Lesson 12: Community Relations

Learning Objectives:

- Be familiar with proactive measures to minimize public opposition
- Understand strategies to manage problems when they occur

Be Proactive, Not Reactive

- Proper site selection, design, construction and operations reduce the chances of community-related problems
- Establish baseline measurements: noise and odor
- Conduct odor dispersion modeling
- Establish odor monitoring & mitigation procedures
- Monitor weather conditions and adjust operations accordingly
- Know other sources of impacts in your area

Reducing Public Opposition

- Get to know your neighbors and the local government contacts early
- Educate your neighbors, and the public in general, about the environmental and horticultural benefits of compost
- Make your site a welcome show place
- Know that people smell with their eyes

Adapted from:

kessler consulting inc.
innovative waste solutions

Reducing Public Opposition

(continued)

- Ask your neighbors to be part of your monitoring team
- Notify neighbors in advance of changes in operation that might affect them

Adapted from:

kessler consulting inc.
innovative waste solutions

Odor Monitoring

- Initial assessment:
  - Inventory all potential sources
  - Determine operational factors impacting odor generation
  - Assess relative odor levels
- Daily assessment:
  - Upon arrival to site and during major operational activities
- Maintain weather and odor log

Managing Complaints

- Designate only one spokesperson
- Tell the truth
- Understand the problem and have a remediation plan before you speak
- Know that everything is on the record
- Avoid all negative words, even in the context of positive statements

Adapted from:

Odor Complaint Procedures

- Provide contact information to neighbors
- Maintain detailed information regarding all complaints received:
  - Person, time, description, current weather, etc.
- Field verify complaint immediately
- Implement corrective measures as soon as possible
- Maintain detailed information regarding response

Odor Control Methods

- Conduct odor-generating activities (e.g. turning) during times of maximum atmospheric dispersion
- Apply capping layer on problem windrows
- Mix odorous materials immediately
- Maintain site and prevent standing water
- Use odor control technologies:
  - Odor neutralizers added to materials, odor neutralizing mist, enclosure and biofiltration

Other Nuisance Controls

- Noise
  - Limit hours of equipment operations
  - Construct thickly-planted earthen berm
- Dust
  - Use fire hose or water truck to wet down access roads
  - Install air mist system to capture fugitive dust from grinding and screening operations