

# COMPOSTING INFORMATION

This section provides a look at a specialized form of composting called **vermicomposting**, which is relatively unknown to residents. In addition, a table on troubleshooting tips is provided for your needs!

## VERMICOMPOSTING

Vermicomposting is a unique and viable alternative for situations where normal composting techniques cannot be practiced. A special kind of earthworm is used to break down the organic materials. These animals are called red wigglers and are capable of eating their weight in organic matter each day. Along with the waste, the worms consume their bedding, then excrete castings.

These castings are an excellent natural plant food, that can be richer in certain materials than topsoil. Because composting using worms require less space than normal methods, it is ideal for offices, classrooms, and high density urban areas.

While an outdoor compost pile is still active during the winter, the decomposition is relatively slow. Most people are not generating yard waste after the snow falls. The only organic waste would be food and kitchen scraps. Vermicomposting allows a person to conveniently get rid of organic material without having to venture outside.

## TROUBLESHOOTING CHART

<b>SYMPTOMS</b>	<b>PROBLEM</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>
The compost smells of ammonia.	Too much nitrogen in the pile.	Add brown leaves and mix them into the pile.
The compost smells like rotten eggs.	Not enough circulating air (anaerobic).	Aerate the pile. Turn for several days until dry.
The center of the pile is dry.	Not enough water.	Moisten materials while turning the pile.
The compost is damp and warm in the middle but nowhere else.	The pile is too small.	Collect material and mix old ingredients into a new pile.
The compost heap is attracting animals and other pests.	Scraps not properly covered by soil.	Fasten lid tightly. Do not add meat or fat and bury food wastes under soil.