

DAWSON CITY MUNICIPAL COMPOST GUIDE

Dawson City Municipal Compost Facility is located at the Quigley Landfill site.

Winter hours: Tues, Wed, Sat, Sun: 11 am – 6 pm

Summer hours: Tuesday through Saturday: Noon – 7:00 pm

Municipal compost facilities reach higher temperatures than backyard composts therefore more items can be safely composted in a municipal compost.

COMPOSTABLE IN THE MUNICIPAL COMPOST FACILITY:

- plate scrapings
- food scraps (raw or cooked) including fruit, vegetables, dairy, fish, shell fish including its shell, bones, bread, pasta, rice, tea bags, coffee grounds and filters
- cooked meat
- **small** amounts of raw meat: **TRIMMINGS ONLY**
- **food soiled** paper products (as long as not lined with foil or plastic) including paper napkins, pizza boxes, paper plates, paper towel, flour and sugar bags, parchment paper
- wax paper
- plant trimmings, leaves, grass
- sawdust and wood shavings
- **certified** compostable bags (only “ASTM D6400” or “US Certified Compostable” labels acceptable)

NOT ACCEPTABLE:

- liquids (such as soups and sauces) - they will break down compost bags. OK if strained first.
- disposable coffee cups and disposable soup bowls (they are lined with plastic)
- tetra-packs
- brush cuttings
- carcasses, large amounts of raw meat
- diapers and wipes, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products
- pet feces, cat litter
- manure, biosolids, night soil
- floor sweepings, vacuum bag contents, dryer lint
- cigarettes and ashes
- chewing gum
- oil from deep fryers
- plastic, styrofoam, foil, glass, metal
- “Degradable” and “biodegradable” garbage bags (such as the Ecosafe Bio bags) that do not have the “ASTM D6400” or “US Certified Compostable” label. These bags are great for the landfill, but not the compost facility.

WHY BOTHER?

Compostables make up almost 50% of domestic garbage (by weight).

Compost is a valuable resource for landscaping, reclamation and gardening. Why waste such a resource by putting it in the garbage!

Compostables break down much more slowly in a landfill compared to a compost facility. Diverting compostables out of the landfill could reduce domestic landfill waste by half, thus prolonging the life of the landfill.

When compost goes to a landfill it composts anaerobically (without oxygen) and this produces methane which is a greenhouse gas. Methane is 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. Excess greenhouse gas contributes to climate change. According to Environment Canada, landfill sites account for 38% of Canada's total methane emissions. In a commercial compost facility, organics compost aerobically (with oxygen) and this does not produce methane.

When compostables break down anaerobically in a landfill, they increase the acidity of the landfill which significantly increases the amount of heavy metals that leach out of the landfill into the ground water.

HOW TO COLLECT YOUR COMPOSTABLES:

A 5-gallon bucket makes a great compost collector. Here are the steps to avoid bag breakage and make collection easy:

- **Line the bottom of the bucket** with some newspaper.
- Insert compostable bag. **The bags must have the “ASTM D6400” or “US Certified Compostable” label to be acceptable.**
- Line the **inside of the bottom of the bag** with newspaper.
- Fill the bag with compostables listed in guide. When full tie top of bag, no twist ties.
- To avoid odour, keep the lid **off**.
- To avoid odour, put meat and fish scraps, incl the paper packaging on home butchered meat, in a small container in your freezer (an ice cream pail works well). Add it to your main compost bucket on the day it is taken to Quigley.
- Rinse out your 5 gallon bucket and start again.
- **Store your unused compost bags in the freezer and they will last for years.**

If you are taking your own compost to Quigley, you don't need to use a compost bag in your bucket. Line the bottom of the bucket with newspaper to make dumping your compost easier and less messy.

If you are already recycling, you will discover that the majority of your kitchen 'garbage' is actually compostable.

Biosak compost bags are available at the Dawson Hardware Store. Ecosafe 6400 compost bags can be ordered through Bonanza Market. Glad compost bags are available in Whitehorse.

Degradable garbage bags are meant for the landfill. They will disappear from the landfill in 1-3 years (as opposed to 400-1000 years for a traditional garbage bag!) They are strong and durable. **But they are not compostable, so do not use degradable garbage bags for your compost.**