

## **Mulching Operation Guidance Outline**

This document is designed to help owners/operators of mulching facilities in Georgia understand and comply with the new requirements in Rule 391-3-4-.16(5)(a).

### **A. Unprocessed Materials**

1. A stockpile of unprocessed yard trimmings, land-clearing debris, untreated and unpainted wood, mulch, or any combination thereof, must be no greater than 25,000 square feet in area and 25 feet in height.
2. The height of the pile will be estimated from the existing ground level.
3. The number of stockpiles is not restricted, provided buffer requirements (either set by the local fire authority or at a minimum of 50 ft.) and fire lane requirements are met (refer to the guidance document for developing a fire plan).

### **B. Processing Requirement**

1. Unprocessed yard trimmings, land-clearing debris, untreated and unpainted wood, or any combination thereof, must be processed no later than 90 days after receipt.
2. The daily inbound truck scale weight and/or volume (number of trucks and volume per truck) of unprocessed material must be recorded.
3. An estimate of the weight or volume of unprocessed material in storage must not exceed a rolling 90-day average of the weight or volume of unprocessed material recorded.
4. Mulch is not subject to this criteria, only unprocessed material.

### **C. Speculative Accumulation**

1. Mulch is not accumulated speculatively if the person accumulating it can show that there is a known use, reuse, or recycling potential for the material; that the material can be feasibly sold, used, reused, or recycled; and that during a rolling 12-month period 75% by weight or volume of the products stored at a facility are recycled, sold, used, or reused.
2. Any material that is accumulated speculatively, and not in accordance with these requirements, must be handled as solid waste.
3. Daily records of truck scale weight and/or volume (number of trucks and volume per truck) of inbound and outbound material shipments with customer contact information (i.e., facility name, address, contact name, phone, email) must be available for review by EPD.
4. A review of inbound and outbound receipts will be used to document the 75% criteria listed above.
5. Facilities which fail to demonstrate that material is not being speculatively accumulated may be required to apply for a solid waste handling permit.

#### D. Fire Plan

1. The facility shall have on site a fire plan detailing steps to prevent, contain, and extinguish a fire. The fire plan shall also include documentation that the local fire authority conducted a fire safety survey.
2. A separate guidance document is available to help develop a fire plan.

#### E. Fire Prevention Measures

1. Activities involving open flames and other flammable materials (oil, gas, fuel) shall not be allowed within 25 feet of a stockpile, except for maintenance activities involving torches and welding equipment if a fireproof barrier is used.
2. This condition should be included in the fire plan and strictly enforced.
3. Documentation of this condition may be through issuance of hot work permits (refer to the fire plan guidance document) or pictorial evidence.

#### F. Buffer Requirement

1. The facility must provide a buffer between unprocessed yard trimmings, land-clearing debris, untreated and unpainted wood, mulch, and any combination thereof and the property line.
2. The buffer shall be set by the local fire authority and documented in the fire plan.
3. If the local fire authority does not establish a buffer, the minimum buffer shall be 50 feet.
4. The buffer may include the fire lane.

#### G. Storm Water Control

1. The facility shall have storm water control measures.
2. Storm water runoff must be controlled to prevent discharge of pollutants into waters of the state.

#### H. Erosion and Sediment Control

1. The facility shall have erosion and sediment control measures.
2. Surface runoff from disturbed areas must be controlled by appropriate erosion and sedimentation control measures or devices.
3. The local issuing authority should be consulted for these requirements.

#### I. Existing Facilities

1. Existing facilities producing mulch that have stockpiles of unprocessed yard trimmings, land clearing debris, untreated and unpainted wood, mulch, or any combination thereof on the effective date of this rule shall comply with sections 391-3-4-.16(5)(a)2.(i)-(viii) within 6 months of the effective date of the rule.
2. EPD recognizes that existing facilities may require time to implement changes to comply with these conditions in order to qualify for the exemption. Six months will be allowed.
3. Within 6 months of the effective date of this rule, existing facilities not in compliance with this rule may be required to apply for a solid waste handling permit.