COMPOST FIRES

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SWANA
COMPOST FIRES HAPPEN
Firefighters were called out Monday night to deal with a fire that broke out in a compost pile at the Foothills Regional Landfill.

The high winds made it difficult to get to the seat of the fire and there was a concern the ambers could be blown into the main garbage area and ignite a fire there, Prince George Fire Rescue assistant chief Dxxxx Pxxxx.

Heavy equipment was used to remove the four other piles that surrounded the pile that was burning. The cause was "naturally occurring."
More than 30 firefighters on Sunday battled a multiple-alarm fire at a city centre housing compostable waste. Because of the material burning, there’s a lot of smoke and heat, so the crews found it difficult to get into the building to knock the fire down.

- The smoke carries a distinct green-bin pungency
- It smells like crap
WHAT STARTS COMPOST FIRES

- Lightening strikes ????
- Heat from equipment ✓
- Sparks from welding ✓
- Cigarette butts ✓
- Wildfires ✓
- Arson ✓
“SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION”

- Biological: 70-80°C
- Chemical: Rapid temperature rise
- Ignite: 150°C to 200°C
TEMPERATURE PROFILE

Ignition Temperature
WHAT CONDITIONS

- Large piles retain heat
- Relatively dry pile
- Wet and dry spots
- Low air flow
- Time
WHAT WILL HEAT & BURN

- Uncured compost
- Green wood piles with fines
- Shredded green wood
- Mixed green & white wood chips
- Compost with wood chips
SMOLDERING INSIDE PILES
OPEN FLAME
IN-VEssel
HARTFORD COMPOST FACILITY
FROM BOB RYNK, 2000

Adapted from MDC Report
PREVENT

Avoid big piles

Windrows

Water (>35%)

Mix & aerate
MONITOR
PUTTING OUT A FIRE
POURING ON THE WATER
ISOLATE
EXCAVATE, SPREAD AND DOUSE

Remove cooler outer material first
COORDINATE WITH FIRE DEPT.
FIRES HAPPEN
BE SMART ABOUT IT

- Prevent
- Monitor
- Respond
SHAMELESS PLUG FOR SWANA

- 8,500 members
- Experienced resources
- NLC Crisis Committee
- Training & Education