

# Composting Troubleshooting Guide

## *Solid Waste Management Fact Sheet No. 5*

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Possible Causes</b>	<b>Solution</b>
<b>Rotten Odor</b>	excess moisture (anaerobic conditions)	turn pile, or add dry, porous material, such as sawdust, wood chips, or straw
	compaction (anaerobic conditions)	turn pile, or make pile smaller
<b>Ammonia Odor</b>	too much nitrogen (lack of carbon)	add high carbon material, such as sawdust, wood chips, or straw
<b>Low Pile Temperature</b>	pile too small	make pile bigger or insulate sides
	insufficient moisture	add water while turning pile
	poor aeration	turn pile
	lack of nitrogen	mix in nitrogen sources such as grass clippings or manure
	cold weather	increase pile size, or insulate pile with an extra layer of material such as straw
<b>High Pile Temperature</b> (>140° F)	pile too large	reduce pile size
	insufficient ventilation	turn pile
<b>Pests: Rats, Raccoons, Insects</b>	presence of meat scraps or fatty food waste	remove meat and fatty foods from pile, or cover with a layer of soil or sawdust, or build an animal-proof compost bin, or turn pile to increase temperature

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EP-5

May 1995

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