

FACT SHEET: COMPOST FROM SOCRRA

What is SOCRRA? The Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority (SOCRRA) is an intergovernmental organization providing waste management, yard waste management, and recycling services to member communities including: Berkley, Beverly Hills, Birmingham, Clawson, Ferndale, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak, and Troy. Office address: 3910 W. Webster, Royal Oak; www.socrra.org.

Location of the SOCRRA Compost Site: 1741 School Road, Rochester Hills. (Located north of M-59; just west of Dequindre Rd.)

Availability of screened compost: SOCRRA compost is returned to SOCRRA member communities for distribution to residents and for community gardening projects. Compost may also be picked up for free at the compost site at certain times (usually Saturday mornings). *For information on times, call the office at 248-288-5150 or www.socrra.org (go to "HOURS").*

Materials used to make SOCRRA compost: Leaves, grass clippings, and other yard waste material collected from SOCRRA communities); plus woodchips.

Process at the compost site: Once at the compost site, yard waste is mixed and shredded, achieving a 2:1 ratio of leaves to grass clippings. The mix is placed in windrows (long piles) and turned periodically to allow aeration and natural moisture addition. After decomposition, the compost is screened to remove sticks, stones and other debris. The screened compost is then stockpiled for curing.

Characteristics of SOCRRA compost, as analyzed by Woods End Laboratories, Inc.:

pH: 7.63 (alkaline, like many soils in Southeast Michigan)]

Total nitrogen: 1.410%

Phosphorus (P): 0.178%

Potassium (K): 0.616%

Pesticide residue: Extremely low

Recommendation for use: Mix SOCRRA compost with native soil on a 50-50 basis. SOCRRA compost is an excellent amendment and top-dressing for all gardens and lawns, and has been extensively used by local gardeners and some landscapers in Southeast Michigan.

Benefits of compost for healthy soils and water quality:

- Increases water-holding capacity of sandy soils.
- Enhances the permeability of clay soils.
- Slowly releases nutrients to plant roots.
- Improves soil structure and tilth.
- Restores microbial populations.
- Suppresses certain soil-borne diseases.
- Prevents soil erosion.
- Degrades oils, pesticides, and other soil contaminants.
- Binds heavy metals carried by storm water runoff.