

Guidance for Generators of Category AA, A, and B Compost and the Ontario Compost Quality Standards – Maturity Effective July 1st, 2015

Disclaimer: This document provides operational guidance to accompany the “Ontario Compost Quality Standards” for generators of Category AA, A, and B Compost. The document does not supersede the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), O. Reg. 347 (including Part II in the “Ontario Compost Quality Standards”), or any site approval conditions. Ministry staff have full discretion on compliance actions required based on their knowledge and site specific conditions. If you wish to determine your legal obligations, you are advised to consult the EPA, O. Reg. 347, and Part II of the Ontario Quality Compost Standards and/or consult a lawyer.

This document includes:

- Maintaining Compliance with Moisture Requirements
- Maturity Resampling Protocol

Appendix 1 in Part II of the Ontario Compost Quality Standards (Standards) outlines the sample failure policy (retesting) for metals and pathogens. However, Appendix 1 is silent on moisture and maturity. This document provides additional guidance on these topics including re-testing considerations.

1.0 Maintaining Compliance with Moisture Requirements

The ministry acknowledges that the sampling and testing procedures for moisture content can result in a $\pm 5\%$ moisture variation in the sampling results and that there are different approaches that have been established to monitor moisture during the curing process.

The facility should take the appropriate steps to demonstrate that any result below the required moisture content is an anomaly during the curing period. If a facility consistently observes their moisture content to be below 40% [such as consistently at 37%], corrective actions should be taken to maintain good conditions for curing of the compost. As more results are accumulated, the facility will have more confidence in the reported moisture values.

Facilities should monitor moisture during the entire curing period and demonstrate that each batch meets the standard. For compliance purposes, individual samples may have substandard moisture content but the average of all samples taken during curing should be $\geq 40\%$.

1.1 Maturity Resampling Protocol

If the result from any compost sample does not meet the standard for maturity set out in Section 3.6, a facility can further cure the material. After this is performed, the batch would be considered a “new” batch and would only require 1 initial sample for analysis. After additional curing, a new composite sample should be taken to demonstrate the batch is mature. If the reprocessed compost batch remains segregated from any other material and has passed all other testing requirements, retesting for other regulated parameters would be unnecessary.

For further information on this topic, please contact Central Region and/or Standards Development Branch.