

# New CalTrans Compost Specifications

Caltrans has dedicated itself to the expanded usage of compost in landscaping, seeding and erosion control applications. As such, a series of new and updated specifications have been released for compost used in:

- Planting backfills
- Mulching
- Drill seeding and hydroseeding - turf and vegetation establishment
- Erosion control – compost blankets, berms and filter socks

Although the applications differ, as do the required characteristics of the composts specified, a standard format for the specifications is outlined below. Notice the 'bolded' text referring to required participation in the US Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance Program.

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## Compost

The compost producer shall be fully permitted in accordance with requirements of the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), Local Enforcement Agencies (LEA) and any other State and Local Agencies that regulate Solid Waste Facilities. If exempt from State permitting requirements, the composting facility shall certify that it follows all guidelines and procedures for production of compost meeting the environmental health standards of Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 3.1, Article 7.

**The compost producer shall be a participant in United States Composting Council's ("USCC") Seal of Testing Assurance ("STA") program.**

At Contractor's option, compost shall be derived from any single, or mixture of the following feedstock materials:

- A. Green material consisting of chipped, shredded, or ground vegetation; or clean processed recycled wood products.
- B. Class A, exceptional quality biosolids composts.
- C. Manure.
- D. Mixed food waste.

Feedstock materials shall be composted to reduce weed seeds, pathogens and deleterious materials in conformance with Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 3.1, Article 7, Section 17868.3

Compost shall not be derived from mixed municipal solid waste. Compost shall not contain paint, petroleum products, herbicides, fungicides or other chemical residues harmful to animal life or plant growth. Compost shall possess no objectionable odors.

Metal concentrations in compost shall not exceed the maximum metal concentrations listed in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Chapter 3.1, Section 17868.2.

Compost shall conform to the following:

*Additional compost requirements within each specification will be described on a table such as the one below.*

<b>Table 1 – Physical/Chemical Requirements</b>		
<b>Property</b>	<b>Test Method</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
pH	TMECC 04.11-A Elastometric pH 1:5 Slurry Method pH Units	Specific to each end use
Soluble Salts	TMECC 04.10-A Electrical Conductivity 1:5 Slurry Method dS/m (mmhos/cm)	Specific to each end use
Moisture Content	TMECC 03.09-A Total Solids & Moisture at 70+/- 5 deg C % Wet Weight Basis	Specific to each end use
Organic Matter Content	TMECC 05.07-A Loss-On-Ignition Organic Matter Method (LOI) % Dry Weight Basis	Specific to each end use
Maturity	TMECC 05.05-A Germination and Vigor Seed Emergence Seedling Vigor % Relative to Positive Control	Specific to each end use
Stability	TMECC 05.08-B Carbon Dioxide Evolution Rate mg CO <sub>2</sub> -C/g OM per day	Specific to each end use
Particle Size	TMECC 02.02-B Sample Sieving for Aggregate Size Classification % Dry Weight Basis	Specific to each end use
Pathogen	TMECC 07.01-B Fecal Coliform Bacteria or Salmonella	< 1000 MPN/gram dry wt. < 3 MPN/4 grams dry wt.
Physical Contaminants	TMECC 02.02-C Man Made Inert Removal and Classification:	1% or below

TMECC refers to "Test Methods for the Examination of Composting and compost," published by the United States Department of Agriculture and the USCC.

**Prior to compost application, the Contractor shall provide the Engineer with a copy of the compost producer's Compost Technical Data Sheet and a copy of the compost producers STA certification. The Compost Technical Data Sheet shall include laboratory analytical test results, directions for product use, and a list of product ingredients.**

Prior to compost application, the Contractor shall provide the Engineer with a Certificate of Compliance in conformance with the provisions in Section 6-1.07, "Certificates of Compliance," of the Standard Specifications.