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News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Compost Availability Affected by Imprelis Herbicide**

The availability of compost processed for sale to the public this fall by the City of Springfield's Yardwaste Recycling Center will be affected by recent developments in the commercial herbicide market.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued an order to DuPont directing the company to immediately halt the sale, use or distribution of an herbicide called Imprelis. City of Springfield staff has been and will continue monitoring and taking proactive steps regarding any potential environmental impact resulting from the use of Imprelis. As a result of these steps, the City will not have compost available for sale this fall.

Imprelis is a new pre-emergent, systemic herbicide released in fall 2010 by DuPont for spring application. It is intended to kill broad-leaf weeds via both root absorption and contact. The product contains very high concentrations of its active ingredient and is being investigated as a possible cause of the decline or death of trees and woody ornamentals in areas across the country in recent weeks.

It is believed only one Springfield lawncare company applied the chemical in the Springfield area this spring, with the last application being made in mid-April. The company is taking steps to work directly with its customers in response. Any action taken is between the company and its customers and does not involve the City.

The City of Springfield is not a regulatory agency for such matters. Because the product label reads: "Do not use grass clippings from treated areas for mulching or compost, or allow for collection to composting facilities," the City's primary concern is mitigating potential impact on the City's supply of mulch and compost created from recycled yardwaste that may contain Imprelis.

Immediately after becoming aware of the potential impact of Imprelis, the City's Department of Environmental Services Solid Waste Management Division staff began taking several important proactive steps to protect its future compost and mulch supply. Those steps include:

- Working with the lawn care company, the City identified the date range for Imprelis applications and has isolated all grass clippings, regardless of local origin, brought to its recycling centers/Yardwaste Recycling Center since the beginning of 2011.
- Working with industry groups and others to ascertain the date after which fresh grass clippings accepted at the recycling centers/YRC will be free of the herbicide and appropriate for processing for sale.

Was the compost sold by the City this spring affected?

The City has no reason to believe that compost sold at the Yardwaste Recycling Center (YRC) or bagged and sold in 2011 was affected by Imprelis. All of the compost sold thus far in 2011 was made from clippings received in the fall of 2010 before the use of Imprelis. Records indicate Imprelis was only applied locally on two occasions in April of 2011.

Will compost be available for sale this fall?

This spring's yardwaste is being processed/composted as usual, but the resulting compost will continue to be kept isolated. It is being tested and will continue to be tested until it tests clean. At that time, the use of the compost will be evaluated. This would ordinarily be available for sale this fall; however, this compost will not be available for sale to the public. It will not be wasted, but will, instead, be utilized in City projects.

Unlike other pesticides, Imprelis has displayed a characteristic that precludes it from breaking down during the composting process. Pesticide residue in compost is usually neutralized by the organisms associated with the natural compost process and is typically not a concern. Imprelis will also eventually break down over time, but because it is a new product, it is unknown how long it will take to fully do so. Regular tests will be conducted on the City's compost in accordance with guidelines established by the U.S. Composting Council.

Will there be compost available for sale next spring?

The City is currently testing incoming materials to ascertain the point at which the materials test clean and are, therefore, appropriate for processing for sale. It is not known, at this time, when that date will be, nor the quantity that will be available for sale next spring. Informational updates will be available on the City's website – [www.springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://www.springfieldmo.gov/recycling) or the City's Recycling Hotline at (417) 864-1904 as the process progresses.

Is the City's mulch affected?

The disposal of any woody yardwaste materials (trees, brush, woody ornamentals) coming from the affected trees/shrubs will not be brought to the City's YRC, but will be managed by the lawn care company that utilized the herbicide. For this reason and because of the nature of the use of woody landscaping mulch – applied above ground, not mixed in the soil like compost so as to come in contact with tender roots (as compost does), it is not anticipated that the City's mulch supply will be effected.

Going forward, the City is committed to exploring any way in which its Solid Waste Management staff and facilities can assist the lawn care company and residents with safe disposal and handling of any vegetative materials that may be affected, while, at the same time, ensuring the quality of the compost and mulch products available at the Yardwaste Recycling Center.

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