

**RCW 43.19A.120 Use of compost products in projects.** (1) When planning government-funded projects or soliciting and reviewing bids for such projects, all state agencies and local governments shall consider whether compost products can be utilized in the project.

(2) If compost products can be utilized in the project, the state agency or local government must use compost products, except as follows:

(a) A state agency or local government is not required to use compost products if:

(i) Compost products are not available within a reasonable period of time;

(ii) Compost products that are available do not comply with existing purchasing standards;

(iii) Compost products that are available do not comply with federal or state health, quality, and safety standards; and

(iv) Compost purchase prices are not reasonable or competitive; and

(b) A state agency is also not required to use compost products in a project if:

(i) The total cost of using compost is financially prohibitive;

(ii) Application of compost will have detrimental impacts on the physical characteristics and nutrient condition of the soil as it is used for a specific crop;

(iii) The project consists of growing trees in a greenhouse setting, including seed orchard greenhouses; or

(iv) The compost products that are available have not been certified as being free of crop-specific pests and pathogens, including pests and pathogens that could result in the denial of phytosanitary permits for shipping seedlings.

(3) Before the transportation or application of compost products under this section, composting facilities, state agencies, and local governments must ensure compliance with department of agriculture pest control regulations provided in chapter 16-470 WAC.

(4) State agencies and local governments are encouraged to give priority to purchasing compost products from companies that produce compost products locally, are certified by a nationally recognized organization, and produce compost products that are derived from municipal solid waste compost programs and meet quality standards adopted by rule by the department of ecology. [2020 c 290 § 2.]

**Findings—Legislative declaration—2020 c 290:** "The legislature finds and declares that local compost manufacturing plays a critical role in our state's solid waste infrastructure. Composting benefits Washington agencies, counties, cities, businesses, and residents by diverting hundreds of thousands of tons of organic waste from landfills, reducing solid waste costs, and lowering carbon emissions. The legislature finds that a growing number of local governments are recognizing the benefits of composting programs and offering compost collection to their residents and businesses. The diversion of food waste from landfills to compost processors remains critical for state and local governments to meet their ambitious diversion goals.

The legislature also finds that composting is a strong carbon reduction industry for Washington, as the application of compost to soil systems permits increased carbon sequestration. Compost can also replace synthetic chemical fertilizer, prevent topsoil erosion, and

filter stormwater on green infrastructure projects such as rain gardens and retention ponds.

The legislature declares that state and local governments should lead by example by purchasing and using local compost that meets state standards and by encouraging farming operations to do so as well."  
[2020 c 290 § 1.]