

Appendix A: Bio-solids Composting Fact Sheet

Athens-Clarke County Unified Government (ACCUG) Bio-solids and Composting Fact Sheet Public Utilities Department & Solid Waste Department

Bio-solid Facts:

- “Bio-solids” are the remaining byproduct of the water reclamation (or sewage treatment) process, after the liquid portion of the wastewater has been extracted and cleaned to a higher quality than the river water into which the liquid portion is ultimately deposited.
- Approximately 25% of the bio-solids generated in ACC is composted; the remaining bio-solids are landfilled.
- ACCUG bio-solids are tested by rule each year for 129 priority pollutants;
- ACCUG bio-solids have never exceeded the limits required by the Georgia Environmental Division (EPD).
- A Bio-Solid Annual Report is prepared each year and available upon request from the Public Utilities Department.

Compost Facts:

- ACCUG has been composting bio-solids since 1996, and has been testing the compost quarterly since that time, with the exception of a brief period.
- ACCUG voluntarily chooses to follow the US Composting Council’s (USCC) Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) Program. This program is an attempt to distinguish truly composted products from those which are not. The STA is a testing and disclosure program which requires participants to play by the same rules and submit regular samples to participating laboratories. The labs use the same agreed upon test methods and report the results in standard units. This program follows the US Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA), Clean Water Act(40 CFR/ Part 503) regarding the pollutant concentration limits in bio-solids when used in composting.
- ACCUG is permitted by the Solid Waste Management branch of the Georgia EPD to conduct composting operations at the landfill, and is inspected periodically.
- Georgia rules for solid waste management require that the compost resulting from compost operations be:
 - non-pathogenic;
 - free of offensive odors;
 - biologically and chemically stable;
 - free of injurious components or particles in able to sustain plant growth; and
 - meet vector attraction reduction.
- ACCUG compost is registered with the Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDOA) as a soil amendment, and is required to report every six months how much compost is distributed to the public.
- The compost mix is approximately 25% bio-solids and 75% yard debris, and is processed through a windrow method.
- ACCUG could generate more compost more given two conditions:
 - Additional yard debris needed to mix with the bio-solids; and

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- Additional developed space at the landfill on which to store and process compost and yard debris.
- Citizens purchasing compost receive a Compost Technical Data Sheet, which conveys moisture content, organic matter content, pH, soluble salts, particle size, select pathogens presence (Fecal coliform or Salmonella) and Trace Metals (Arsenic, Cadmium, Chromium, Copper, Lead, Mercury, Molybdenum, Nickel, Selenium, and Zinc). Most recent testing results are available upon request from the Solid Waste Department.
- ACCUG Solid Waste Department has two Certified Composting Program Managers on staff. This is a certification program created and managed by the USCC and the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA).
- ACCUG compost meets or exceeds all state and federal regulations pertaining to bio-solid composting and is considered by US EPA, GA EPD, GA DOA, and the US Composting Council, as safe to use in yards as a soil amendment.