

Common Terms and Definitions

The terms defined below are used throughout this report. The source of each term is shown in parentheses “()”. Some terms are defined in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), and others are found in the Public Resource Code (PRC). These terms are as follows:

“AB 939” or “Assembly Bill 939” enacted the California Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989, which governs solid waste management, source reduction, recycling, composting, and market development within the state of California.

“Active Compost” means compost feedstock that is in the process of being rapidly decomposed and is unstable. Active compost is generating temperatures of at least 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) during decomposition; and is releasing carbon dioxide at a rate of at least 15 milligrams per gram of compost per day, or the equivalent of oxygen uptake (14CCR17852).

“Additives” means material mixed with feedstock or active compost in order to adjust the moisture level, carbon to nitrogen ratio, or porosity to create a favorable condition. Additives include, but are not limited to, fertilizers and urea. Additives do not include septage, sewage, or compost feedstock (14CCR17852).

“Aerated Static Pile” means the method of composting that involves mechanically moving air through the compost pile, either through suction or blowing air through the pile (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Alternative Daily Cover” (ADC) means cover material other than at least six inches of earthen material, placed on the surface of the active face at the end of each operating day to control vectors, fires, odors, blowing litter, and scavenging (14CCR17852).

“Amendments” means materials added to stabilized or cured compost to provide attributes for certain compost products, such as product bulk, product nutrient value, product pH, and soils blend. Amendments do not include septage, sewage, or compost feedstock (14CCR17852).

“Biomass Fuel” means ground green material used for Biomass Conversion (see “Biomass conversion”) (PRC40106).

“Biomass conversion” means the controlled combustion, when separated from other solid waste and used for producing electricity or heat, of the following materials:

1. Agricultural crop residues
2. Bark, lawn, yard, and garden clippings
3. Leaves, silvicultural residue, and tree and brush pruning
4. Wood, wood chips, and wood waste
5. Nonrecyclable pulp or Nonrecyclable paper materials

“Biomass conversion” does not include the controlled combustion of recyclable pulp or recyclable paper materials, or materials that contain sewage sludge, industrial sludge, medical waste, hazardous waste, or either high-level or low-level radioactive waste (PRC40106).

“California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)”, Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq. was enacted in 1970 as a system of checks and balances for land use development and management decisions in California. CEQA is California’s most significant environmental law. It requires state, local, and other agencies subject to the jurisdiction of California to evaluate the environmental implications of their actions. It aims to minimize environmental effects of the agency actions by requiring agencies to avoid or reduce, when feasible, the significant impacts of their decisions (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Chipping and Grinding” means an activity that mechanically reduces the size of organic matter (14CCR17852).

“Compost” means the product resulting from the controlled biological decomposition of organic wastes that are source-separated from the municipal solid waste stream, or which are separated at a centralized facility. Compost includes vegetable, yard, and wood wastes which are not hazardous waste (PRC40116).

“Composting Facility” means a facility that is operated for the purpose of producing compost, as defined in PRC40116. A “Composting Facility” includes (14CCR17852):

1. Green material composting facilities that have greater than 1,000 cubic yards of feedstock and active compost on site at any one time
2. Animal material composting facilities
3. Sewage sludge composting facilities
4. Mixed solid waste composting facilities

“Force Majeure” means an unexpected or uncontrollable event.

“Garden Refuse” means residential plant material that is source-separated at the point of generation. Garden refuse includes, but is not limited to, yard trimmings. Garden refuse does not include treated wood waste, mixed demolition, or mixed construction debris. Other names for garden refuse include “green waste” and “green material” (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Garden Refuse-Derived Products” are commodities derived from processed garden refuse and may include finished compost, mulch, biomass fuel, and alternative daily cover (ADC) for landfills (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Garden Refuse Facility” or garden refuse processing facility refers to the regional facility proposed in this document for the processing of the SWA member agencies’ garden refuse material.

“Green Material.” See Garden Refuse.

“Green Waste.” See Garden Refuse.

“Haulers” refers to an entity that transports garden refuse or any of its products or residuals at any point in the life cycle of the material including, but not limited to, collection from generators, transport to a processing facility, or delivery to an end user (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“In-Vessel” refers to the method of composting where the composted materials are completely encapsulated during the composting process (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Issue Resolution Plan” is a plan to address nuisance complaints, answering directly to the complaint issuer and to the oversight committee. Elements of the plan include how communication will be handled and the range of technology that may be used to remedy the situation. The plan should emphasize expediting resolution (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Landfill” means a waste management unit at which waste is discharged in or on land for disposal. It does not include surface impoundment, waste pile, land treatment unit, injection well, or soil amendments (27CCR20164).

“Mulch” means material produced through chipping and grinding of green material (14CCR17852).

“NPDES Permit” is the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit issued by the local Regional Water Quality Control Board to an owner or operator of any facility that is currently discharging or will be discharging waste into any surface waters of the state (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Preconsumer Food Waste” means food intended for human consumption that was disposed of after commercial processing but prior to retail sale for consumption (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Preliminary Siting Criteria” means factors to be taken into account when assessing the suitability of a potential site (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Primary” processing of green material may include:

- transfer and reload operations
- initial contamination reduction
- initial size control (chipping, shredding, screening) (SWA staff definition)

“Procurement” is the process by which a public agency acquires services (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Public-Private Partnership” means an agreement for services whereby public and private sectors collaborate in a partnership to provide services by contract (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Public Scoping Process” is the process in CEQA regulations by which the lead agency publicly invites other agencies and interested parties to comment and provide input on the range of alternatives and potential environmental issues (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Secondary” processing may include:

- secondary size control

- secondary contamination reduction
- moisture control
- composting with or without additives (SWA staff definition)

“Soil Amendment” means material added to soil to change its properties, including but not limited to compost, mulch, perlite, wood chips or shavings, nutrients, coloring, etc. (CH2M HILL HILL staff definition)

“Stakeholder” is an individual or entity with an interest in a project, including but not limited to permitting agencies, affected neighbors, public groups, environmental reviewers, etc. (CH2M HILL staff definition)

“Transfer Station” means a facility used for the unloading, consolidation, and transfer of waste materials (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Un-aerated Static Pile” means the method of composting that does not involve turning the pile or the use of mechanical devices for the purpose of introducing oxygen into the pile (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Urban Wood Waste” means dimensional lumber and brush & tree trimmings collected from residential self-haul and commercial sources (SWA staff definition).

“Waste Discharge Requirements” means the permit issued by the local Regional Water Quality Control Board to an owner or operator of any facility that is currently discharging or will be discharging waste that may affect groundwater quality from which waste may be discharged in a diffused manner (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Windrow” is a long open-air pile of garden refuse (green materials) (CH2M HILL staff definition).

“Windrow composting” means the method of composting that involves physical disturbance of the pile at regular intervals in order to introduce oxygen and water to the pile (CH2M HILL staff definition).