

LABSS INFORMATION PAPER INFOP21 - 2019 Version 2 – 28 April 2020**COMPOSTING TOILETS AND NON-DOMESTIC BUILDINGS****Interpretation in the context of exemption and definition.****BACKGROUND**

This paper provides guidance on composting toilet installations in, or ancillary to, non-domestic buildings. The term “composting toilet” in this paper includes a “urine diverting dry toilet” (UDDT), which diverts urine from the solid fraction of the waste.

DECISION

Following consultation with all Consortia, there is agreement on the following points of interpretation:

1. A composting toilet is a type of **waterless closet**.
2. A composting toilet within a non-domestic building is **not** a sanitary facility (see definition of sanitary facility in Appendix A).
3. A self-contained composting toilet ancillary to a non-domestic building may be exempt from compliance with Regulations 8 to 12 under Schedule 1 Type 13.
4. The installation of a composting toilet within an existing building may be exempt from warrant approval under Schedule 3 Type 2.
5. Generally, a composting toilet would **not** count toward any sanitary provision required under Standard 3.12 in the case of a non-domestic building (the minimum recommended number of **water closets** in a non-domestic building is given in Tables 3.5-8). However a verifier may, were deemed appropriate, consider a composting toilet as contributing towards the sanitary provision required under the standard.
6. There is nothing in building regulations to preclude the installation of a composting toilet in a non-domestic building.

Where point 1 is concerned, it is noted that a waterless closet does not: (a) require a water supply, or (b) produce wastewater as defined in Appendix A. Untreated urine from a composting toilet, in particular, is not wastewater as defined in Appendix A and may thus be exempt from the requirements of Standards 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9. (Note, however that the disposal of untreated urine via an infiltration field is a controlled activity requiring authorisation from SEPA – see Regulatory Method WAT-RM-04 for additional information.)

Where point 3 is concerned, verifiers will need to consider each individual enquiry on its own merits. However, it is recommended that any advice provided to agents and/or members of the public take due account of the LABSS view that a composting toilet is **not** a sanitary facility in terms of the building regulations. In particular, a small building containing just an accessible composting toilet and a gel dispenser is likely to be exempt under Schedule 1 Type 13, i.e., as long as it is at least 1m away from the site boundary. (Note a building containing a urinal would not be so exempt, however.)

Where point 4 is concerned, verifiers will, again, need to consider each individual enquiry on its own merits. However, the LABSS view is that a composting toilet is a type of **waterless closet**. Consequently, the installation of a composting toilet should **not** be considered to involve “a change in the method of wastewater discharge” when determining whether works are exempt from building warrant approval under Schedule 3 Type 2. Similarly, a composting toilet would not be considered to be a sanitary facility when determining whether a building qualifies for other Schedule 3 exemptions (e.g., Type 3).

Where points 5 and 6 are concerned, it is recognised that some existing buildings have, perhaps for historic reasons, limited or no sanitary facilities.

Where proposed alterations to such a building do not involve a change in occupation or use as defined in Regulation 4, verifiers may wish to bear in mind that there is nothing in current building regulations to preclude the installation of a composting toilet in a non-domestic building, i.e., subject to warrant approval being obtained where necessary.