



# LEPS

Langley Environmental Partners Society



## Horse Manure Composting Program

# Siting Tips for Compost Systems

The siting of your horse manure composting system is one of the most important decisions you have to make.

The following are several important considerations you must keep in mind when choosing a site:

### Distance to watercourses

According to the BC Waste Management Act, The Code under the Agricultural Waste Control Regulation Section 15 says that a composting site must be located at least 15m from any watercourse and at least 30m from any source of water for domestic purposes.

If piles are not contained, that is they are not on a concrete slab, piles must be 30m away from watercourses.

\*LEPS recommends a 30m distance in general as Sections 3 and 30 of The Code state that agricultural wastes and products must be managed in a manner that prevents pollution. It is important to err on the side of caution as the Fisheries Act Section 36(3) prohibits the deposit of deleterious substances into watercourses (this could include compost materials and leachate).

### Distance to wells

Distance from wells must be at least 30.5 meters from any probable source of contamination. This includes compost materials and leachate (BC Health Act Section 42).

### Distance to neighbours

Though a properly composting manure pile should not have much odour there can be some, particularly on hot summer days. Consider locating your site as far as possible from rural residences or residential areas, siting so that prevailing winds transport odours away from rural residences or residential areas. Though the Agricultural Waste Control Regulation Section 19 states that The Code is not intended to prohibit various odours from agricultural operations or activities on a farm, providing such operations or activities do not pollute, a recent Provincial Court judgement found that odours that cause or are capable of causing material physical discomfort to a person are considered emissions that cause pollution.

### Drainage direction from the site

If water is allowed to pass through the compost materials (which it should not), or the system is not on a sloped concrete slab (recommended), ensure that your compost site does not drain directly into a local water course.

## Siting Tips for Compost Systems...continued...

### Access to the system

It is important to consider whether you need to be able to access the system all year, particularly during wet weather. You must also consider access to the site for building the system itself. If you are having a concrete pad and forms poured you want cement trucks to be able to access the site as closely as possible.

### Machinery use

You need to consider whether you intend to manage the system by hand or with a tractor. Will the system handle the size of machinery you are currently using? Are you intending to get larger equipment in the future? If you sell your property, what sized equipment might a new land-owner be using?

### Distance from your barn

Consider how close you want your system to your barn. Do you want your stall cleaners to dump directly into the system or will you have a temporary dump site and move it mechanically into the system later?

You may also want to consider the proximity to the horses as insects from the system may bother horses.

### Distance from your fields

Consider how close you want your system to be to your fields where you will be using the compost. How far do you want to run your machinery? Greater distances to fields means more wear and tear on your property and more of your time going back and forth.

### The amount of space to work around the system

Consider how much space you will need to work with and around your compost system. You will need enough room to get your tractor in and out of the system, for your tractor to turn around, and for you to park your manure spreader to load it.

### Possible expansion

Consider how much space you have surrounding the system. Do you think you might expand the system in the future if you take more animals on your property, or if your animals generate more waste than you planned for?

If you do not build a cover for the system immediately, do you hope to build a roof in the future?