St. Croix Observatory

Sun-Mar Composting Toilet User's Guide

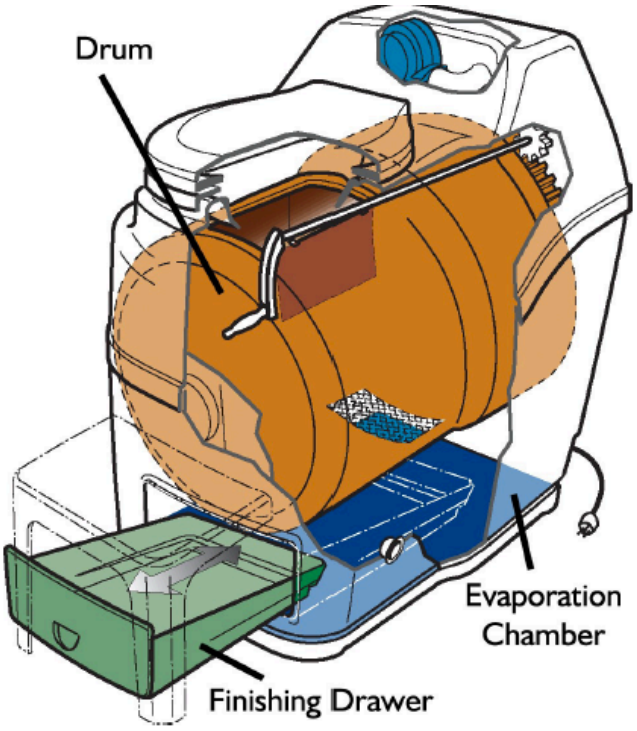




It's just a toilet. Don't be afraid. It won't bite.

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1. Supplies

Compost Sure peat moss & chopped hemp stalk mix (and a scoop)
Compost Quick enzyme accelerator (speeds up the compost process and can be used as a cleaner on surfaces
Microbe Mix: compost-enhancing bacteria
Heavy bucket
Garden trowel
Disposable gloves
Metal garbage bin with lid to keep out the mice
Plastic “doggie poop bags”
Putty knife scraper

Important Information:

- For proper aeration and effective composting, the drum should never be more than half full
- The compost should be moist. If it’s dry, add a couple litres of water and turn the drum two full rotations for good mixing and aeration.
- Ideal moisture is 40 - 60 % for aerobic microbes.

2. How to clean the composter

You will need disposable gloves, a sturdy bucket, garden trowel, putty knife scraper, garbage bag, household cleaner or disinfecting wipes, or Compost Quick liquid with some toilet tissue. Hot water can also be used.

If there are any crusty deposits on the black funnel under the seat, scrape them into the drum with the yellow putty knife scraper.

NOTE: SCO has no cleaning staff or garbage collection. You, the SCO user, are the cleaning staff and the garbage collector. Be considerate. Please do not leave a mess for someone else to clean up. Do unto others …

The exterior, lid, and seat of the composter can be cleaned with dilute bleach, a household cleaner, or sanitizing wipes. DO NOT put the wipes into the composter. The wide, removable black funnel under the seat can be cleaned with hot water, or wiped down with toilet paper dampened with Compost Quick liquid. When finished, this TP can be dropped into the composter drum.

Wet wipes, disinfecting wipes, and paper towel go in the garbage, NEVER into the composter drum. Disinfectants and household cleaner must never enter the composter drum. They can kill the compost, resulting in unpleasant, bad compost.

3. How to properly use the composting toilet: going Number Two

Make yourself comfortable and aim with care.
If it's just a pee, let it be. Use TP to wipe up any splashes and trop the TP into the drum.
The only things that can go into the composting drum are liquid and solid human biological waste, plus toilet paper.

NEVER PUT IN THE COMPOSTER:
- paper towel (it doesn't break down easily or quickly)
- facial tissue (often contains lotions, fragrances, etc.)
- menstrual products (won't compost)
- continence products (won't compost)
- household cleaning products (will kill the compost)
- WET WIPES MUST NOT GO INTO THE DRUM they are plastic and do not decompose.
- These items are garbage. Bag them and take them home for disposal with your household garbage.

When finished, add a 1-cup scoop of Compost Sure mix to the drum.
Sprinkle 1 spoonful of Microbe Mix into the drum.
Pull out the folding crank handle on the front of the unit and crank it clockwise for one full rotation of the drum. This should take seven turns of the handle. You will hear the release button on the front of the unit "pop" when one full rotation has been completed.

Check to ensure the drum is fully rotated and the drum trap door opening lines up with the black funnel opening under the seat.

4. Emptying the composter drum

Pull the drum lock button out and turn the crank handle anticlockwise for one full rotation of the drum. You'll hear a soft thud as the compost falls from the drum into the finishing drawer. Leave the compost in the finishing drawer for two or three weeks.

5. Disposing of mature compost

After two or three weeks, the finishing drawer can be removed and the compost dumped in an appropriate spot in the woods behind the storage building.

If the drawer is very full, or the compost is wet and heavy, you may prefer to *carefully* transfer the compost from the drawer to the green bucket before carrying it outside for dumping. Use the garden trowel for the transfer to the bucket. Take care to avoid spills onto the floor.

Replace the now empty finishing drawer and reattach the step on the front of the composter.

6. Spring start-up for the composter

When nighttime temperatures are above freezing, it's time to start up the composter. If the finishing drawer is full, remove it and dump the compost into the woods behind the storage building. Scrape any loose debris out from under the drawer and dump it too. Add to the drum the following:

- Two scoops Compost Sure
- Two spoonfuls of Microbe Mix
- Two or thee capfuls of Compost Quick liquid, plus two litres of warm water.

Pull out the crank handle and rotate the drum for two full rotations to aerate and mix the compost, for a good seasonal start-up.

7. Fall shut-down for the composter

Remove some compost from the drum by pulling the drum lock button out and turning the handle anticlockwise for one full rotation of the drum. You'll hear the compost thump as it falls from the drum into the finishing drawer. Leave the compost in the drawer for two to three weeks, after which the drawer can be removed and the compost dumped. See Section 5 above. Replace the finishing drawer.

8. Winter Use

In winter, at freezing temperatures, the toilet can still be used, but the composting drum is a holding tank. Compost does not "cook" in freezing temperatures. The drum must not be rotated in freezing conditions because this can damage the drum and its turning gears.