Master Composter Program

RESOURCE GUIDE
The University of Wisconsin Extension’s Master Composter program provides training that improves the capability of composters to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with others. The Solid & Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC) developed this guide as a resource for Master Composters. There are references to tools that Master Composters can utilize to augment and improve their outreach efforts, whether in the form of a workshop, demonstration or display. The guide is arranged as follows:

- Wisconsin Master Composter online educational resources.
- Directory of Master Composters engaged in outreach activities.
- Directory of Department of Natural Resources and Local Officials promoting home composting state-wide and locally.
- SHWEC publication “Home Composting Resources”.

The efforts of Master Composters help reduce the amount of waste going into landfills and instill personal responsibility for waste that is generated. Home composting can serve as a model of sustainability—illustrating the results of returning degradable organic materials to the soil. SHWEC will continue its efforts to train individuals who are interested in promoting home composting as a method to manage yard materials and food scraps at the source. Not only is composting a very effective tool to keep these materials out of landfills, but also produces a finished product valued by gardeners everywhere.

**MASTER COMPOSTER PROGRAM – CONTACT INFORMATION**

Solid & Hazardous Waste Education Center  
610 Langdon Street, Rm 528  
Madison, WI 53703  
Phone: 608-262-0385  
Fax: 608-262-6250  
Web: [www.uwex.edu/shwec/](http://www.uwex.edu/shwec/)
SHWEC maintains an online library of instructional materials that Master Composters can download to use for workshops and other outreach activities. The website contains a comprehensive library of educational materials including reproducible handouts, compost bin plans, SHWEC publications and links to various reference materials.

**Workshop Handouts**
- Compost Basics
- What can be Composted
- Fast-Track Compost
- Troubleshooting Compost
- Uses for Compost
- Common Backyard Composting: Questions & Answers
- Home Composting Resources
- Landscape Choices to Reduce Yardwaste
- Herbicides to Avoid in Your Compost
- Burn Barrels: They’re Unhealthy, Unneighborly, Unnecessary and Illegal
- The Health Hazards of Burning Leaves

**Compost Bin Plans and Sources**
This listing provides links to SHWEC compost bin plans as well as a listing of companies that sell manufactured compost bins

**Tools for Workshops & Outreach Activities**
- Workshop Outline
- Workshop Checklist
- Composting Short-Course Power Point Presentation
- Teaching Tips for Compost Workshops
- Building a Hot-pile for Demonstration
- Compost Workshop Publicity
- Compost Bin Sale Publicity
- Master Composter Study Guide
- Composting Video List – Available for loan

**Vermicomposting Resources**
A summary of vermicomposting from SHWEC and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Waukesha area</td>
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</table>

Those listed in this directory have completed Master Composter Instructor training.

The letter to the right of names indicates their interest in conducting composting workshops:

- a. Willing to prepare and teach a workshop
- b. Willing to plan and present a workshop with minimal assistance
- c. Willing to plan and present a workshop with much assistance
- d. Willing to handle all aspects of a workshop
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**Home Composting Resources**

**Try These Web Sites for Starters…**

- [www.baेन.νcсu.edu](http://www.baėn.νcςu.edu) - go to “people”, “faculty”, “Rhonda Sherman”, “on-site composting” & “publications.”
  A resource listing by NC State University faculty member Rhonda Sherman, including publications and lists of other publications on composting and vermicomposting.

- [www.biocycle.net](http://www.biocycle.net) - go to “article archives” click on BioCycle icon, and search list of archives by subject.
  Numerous articles on home and large scale composting and vermicomposting from Biocyce magazine.

- [www.compostingcouncil.org](http://www.compostingcouncil.org)
  US Composting Council’s web site includes publications, discussion list, calendar of events and trainings from USCC, membership info. and more about organization.

- [www.compostinfo.com](http://www.compostinfo.com)
  Florida’s on-line composting center developed by Sarasota County. Includes composting tutorials and other technical resources.

- [www.cce.cornell.edu](http://www.cce.cornell.edu) - use Search box to find topic specific info about composting.
  Technical and educational information on composting, including publications and audio-visual materials.

- [www.extension.umn.edu](http://www.extension.umn.edu) - type “compost” in search box.
  Fact sheets and guides on home composting and mulching.

- [www.mastercomposter.com](http://www.mastercomposter.com)
  Guide to master composter programs in the US and internationally. Listings of composting and gardening products, interactive message board, technical resources and educational materials on composting issues.

- [www.muextension.missouri.edu](http://www.muextension.missouri.edu) - type “compost” in search box.
  Numerous fact sheets on home composting and mulching.

- [www.plantfacts.osu.edu](http://www.plantfacts.osu.edu) - type “compost” in search box.
  Ohio State University links to fact sheets on composting, mulching and use of organic materials.

- [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov) - type “compost” or “mulch” in search box.
  USDA provides basic home composting, vermicomposting and mulching information.

- [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us) - click on search box and type compost.
  Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources site contains basic backyard composting and vermicomposting information.

- [www.uwex.edu/ces/shwec](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/shwec) - go to “publications,” and in focus area, specify composting.
  University of Wisconsin Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center fact sheets on composting questions, bin construction, vermicomposting and more.
Books and Printed Materials


**Basic Composting: All the Skills and Tools You Need to Get Started (Basic How-To Guides)** (2003); Eric Ebeling, Patti Olenick & Carl Hursh; at local bookstores and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used); $16.95.

**The Chemical Free Lawn** (1998); Warren Schultz; available from local bookstores and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new and used); $15.

**Compost** (2001); Organic Gardening magazine; Rodale Books; [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used); $9.95.

**The Compost Book** (1999); David & Yvonne Taylor; “can’s” and “can’ts” of composting with diagrams and drawings; [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used); $23.35.

**Compost Critters** (1993); Bianca Lavies; color photographs, descriptions of who eats who in compost pile; Flowerfield Enterprises, 10332 Shaver Rd, Kalamazoo MI 49024, [www.wormwoman.com](http://www.wormwoman.com) and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used); $15.99.

**Composting (Smith & Hawken)** (1998); Liz Ball; at local bookstores and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used); $10.95.


**Don’t Waste Your Wastes – Compost’em** (1992); Bert Whitehead, Sunnyvale Press; at local bookstores, [www.baproducts.com](http://www.baproducts.com) and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new and used); $8.

**Easy Compost: The Secret to Great Soil and Spectacular Plants** (1997); Brooklyn Botanic Garden; at local bookstores and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). $9.95.

**Home Composting: Reap a Heap of Benefits** (brochure) WI DNR PUBL-SW-072-01REV

**Home Composting: The Complete Composter** (brochure) WI DNR PUBL-SW-18293

**Yard Care: Do Your Share** (brochure); WI DNR, PUBL-SW-073-01REV

Brochures available at local UW-Extension Offices, local Solid Waste/Recycling Depts. or WI DNR or downloadable at [www.dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/wm/publications](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/wm/publications) under Yard Waste section.

**Home Composting Wheel** (1994); compost basics; at [www.ehmi.org](http://www.ehmi.org) go to “Product Research,” “by topic,” or EHMI, 10 Newmarket Rd., Durham, NH, 03824; 800-446-5256; $2.99/ea; minimum order 50.


**Organic Gardener’s Composting** (1993); Steve Solomon; at local bookstores and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used); $15.50.

**The Rodale Book of Composting: Easy Methods For Every Gardener** (1992); Debra Martin, et. al.; at local bookstores, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (new & used) or [www.rodalestore.com](http://www.rodalestore.com); $14.95.


Worms Eat My Garbage: How to Set Up & Maintain a Worm Composting System (1998); Mary Appelhof; available at www.wormwoman.com or Flowerfield Enterprises, 10322 Shaver Rd., Kalamazoo, MI 49024, 616-327-0108; $12.95.

### Slide Sets, Videos and CD Roms

**Backyard Composting CD Rom** (2003); University of MN; includes history and compost tips with photos, movies and animated diagrams for homeowners, Master Gardeners and teachers; view screen-sheets & order at www.compost.umn.edu or 612-625-3135; $19.95.

**Composting, It’s Recycling Naturally** (2003); PowerPoint presentation, 54 slides; from University of WI Cooperative Extension; adapted from Penn State University Extension; includes colorful slides on basic composting, grass cycling and smart landscape choices; contact local WI County Extension Offices to borrow copy or contact SHWEC at UWSP, CNR, Stevens Point WI 54481, 715-346-2793.

**It’s Gotten Rotten**; 20-min. video; composting science program for high schoolers showing compost critters and classroom use of compost for scientific investigations; www.cce.cornell.edu - go to “resources publications”, “Ecological Impact Issues,” and “recycling/composting” or Cornell University Resource Center, PO Box 3884, Ithaca NY 14852-3884, 608-255-2080; $26.25.

**The Magic of Composting**; 13-min. video; humorous program on backyard composting; Recycling Council of Ontario, 489 College St., Suite 504, Toronto, Ont. M6G 1A5, 416-657-2797 or www.rco.on.ca - go to “information”, “publications”, “composting resources”; $25.

**Home Composting - Turning Your Spoils Into Soils**; 17-min. video; basic backyard composting; CT DEP Recycling Program, 79 Elm Street, Hartford CT 06106-5127, 860-424-3365; or http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/compost/cresource.htm ; $8.

### Trade Journals and Newsletters


**Composting News**, electronic or paper monthly newsletter on composting and scrap wood management; McEntee Media Corp., www.recycle.cc/cnpage.htm, 440-238-6603; $83/year.


**Revised 4/2005 by Mary Kohrell, SHWEC Adjunct Faculty**

For More Information, Contact Your County Extension Agent or SHWEC

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<th>SHWEC at <a href="http://www.uwex.edu/ces/shwec">http://www.uwex.edu/ces/shwec</a></th>
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<td>UW Extension 610 Langdon St., Rm 528 Madison WI 53703 608-262-0385 FAX 608-262-6250</td>
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University of Wisconsin, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin Counties cooperating. UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming including Title IX and ADA.