

To: The Public Safety Committee

Please consider the following changes to the composting amendments:

- renaming 2.12 “Leaf Compost” to “Yard Waste Compost.”
- including in 2.12 all yard waste such as:
  - grass clippings. Property owners who chooses to collect grass clipping while mowing their lawn need to have a place to compost these clippings.
  - lawn thatch (some people remove the thatch from their lawns and this is perfect material to be composted.)
  - weeds, (every property owner has them)
  - plant trimmings (dead flowers and leaves),
  - bush trimmings (hedge cuttings, waste from pruning)
  - tree trimmings,
  - vegetable garden trimmings (carrot tops, beet tops, pea pods, rhubarb leaves, etc)
  - fall clean-up debris (dead annuals, vegetable garden stalks, etc,)

There are hundreds of active gardeners in London where composting these yard materials is an ongoing part of the practice of gardening.

- changing the height of the compost area in 2.12 to 1.8m to be the same as 2.11 Compost Location

- changing the number of leaf compost areas to 2. There are 2 ways of composting - active and inactive.

Active composting involves turning the materials occasionally to give all materials access to the right amount of moisture and oxygen. Active composting can turn materials into usable compost in 1 year but requires a separate place to turn the materials into. Most gardeners will use a second area for this.

The inactive method leaves the material as it was piled until it is composted. Inactive composting takes at least 2 years and gardeners need to start a second pile before last year’s material is ready to be removed. Piling this year’s materials on top of last years simply makes last years materials inaccessible

With either method, more than 1 areas is needed.

- rounding up the size of a leaf compost area to an even 10 m2.

- defining “rear yard” in both 2.11 and 2.12. On a lot that has open area beside the main structure, where does the rear yard begin? Is it behind the front corner of the building, behind the rear corner of the building or could it be wherever the owner chooses to erect a divider such as a fence?

- removing items 2.11 v and 2.12 v. There are places where using a wall or fence is appropriate for a compost pile. Simply ruling all these places out is overly restrictive. If there are instances where it is not appropriate, list these.

- changing, in 2.11, the restrictions on enclosure materials (iv) and covers (vi.)

Composting requires a very delicate balance of moisture and oxygen. With too little moisture organic materials will simply stay in their original condition like a book on a library shelf. Too much moisture has a similar effect, like a log at the bottom of a lake. Concrete blocks, solid lumber or metal structures don’t allow enough air for materials to compost. Any structure that would be enclosed so tightly that even a mouse or mole couldn’t get in is too air tight to compost. This would not be a composter.

Active gardening is a great way for people to get exercise and enjoy the outdoors and composting is an important part of gardening. Turning yard waste and kitchen scraps into compost is a great way to enhance the soil in gardens. Home composting saves the cost of materials having to be picked up and dealt with by the city.

However, the restrictions being proposed would greatly restrict to ability of gardeners to compost and some of the benefits mentioned would be lost.

Ray Robertson  
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