THE USE OF COMPOST AS AN EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

MATERIAL

Compost shall be a well decomposed, weed free organic matter derived from agricultural, food, and yard or wood/bark organic matter source. The compost must be aerobically composted at a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Bureau of Waste Management permitted site. The compost shall possess no objectionable odors and will be reasonably free (<1% by dry weight) of man-made foreign matter. The compost product shall not resemble the raw material from which it was derived.

The physical parameters of the compost should be:

pH	5.5 – 8.0
Moisture Content	35% - 55%
Particle Size	98% pass through 1” screen
Soluble Salt Concentration	5.0 dS Maximum

COMPOST FOR EROSION CONTROL

Compost shall be uniformly applied at a rate of 270 – 540 cubic yards per acre (2 to 4 inch layer) to slopes of up to 2:1. Slopes with problem soils and more runoff will require greater application rates. On highly unstable soils, use compost in conjunction with appropriate structural measures. Spread the compost uniformly, then track (compact) the compost layer using a bulldozer or other appropriate equipment. Alternatively, apply compost using a pneumatic (blower) unit. Project compost directly at soil, thereby preventing water from moving between the soil-compost interface. Apply compost layer approximately 3 feet over the top of the slope or overlap it into existing vegetation. Follow by seeding or ornamental planting.

Where planning immediate grass, wildflower, or legume seeding or ornamental planting, use only a well composted product that contains no substances toxic to plants. Very coarse composts should be avoided if the slope is to be landscaped or seeded, as it will make planting and crop establishment more difficult. Composts containing fibrous particles that range in size produce a more stable mat.

COMPOST FILTER BERMS

Compost may also be used to construct a filter berm for sediment control. Composts denser in nature and containing particles that range in size produce the most stable berms. Do not use compost filter berms in channels.

Construct a 1 ½ to 2 foot high by 2.5 to 3 foot wide berm of compost parallel to the base of the slope or other affected area. For maximum water filtration ability, construct a 1 ½ to 2 foot high trapezoidal berm which is 3 feet wide at the top and 4 feet wide at the base.