



# Landscape Amendments Produced by The Frederick County Division of Solid Waste and Recycling

Diverting organic yard materials (such as leaves, grass clippings, limbs, etc.) from the waste stream is a critical part of Frederick County's integrated waste management strategy. Beyond conserving landfill space, separating yard waste allows these materials to be processed as a valuable commodity. **At the County's state-of-the art processing facility, unwanted organic materials find new life as they are recycled into mulch or compost.** By participating in the yard waste program—whether by bringing in yard waste or by purchasing compost or mulch—you are helping Frederick County's goal to **recycle more and waste less.**

This fact sheet provides a basic description of the yard waste program, including information on how materials are collected and processed, technical data on the finished products and recommendations for their use in the landscape. The landscape amendments produced by this program are premium quality horticultural products that are used by both homeowners and professional landscapers. Both mulch and compost cost are sold by weight only, at a rate of \$15 per ton.

## Frederick County's Shredded Mulch

Frederick County's organic materials program currently produces two grades of mulch: premium double-ground and basic single-ground. These products are only for sale in bulk at our Reichs Ford Road facilities; our staff can load open trucks and trailers only.

**Premium Double-Ground Mulch:** At the Reichs Ford Road facilities staff carefully monitor all incoming materials and remove unacceptable items. After collection, woody materials are processed with modern grinding equipment using a 2" screen, creating fine-textured, high quality mulch.

**After processing, the premium double ground mulch is sold for \$15 per ton.** This is an attractive, all natural mulch—no chemical additives or synthetic dyes are added. It is recommended for use in established flower gardens and shrub plantings, around trees, for paths and general landscaping purposes.

**Basic Single-Ground Mulch:** Basic single-ground mulch is produced from the same materials as the double-ground, but has been less processed (less grinding and screening), creating a coarser texture.

**The single-ground mulch is sold for \$8.00 per ton.** This is mulch is recommended for utility landscaping purposes such as pathways, erosion control and soil drainage improvement.

## Recommendations for Using Mulch

We recommend that mulch be spread 3" deep around woody plants and 2-3" deep around herbaceous perennials and annuals. Best gardening practices include not placing mulch directly against plant stems (this is true of any mulch, as mulching directly around woody stems can contribute to plant disease and decay.) When used in paths and other applications not directly around plants, mulch may be applied greater than 3" deep to suppress growth of weeds.

Please bear in mind that due to high demand, our mulch products often sell soon after they are processed. This means that at some times neither the premium double ground nor the basic single ground mulches may have been aged before being sold. Any all-natural, fresh mulch may contain some weed seeds and may absorb some nitrogen from the soil as it ages. Because of this it is not recommended to use freshly ground mulch products around seedlings and new plantings.

- Our facilities are located at 9031 Reichs Ford Road, in Frederick. Driving directions and additional information are posted online at : [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/wastemanagement](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/wastemanagement)
- Mulch is sold during regular operating hours, 7:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Saturday.
- Our staff is happy to answer any questions about the yard waste recycling program. Large quantity sales are available by advance arrangement. The office phone number is 301-600-1848.
- Brush, shrub prunings, leaves, grass clippings, landscape debris and limbs are accepted for recycling during the same hours; there is no cost to drop off these materials at this time.

**\* Please remember that Maryland law requires all vehicles transporting loose materials that can blow, fall or spill from a vehicle to have the materials fully enclosed on all sides and covered.**

## **REVIVE: Frederick County's Premium Compost**

The Department of Solid Waste Management receives more than 3,000,000 pounds of yard waste and landscape debris each year; these materials are recycled, not disposed. Our state-of-the-art facility utilizes modern equipment and best management practices to accelerate the natural degradation process of leaves, grass clippings and fine woody materials. The materials are shredded, screened and carefully monitored, then gathered into *windrows*—long piles that trained staff assess and assist in composting.



Compost windrow being turned at the Reichs Ford Road facilities.

Large equipment, specifically designed for turning compost windrows, incorporate air into the piles and mix the materials. Throughout the process the aeration, heating and curing of the compost is evaluated. This carefully designed program enables a stable, refined finished product to be produced in just three to four months time.

Samples of the finished compost are routinely sent to an independent laboratory, where the material is tested using U.S. Composting Council standards. The ongoing monitoring of the system and the regular product testing creates a consistently high quality soil amendment that we are proud to offer for sale in Frederick County. Our humus-rich, biologically active compost is named Revive – it recycles old materials and brings new life to your landscape!

**This product not only creates new usefulness for waste resources, but also is a premium soil amendment that brings landscapes to life.**

### **Independent Laboratory Testing**



A full report of the test results for our compost can be found on our website:  
[www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Revive](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Revive)

### **Lab Test Summary:**

- The pH of our compost is in the average range (6.0-8.5), and is a perfect complement for local acidic soils.
- Organic matter is the measure of carbon-based materials; this is an important test for determining the age and physical properties of the material. There is no ideal organic matter content for compost, but most users prefer a product ranging from 30 to 70% in order to help build structure and water holding capacity within their soil. Our compost meets this standard.
- Nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P), and potassium (K) are the three major nutrients used by plants. Our compost's nutrient results indicate that yearly additions of this product will most likely supply the needed phosphorous and potassium levels to your soil; however, vegetable crops and ornamental plants will likely need additional nitrogen.
- Bio-Assay Testing measures how well compost will germinate seeds and produce viable seedlings; our results show that Revive is excellent for this use.

### **Recommendations:**

- A yearly application of 2" of compost, top-dressed or worked into an established garden bed will provide organic matter to improve soil conditions as well as provide some nutrients to enhance plant growth. Compost can be added at any time; many gardeners will place mulch on top of an application of compost. Three cubic yards of compost will cover approximately 500 square feet to a depth of 2".
- A yearly application of  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of compost, top-dressed across an established turf, will add to the overall health and beauty of your lawn. Three cubic yards of compost will cover approximately 2,000 square feet with  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of compost.

**At this time mulch and Revive compost are only sold in bulk, for \$15 per ton. They are available only at our Reichs Ford Road facilities. More information can be obtained online or by calling our office at 301-600-1848.**