section 17855(a)(1).

(4) Handling of green material, feedstock, additives, amendments, compost, or chipped and ground material is an excluded activity if 500 cubic yards or less is on-site at any one time, the compostable materials are generated on-site and if no more than 1,000 cubic yards of materials are either sold or given away annually. The compostable material may also include up to 10% food material by volume.

(5) The handling of compostable materials is an excluded activity if:

(A) the activity is located at a facility (i.e., landfill or transfer/processing facility) that has a tiered or full permit as defined in section 18101,

1. has a Report of Facility Information which is completed and submitted to the EA that identifies and describes the activity and meets the requirements of Titles 14 or 27; and,

2. will only use the material on the facility site, or

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- (B) the activity is solely for the temporary storage of biosolids sludge at a Publicly Operated Treatment Works (POTW), or
- (C) the activity is located at the site of biomass conversion and is for use in biomass conversion as defined in [Public Resources Code section 40106](#); or
- (D) the activity is part of a silvicultural operation or a wood, paper, or wood product manufacturing operation; or
- (E) the activity is part of an agricultural operation and is used to temporarily store or process agricultural material not used in the production of compost or mulch; or
- (F) the activity is part of an operation used to chip and grind materials derived from and applied to lands owned or leased by the owner, parent, or subsidiary of the operation; or
- (G) the activity is part of an agricultural operation used to chip and grind agricultural material produced on lands owned or leased by the owner, parent, or subsidiary of the agricultural operation, for use in biomass conversion; or
- (H) the activity is part of an animal food manufacturing or rendering operation.
- (I) the activity is the storage of yard trimmings at a publicly designated site for the collection of lot clearing necessary for fire protection provided that the public agency designating the site has notified the fire protection agency; or
- (J) the materials are handled in such a way to preclude their reaching temperatures at or above 122 degrees Fahrenheit as determined by the EA.

- (6) Non-commercial composting with less than one cubic yard of food material is excluded provided that all compostable material is generated and used on-site.
- (7) Storage of bagged products from compostable material is an excluded activity provided that such bags are no greater than 5 cubic yards.
- (8) Within-vessel composting process activities with less than 50 cubic yard capacity are excluded.
- (9) Beneficial use of compostable materials is an excluded activity. Beneficial use includes, but is not limited to slope stabilization, weed suppression, alternative daily cover, and similar uses, as determined by the EA; land application in accordance with California Department of Food and Agriculture requirements for a beneficial use as authorized by [Food and Agricultural Code section 14501](#) et seq.; and reclamation projects in accordance with the requirements of the Office of Mine Reclamation of the Department of Conservation as authorized by [Public Resources Code section 2770](#) et seq.

Section 17855.2. Prohibitions.

- (a) The composting of unprocessed mammalian tissue, including but not limited to, flesh, organs, hide, blood, bone and marrow is prohibited, except when from the food service industry, grocery stores, or residential food scrap collection, or as part of a research composting operation for the purpose of obtaining data on pathogen reduction or other public health, animal health, safety, or environmental concern, in accordance with section 17862.
- (b) The composting of medical waste is prohibited.
- (c) The composting of hazardous waste is prohibited.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17855.3. Permit Name.

Any permit issued pursuant to this Article, except for one issued pursuant to section 17862.1(b),

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shall be entitled: "Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit."

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17855.4. Pre-existing Permits and Notifications.

(a) If a facility had previously obtained a Registration or Standardized Permit in accordance with the regulations in effect prior to April 4, 2003, that facility may continue to operate in accordance with its permit, until the EA conducts a permit review pursuant to Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 18104.7 and 18105.9 and determines that a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit is required. If the EA makes such a determination, the operator shall comply with the Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit requirements set forth in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) within two years of that determination.

(b) If an operation had previously been operating pursuant to an EA Notification in accordance with the regulations in effect prior to April 4, 2003, that operation may continue to operate in accordance with its EA Notification or regulatory authorization until the EA determines that a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit is required. The EA shall make this determination no sooner than 120 days and no later than two years from April 4, 2003. If the EA determines that a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit is required, the operator shall comply with the Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit requirements set forth in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) within two years of that determination.

(c) If an activity has previously been excluded from the regulations in effect prior to April 4, 2003, that activity may continue to operate in accordance with its regulatory exclusion until the EA determines that a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit is required. The EA shall make this determination no sooner than 120 days and no later than two years from April 4, 2003. If the EA determines that a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit is required, the operator shall comply with the Compostable Material Handling Facility Permit requirements set forth in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) within two years of that determination.

(d) Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, a Chipping and Grinding activity that is currently operating in accordance with the regulations in effect prior to April 4, 2003, may continue to operate in accordance with its regulatory authorization until the EA determines that a different authorization is required. The EA shall make this determination within 120 days from April 4, 2003.

(1) If the EA determines that the activity is required to comply with the EA Notification requirements, the operator shall comply with the EA Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100), within 120 days from that determination.

(2) If the EA determines that the activity is required to comply with the Registration requirements, the operator shall comply with the Registration requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100) within 120 days from that determination.

(3) If the EA determines that the activity is required to comply with the Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit requirements, the operator shall comply with the Compostable Material Handling Facility Permit requirements set forth in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) within two years from that determination.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Section 17856. Agricultural Material Composting Operations.

(a) All agricultural material composting operations and chipping and grinding operations shall comply with the Enforcement Agency Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100), except as otherwise provided by this Chapter. Agricultural Compostable Materials Handling Operations shall only be subject to the requirements of section 17863.4 if the EA makes a written determination that the operation has violated the requirements for odor impacts of section 17867.

(b) Compost produced by an agricultural material composting operation or chipping and grinding operation which uses only agricultural material may be sold or given away in unrestricted quantities. These operations shall be inspected by the EA at least once annually.

(c) Compost produced by an agricultural material composting operation which uses agricultural material and/or green material, as specified in section 17852 (a)(21), may be sold or given-away in accordance with the following restrictions.

(1) Those sites that do not sell or give-away more than 1,000 cubic yards of material per year shall be inspected by the EA at least once annually when actively composting. If more than 12,500 cubic yards of green material, including feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground material, is to be handled on-site of productive farmland as defined in [Government Code section 51201](#), the operator shall give advance notice to the EA. The EA shall only prohibit the on-site storage of additional materials, or impose a greater inspection frequency, if the EA makes a written finding that it will pose an additional risk to public health and safety and the environment. The EA shall forward a copy of the request and approval to the Board.

(2) Those operations that sell or give-away more than 1,000 cubic yards of material per year, shall have not more than 12,500 cubic yards of green material, including feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground material, on-site at any one time and shall be inspected by the EA once every three (3) months.

(3) These sites shall record the quantity received of green material.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17857.1. Green Material Composting Operations and Facilities.

(a) A green material composting operation that has up to 12,500 cubic yards of feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground material on-site at any one time shall comply with the EA Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100).

(b) A green material composting operation that has up to 12,500 cubic yards of feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground material on-site at any one time shall be inspected by the EA at least once every three (3) months, unless an operator request for a reduced inspection frequency of no less than annually is approved by the EA. The EA shall only approve a lesser inspection frequency, if the EA finds that it will not pose an additional risk to public health and safety and the environment. The EA shall forward a copy of the request and approval to the Board.

(c) A green material composting facility that has more than 12,500 cubic yards of feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground material on-site at any one time shall obtain a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit pursuant to the requirements of Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) prior to commencing operations.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Section 17859.1. Biosolids Composting at POTWs.

(a) Except as provided in section 17855(a)(5)(B), the composting of biosolids on-site at a Publicly Operated Treatment Works (POTW) shall comply with the EA Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100).

(b) All other composting of biosolids shall comply with section 17854.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Title 40, Chapter 1, Subchapter 0, Part 503, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

17862. Research Composting Operations.

(a) An operator conducting research composting operations shall not have more than 5,000 cubic-yards of feedstock, additives, amendments, chipped and ground material, and compost on-site at any one time, and shall comply with the EA Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100), except as otherwise provided by this Chapter.

(b) An operator conducting research composting operations utilizing within-vessel processing, may exceed 5,000 cubic-yards of feedstock, additives, amendments, chipped and ground material and compost, if the EA determines that such increased volume will not pose additional risk to the public health, safety and the environment.

(c) In addition to the EA Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0, section 18103.1 (a)(3), the operator shall provide a description of the research to be performed, research objectives, methodology/protocol to be employed, data to be gathered, analysis to be performed, how the requirements of this subchapter will be met, and the projected timeframe for completion of the research operation.

(d) The EA Notification for a research composting operation shall be reviewed after each two-year period of operation. Review criteria shall include the results and conclusions drawn from the research.

(e) Research composting operations that will be using unprocessed mammalian tissue as a feedstock for the purpose of obtaining data on pathogen reduction or other public health, animal health, safety, or environmental protection concern, shall satisfy the following additional requirements:

(1) Unprocessed mammalian tissue used as feedstock shall be generated from on-site agricultural operations, and all products derived from unprocessed mammalian tissue shall be beneficially used on-site.

(2) The operator shall prepare, implement and maintain a site-specific, research composting operation site security plan. The research composting site security plan shall include a description of the methods and facilities to be employed for the purpose of limiting site access and preventing the movement of unauthorized material on to or off of the site.

(3) The EA Notification for the research composting operation using unprocessed mammalian tissue as feedstock and documentation of additional requirements of this section shall be reviewed after each six month period of operation.

(f) The operator shall submit all additional documentation required by subsections (c) and (e)(2) to the EA with the EA Notification and prior to the composting of any feedstock. The EA shall determine that the EA Notification for research composting operations is complete and correct only if the additional documentation requirements of this section have been met.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17862.1. Chipping and Grinding Operations and Facilities.

(a) A chipping and grinding operation that receives up to 200 tons per day of material that may be handled by a green material composting operation shall comply with the EA Notification requirements set forth in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0 (commencing with section 18100), except as otherwise provided by this Chapter.

(b) A chipping and grinding facility that receives more than 200 tons per day, and up to 500 tons per day of material that may be handled by a green material composting operation shall obtain a Registration Permit pursuant to the requirements of Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 5.0, Article 3.0, prior to commencing operations.

(c) A chipping and grinding facility that receives more than 500 tons per day of material that may be handled by a green material composting operation shall obtain a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit pursuant to the requirements of Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1 and Subchapter 3, Articles 1, 2, 3, and 3.1 (commencing with section 21450) prior to commencing operations.

(d) A chipping and grinding operation of facility shall not be subject to the provisions of sections 17868.1 through 17868.3 of this Chapter.

(e) If a chipping and grinding operation or facility exceeds the contamination limits in section 17852(a)(21), it shall be regulated as set forth in the Transfer/Processing Regulatory requirements (commencing at section 17400).

(f) If a chipping and grinding operation or facility stores material for a longer period of time than is allowed by section 17852(a)(10)(A)(2), then the site shall be regulated as a green material handling operation or facility, as set forth in this Chapter.

Note:**Authority cited:**

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Article 3. Report of Facility Information

17863. Report of Composting Site Information.

Each operator of a compostable material handling facility that is required to obtain a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit, as specified in Article 2 of this Chapter, shall, at the time of application, file a Report of Composting Site Information with the EA. If the operator intends to alter the permitted feedstock, these changes must be reported to the EA for maintenance of permit status. Such changes may become the basis for revisions to the permit or for revocation of the permit.

Note:**Authority cited:**

Sections 40502, 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

17863.4. Odor Impact Minimization Plan.

(a) All compostable material handling operations and facilities shall prepare, implement and maintain a site-specific odor impact minimization plan. A complete plan shall be submitted to the EA with the EA Notification or permit application.

(b) Odor impact minimization plans shall provide guidance to on-site operation personnel by describing, at a minimum, the following items. If the operator will not be implementing any of these procedures, the plan shall explain why it is not necessary.

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- (1) an odor monitoring protocol which describes the proximity of possible odor receptors and a method for assessing odor impacts at the locations of the possible odor receptors; and,
- (2) a description of meteorological conditions effecting migration of odors and/or transport of odor-causing material off-site. Seasonal variations that effect wind velocity and direction shall also be described; and,
- (3) a complaint response protocol; and,
- (4) a description of design considerations and/or projected ranges of optimal operation to be employed in minimizing odor, including method and degree of aeration, moisture content of materials, feedstock characteristics, airborne emission production, process water distribution, pad and site drainage and permeability, equipment reliability, personnel training, weather event impacts, utility service interruptions, and site specific concerns; and,
- (5) a description of operating procedures for minimizing odor, including aeration, moisture management, feedstock quality, drainage controls, pad maintenance, wastewater pond controls, storage practices (e.g., storage time and pile geometry), contingency plans (i.e., equipment, water, power, and personnel), biofiltration, and tarping.

- (c) The odor impact minimization plan shall be revised to reflect any changes, and a copy shall be provided to the EA, within 30 days of those changes.
- (d) The odor impact minimization plans shall be reviewed annually by the operator to determine if any revisions are necessary.
- (e) The odor impact minimization plan shall be used by the EA to determine whether or not the operation or facility is following the procedures established by the operator. If the EA determines that the odor impact minimization plan is not being followed, the EA may issue a Notice and Order (pursuant to section 18304) to require the operator to either comply with the odor impact minimization plan or to revise it.
- (f) If the odor impact minimization plan is being followed, but the odor impacts are still occurring, the EA may issue a Notice and Order (pursuant to section 18304) requiring the operator to take additional reasonable and feasible measures to minimize odors.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, 43021 and 43209.1 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020, 43201 and 43209.1 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Article 5. Composting Operation and Facility Siting and Design Standards

Section 17865. Siting On Landfills.

(a) Compostable materials handling operations and facilities located atop closed solid waste landfills shall meet postclosure land use requirements pursuant to Title 27, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 3, Subchapter 5, Article 2, section 21190.

(b) Compostable materials handling operations and facilities sited on intermediate cover on a solid waste landfill shall locate operations areas on foundation substrate that is stabilized, either by natural or mechanical compaction, to minimize differential settlement, ponding, soil liquefaction, or failure of pads or structural foundations.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17866. General Design Requirements.

(a) Compostable materials handling operations and facilities shall be designed and constructed in such a manner as to enable the operations and facilities to comply with the operational requirements set forth in Article 6 of this Chapter.

(b) The design of a compostable materials handling facility shall utilize advice, as appropriate, from persons competent in engineering architecture, landscape design, traffic engineering, air quality control, and design of structures.

(1) The engineering design of a compostable materials handling facility shall be in accordance with the principles and disciplines in the State of California generally accepted for design of this type of facility. The design of a composting facility requiring a Compostable Materials Handling Facility Permit shall accompany the Report of Composting Site Information, pursuant to section 17863 of this Chapter.

(2) The engineering design shall be based on appropriate data regarding the service area, anticipated nature and quantity of material to be received, climatological factors, physical settings, adjacent land use (existing and planned), types and numbers of vehicles anticipated to enter the station, drainage control, the hours of operation and other pertinent information. If the station is to be used by the general public, the design of the facility shall take account of features that may be needed to accommodate such public use.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Article 6. Composting Operating Standards

Section 17867. General Operating Standards.

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(a) All compostable materials handling operations and facilities shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) All handling activities are prohibited from composting any material specified in section 17855.2 of this Chapter.
- (2) All handling activities shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes vectors, odor impacts, litter, hazards, nuisances, and noise impacts; and minimizes human contact with, inhalation, ingestion, and transportation of dust, particulates, and pathogenic organisms.
- (3) Random load checks of feedstocks, additives, and amendments for contaminants shall be conducted.
- (4) Contamination of compostable materials that has undergone pathogen reduction, pursuant to section 17868.3 of this Chapter, with feedstocks, compost, or wastes that have not undergone pathogen reduction, pursuant to section 17868.3 of this Chapter, or additives shall be prevented.
- (5) Unauthorized human or animal access to the facility shall be prevented.
- (6) Traffic flow into, on, and out of the composting operation or facility shall be controlled in a safe manner.
- (7) All compostable materials handling operations and facilities, that are open for public business, shall post legible signs at all public entrances. These signs shall include the following information:
 - (A) name of the operation or facility,
 - (B) name of the operator,
 - (C) facility hours of operation,
 - (D) materials that will and will not be accepted, if applicable,
 - (E) schedule of charges, if applicable, and
 - (F) phone number where operator or designee can be reached in case of an emergency.
- (8) The operator shall provide fire prevention, protection and control measures, including, but not limited to, temperature monitoring of windrows and piles, adequate water supply for fire suppression, and the isolation of potential ignition sources from combustible materials. Firelanes shall be provided to allow fire control equipment access to all operation areas.
- (9) The operator shall provide telephone or radio communication capability for emergency purposes.
- (10) Physical Contaminants and refuse removed from feedstock, compost, or chipped and ground material shall be removed from the site within 7 days and transported to an appropriate facility.
- (11) Enclosed operations and facilities shall provide ventilation to prevent adverse public health effects from decomposition gases.
- (12) The operator shall ensure that leachate is controlled to prevent contact with the public.
- (13) The operator shall prevent or remove physical contaminants in compost and chipped and ground materials that may cause injury to humans.
- (14) An attendant shall be on duty during business hours if the operation or facility is open to the public.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

California

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17867.5. Training.

(a) Compostable materials handling operations and facilities shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Operators shall ensure that all personnel assigned to the operation shall be trained in subjects pertinent to operations and maintenance, including the requirements of this article, physical contaminants and hazardous materials recognition and screening, with emphasis on odor impact management and emergency procedures. A record of such training shall be maintained on the site.


Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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Article 7. Environmental Health Standards

Section 17868.1. Sampling Requirements.

All composting operations that sell or give away greater than 1,000 cubic yards of compost annually, and all facilities shall meet the following requirements:

(a) Operators shall verify that compost meets the maximum acceptable metal concentration limits specified in section 17868.2, and pathogen reduction requirements specified in section 17868.3. Verification of pathogen reduction requirements shall occur at the point where compost is sold and removed from the site, bagged for sale, given away for beneficial use and removed from the site or otherwise beneficially used. This verification shall be performed by taking and analyzing at least one composite sample of compost, following the requirements of this section as follows:

- (1) An operator who composts green material, food material, or mixed solid waste shall take and analyze one composite sample for every 5,000 cubic-yards of compost produced.
- (2) An operator who composts biosolids shall meet the sampling schedule described in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Frequencies of Compost Sampling for Biosolids Composting Facilities

Amount of Biosolids Compost Feedstock (metric tons per 365 day period)	Frequency
Greater than zero but annually fewer than 290	annually
Equal to or greater than 290 but fewer than 1,500	quarterly
Equal to or greater than 1,500 but fewer than 15,000	bimonthly
Equal to or greater than 15,000	monthly

(A) The amount of biosolids compost feedstock shall be calculated in dry weight metric tons.

(3) Composite sample analysis for maximum acceptable metal concentrations, specified in section 17868.2, shall be conducted at a laboratory certified by the California Department of Health Services, pursuant to the Health and Safety Code.

(b) A composite sample shall be representative and random, and may be obtained by taking twelve

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(12) mixed samples as described below.

(1) The twelve samples shall be of equal volume.

(2) The twelve samples shall be extracted from within the compost pile as follows:

(A) Four samples from one-half the width of the pile, each at a different cross-section;

(B) Four samples from one-fourth the width of the pile, each at a different cross-section; and,

(C) Four samples from one-eighth the width of the pile, each at a different cross-section.

(c) The EA may approve alternative methods of sampling for a green material composting operation or facility that ensures the maximum metal concentration requirements of section 17868.2 and the pathogen reduction requirements of section 17868.3 are met.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17868.2. Maximum Metal Concentrations.

(a) Compost products derived from compostable materials that contains any metal in amounts that exceed the maximum acceptable metal concentrations shown in Table 2 shall be designated for disposal, additional processing, or other use as approved by state or federal agencies having appropriate jurisdiction.

Table 2
Maximum Acceptable Metal Concentrations

Constituent	Concentration (mg/kg) on dry weight basis
Arsenic (As)	41
Cadmium (Cd)	39
Chromium (Cr)	1200
Copper (Cu)	1500
Lead (Pb)	300
Mercury (Hg)	17
Nickel (Ni)	420
Selenium (Se)	36
Zinc (Zn)	2800

(b) Alternative methods of compliance to meet the requirements of Subdivision (a) of this section, including but not limited to sampling frequencies, may be approved by the EA for green and food materials composting operations and facilities if the EA determines that the alternative method will ensure that the maximum acceptable metal concentrations shown in Table 2 are not exceeded.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17868.3. Pathogen Reduction.

(a) Compost products derived from compostable materials, that contains pathogens in amounts that exceed the maximum acceptable pathogen concentrations described in Subdivision (b) of this section shall be designated for disposal, additional processing, or other use as approved by state or federal agencies having appropriate jurisdiction.

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(b) Operators that produce compost shall ensure that:

(1) The density of fecal coliform in compost, that is or has at one time been active compost, shall be less than 1,000 Most Probable Number per gram of total solids (dry weight basis), and the density of *Salmonella* sp. bacteria in compost shall be less than three (3) Most Probable Number per four (4) grams of total solids (dry weight basis).

(2) At enclosed or within-vessel composting process operations and facilities, active compost shall be maintained at a temperature of 55 degrees Celsius (131 degrees Fahrenheit) or higher for a pathogen reduction period of 3 days.

(A) Due to variations among enclosed and within-vessel composting system designs, including tunnels, the operator shall submit a system-specific temperature monitoring plan with the permit application to meet the requirements of Subdivision (b)(2) of this section.

(3) If the operation or facility uses a windrow composting process, active compost shall be maintained under aerobic conditions at a temperature of 55 degrees Celsius (131 degrees Fahrenheit) or higher for a pathogen reduction period of 15 days or longer. During the period when the compost is maintained at 55 degrees Celsius or higher, there shall be a minimum of five (5) turnings of the windrow.

(4) If the operation or facility uses an aerated static pile composting process, all active compost shall be covered with 6 to 12 inches of insulating material, and the active compost shall be maintained at a temperature of 55 degrees Celsius (131 degrees Fahrenheit) or higher for a pathogen reduction period of 3 days.

(c) Alternative methods of compliance to meet the requirements of Subdivision (b) of this section may be approved by the EA if the EA determines that the alternative method will provide equivalent pathogen reduction.

(d) Compost operations and facilities shall be monitored as follows to ensure that the standards in Subdivision (b) of this section are met:

(1) Each day during the pathogen reduction period, at least one temperature reading shall be taken per every 150 feet of windrow, or fraction thereof, or for every 200 cubic-yards of active compost, or fraction thereof.

(2) Temperature measurements for pathogen reduction shall be measured as follows:

(A) Windrow composting processes and agitated bays shall be monitored twelve (12) to twenty-four (24) inches below the pile surface;

(B) Aerated static pile composting processes shall be monitored twelve (12) to eighteen (18) inches from the point where the insulation cover meets the active compost.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Section 17868.5. Green Material Processing Requirements.

In order for a feedstock to be considered green material, as defined in section 17852(a)(21), the following requirements shall be met:

(a) The feedstock shall undergo load checking to ensure that physical contaminants are no greater than 1.0 percent of total weight. Load checking shall include both visual observation of incoming waste loads and load sorting to quantify percentage of contaminating materials.

(1) A minimum of one percent of daily incoming feedstock volume or at least one truck per day, whichever is greater, shall be inspected visually. If a visual load check indicates a contamination level greater than 1.0 percent, a representative sample shall be taken, physical

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contaminants shall be collected and weighed, and the percentage of physical contaminants determined. The load shall be rejected if physical contaminants are greater than 1.0 percent of total weight.

(b) Upon request of the EA, the operator shall take a representative sample of feedstock, physical contaminants shall be collected and weighed, and the percentage of physical contaminants determined.

(c) Any agricultural material handling operation using this material shall ensure the feedstock meets the metal concentration limits specified in Table 2 of section 17868.2.

(d) Facility personnel shall be adequately trained to perform the activities specified in this section.

(e) Any operation or facility using this feedstock shall maintain records demonstrating compliance with this section.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Article 8. Composting Operation and Facility Records

Section 17869. General Record Keeping Requirements.

Except as provided in subsection (d), all compostable materials handling operations and facilities shall meet the following requirements:

(a) All records required by this Chapter shall be kept in one location and accessible for five (5) years and shall be available for inspection by authorized representatives of the board, EA, local health entity, and other duly authorized regulatory and EAs during normal working hours.

(b) The operator shall record any special occurrences encountered during operation and methods used to resolve problems arising from these events, including details of all incidents that required implementing emergency procedures.

(c) The operator shall record any public complaints received by the operator, including:

- (1) the nature of the complaint,
- (2) the date the complaint was received,
- (3) if available, the name, address, and telephone number of the person or persons making the complaint, and
- (4) any actions taken to respond to the complaint.

(d) The operator shall record the quantity and type of feedstock received and quantity of compost and chipped and ground material produced. Agricultural compostable materials handling operations shall maintain records only for compostable material accepted from off-site.

(e) The operator shall record the number of load checks performed and loads rejected.

(f) The operator shall record all test results generated by compliance with Article 7 of this Chapter, including but not limited to, metal concentrations, fecal coliform and Salmonella sp. densities, temperature measurements, and dates of windrow turnings.

- (1) The operator shall retain records detailing pathogen reduction methods.

(g) The operator shall record and retain records of any serious injury to the public occurring on-site and any complaint of adverse health effects to the public attributed to operations. Serious injury means any injury that requires inpatient hospitalization for a period in excess of 24 hours or in which a member of the public suffers a loss of any member of the body or suffers any degree of permanent disfigurement.

(h) The operator shall retain a record of training and instruction completed in accordance with

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section 17867.5.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Article 9. Composting Facility Site Restoration

17870. Site Restoration.

All compostable materials handling operations and facilities shall meet the following requirements:

(a) The operator shall provide the EA written notice of intent to perform site restoration, at least 30 days prior to beginning site restoration.

(b) The operator(s) and owner(s) shall provide site restoration necessary to protect public health, safety, and the environment.

(c) The operator shall ensure that the following site restoration procedures are performed upon completion of operations and termination of service:

(1) The operation and facility grounds, ponds, and drainage areas shall be cleaned of all residues including, but not limited to, compost materials, construction scraps, and other materials related to the operations, and these residues legally recycled, reused, or disposed of.

(2) All machinery shall be cleaned and removed or stored securely.

(3) All remaining structures shall be cleaned of compost materials, dust, particulates, or other residues related to the composting and site restoration operations.

Note:

Authority cited:

Sections 40502, 43020, and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

Reference:

Sections 43020 and 43021 of the [Public Resources Code](#).

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