

# Composting

## April 2008

Composting is a means of breaking down “green wastes” such as grass clippings, leaves, brush and yard wastes, horse manure and other organic wastes into a usable gardening product. The intent of this program is to establish a self-sustaining facility which will accept green wastes, produce a quality compost product, and develop a business model that will allow year-round operation, establish sales markets and operate without subsidy. The goal of this program is to foster composting in the community as a private enterprise.

The Anchorage Regional Compost Facility located at Point Woronzof was operated by the previous operator for over 10 years. In October 2007 the Heritage Land Bank elected not to renew the property lease to the current operator. With on-going litigation between the former operator and the Municipality, the exact dates for making this property available to a new operator or the condition of the property are highly uncertain. Consequently, municipal procurement of a private operator for this property is not possible at this time. Solid Waste Services (SWS) and the Municipality will continue to foster efforts by private entities to fill this gap in our waste management stream.

### 2008 Facility Operations

SWS is preparing to have a composting operation available to the public this summer. Assembly Ordinance AO 2008-53 will allow SWS to collect tipping fees and sell compost. Although it is assumed that SWS will be able to operate a compost facility at the Point Woronzof site within the next few weeks, alternative locations are under consideration to provide a viable outlet for compostable wastes as soon as possible. SWS intends to accept yard waste, horse manure and other selected (non-putrescible) organics at the facility this season.

User costs - \$30 per ton tipping fee  
Or \$8 per car/truck load (under 1,000 lbs)  
Product sales - TBD

Source of revenue – Self-sustaining operation from tipping fees and product sales

### Current Site Cleanup

There are significant quantities of materials stockpiled on the Point Woronzof site. While much of the material could be processed into compost, there are also quantities of materials which are not compostable or may be adverse to quality compost production. There are quantities of material in various stages of the composting process. Additionally, portions of the existing operation have expanded beyond the boundaries of the leased property. At some point, if the Municipality intends any other use for this land, the site will need to be restored to a useable condition. Incorporating existing materials into compostable product and accomplishing reclamation concurrent with composting will greatly reduce site restoration costs to the Municipality. SWS proposes accomplishing the reclamation over a 4 year period. Funding for reclamation will come from the tipping fee surcharge, to be established by Assembly Ordinance AO 2008-62.

### **Compostables Transfer Program**

The location of the Anchorage Regional Compost Facility is inconvenient for many users and additional collection points for compostables are desired by the community. Collection points for compostable materials must be located at facilities with scales so the tipping fee for the compost facility can be recovered. SWS plans to start the compostables transfer program at Central Transfer Station and expand operations to Anchorage Regional Landfill. This program will be implemented once a composting facility has been established and necessary equipment is procured.

User costs - \$10 per ton (plus compost facility tipping fee)

Or \$10 per car/truck load (under 1,000 lbs)

Source of revenue – Self-sustaining program

### **Area-wide Programs**

The Christmas tree recycling program has been funded in part by the Municipality from tipping fee revenue and run by Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling (ALPAR). This has been a very successful program collecting holiday trees for a limited time at Carrs stores and chipping the trees for trails programs. We intend to keep this program and look to expand to a drop-off program for other seasonal wastes, namely a fall leaf program slated for Phase II (October 2009).

Source of revenue – Refuse Tipping Fee