



# There's a friendly way to flush

Composting toilets give new meaning to the outhouse.

## BY JUDI KOSKI

As we northerners say, it's time to open up the camp. We are reminded of all the joys and jobs that await us. We also shrink back in fear at the mere mention of the word "outhouse."

Now don't flip your lid. There is an environmentally healthy choice for recycling human waste. Switching to a composting toilet system can be one of the most positive environmental changes a property owner can make.

Composting is more an attitude than a process. It starts people thinking about what else they can do for the environment.

There are several makes and models available that are functional, stylish, and DIY friendly.

So what exactly is a composting toilet?

Basically, the self-contained model is like a regular toilet without the flushing. It doesn't use a holding tank or septic system, produces no pollution or odour and makes great compost for flowers and shrubs.

Another model incorporates both a low-flush toilet and a composting unit installed under the building. This combo is still easy to maintain and can handle higher capacity use. This is what I have at my "off-the-grid" camp and I can attest to the fact that it really does

work. Now the family only visits the outhouse to look at the crescent moon on the door.

The composting toilet is environmentally safe, user friendly and can be used anywhere. It can easily be installed at the camp, boat house, or garden shed for example, and offers a much appreciated upgrade to the outhouse.

Composting toilets use a recycling process that mimics nature. Aerobic microbes turn organic matter into compost and liquid is evaporated. Basically all that's needed is to add a peat moss mixture periodically.

Since composting toilets are built to be independent of sewage and septic systems, they dramatically reduce the land and resources needed to build and maintain waste treatment facilities. Imagine the positive environmental impact there would be if more camps and homes were to switch to a composting system!

When pricing a system, keep in mind what the costs would be both long-term and in comparison to another system. Most composting toilets are less expensive than installing a septic system, and that's just the upfront costs.

Composting toilets continue to save money over the years, while also producing a valuable soil additive.

## Benefits of composting toilet:

- No pollution of groundwater and soil
- Saves water
- Recycles nutrients
- Little or no liquid output
- No plumbing on self contained
- No hydro
- No permit
- Reduces waste treatment



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