

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## *“Leaf” It in Your Yard (Composting) Safety Contract*



### *Before You Begin...*

*Composting has some potentially dangerous tools if misused. All participants should be aware of the potential for danger and agree to the following contract terms prior to participating in any composting activities. Read the following contract carefully. Unsafe behavior will result in a loss of composting privileges.*

### *Composting Qualifications*

#### **Do:**

Wear goggles at all times.

Transport tools with sharp or pointed edges down.

Keep clear of the shovel at all times.

Wash your hands when finished.

#### **Don't:**

Take off your goggles until you have finished and returned the tools to their proper place.

Play around with the tools or water.

Stand near the shovel while it is in use.

### *Agreement*

*I agree to the terms of the Compost Safety Contract. I realize that composting can be potentially dangerous if tools are misused. I am willing to follow the rules to ensure my safety and the safety of my team. I understand that unsafe behavior will end my participation in composting team activities and may have other negative consequences.*

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## *“Leaf” It in Your Yard (Composting)* *Student Tips for Managing a* *Compost Pile*



### *Before You Begin...*

- 1) Read and sign the Compost Safety Contract.
- 2) Make sure you have the following materials: goggles, shovel or pitchfork, meter stick, water, and troubleshooting page (Data Sheet 4). Other optional materials include work gloves and a temperature probe.
- 3) Know your job responsibilities:
  - Recorder:** Keeps a log that describes what the team did in 50 words or more.
  - Tool Manager:** Oversees the safe transport and use of all tools. Is responsible for turning the pile.
  - Measurer:** Measures the pile height and temperature before and after turning the pile. Gives this information to the Recorder. Also responsible for adding water during turning (only if needed).

### *Independent Team Maintenance*

- 1) Measure pile height and temperature at the center of the pile. If no thermometer is available, record temperature as either warmer, cooler, or about the same as your body temperature.
- 2) Carefully remove the compost bin and put it next to the pile.
- 3) Turn and water the pile. Refill the compost bin starting at the top of the compost and working your way down. If you have no compost bin, simply move the pile four feet over as you turn it. While turning, water any areas of the pile that are dry and crumbly. Do not put a large amount of water in any one spot. Never use more than four liters of water on an average sized pile (3'x3'x3'). Remember, the pile should be moist (not wet), like a wrung-out sponge.
- 4) Measure pile height and temperature at the center of the pile. If no thermometer is available, record temperature as either warmer, cooler, or about the same as your body temperature.

### *After You Finish*

- 1) Check the area to make sure it looks neat and clean.
- 2) Return all materials safely to their place and **WASH YOUR HANDS.**
- 3) Report your findings to the class.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



*“Leaf” It in Your Yard (Composting)*  
**Data Sheet**  
*page 4 of 4*



**Directions:** Use this sheet to record information as you conduct your research.

**Question:** What is needed to make a productive compost pile?

Questions	Example Answers Researched answers may vary slightly.	Source
<i>Troubleshooting</i> <i>What should you do if...</i>		
Unwanted animals start showing up at your compost pile?	<i>Make sure all food waste is buried in the center of the pile. Do not add more food waste until unwanted animals stop visiting.</i>	
The compost pile smells bad?	<i>Turn the pile more frequently and add dry material. There is too much moisture and not enough air getting into the pile.</i>	
The compost pile is dry in the center?	<i>Add water while turning the pile. This will allow moisture to be distributed uniformly.</i>	
The compost pile is damp and warm only in the middle?	<i>Either you have humus (the pile has finished composting) or you need to add water while turning the pile to increase overall moisture.</i>	
The compost pile smells sweet, but won't heat up?	<i>Mix in something high in nitrogen, such as grass, manure, or fertilizer.</i>	