

Emerging Contaminants in Compost

PFAS

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX, and many other chemicals. These chemicals are used in a range of applications such as fire fighting foam and also to provide water repellent qualities for packaging. PFAS are very persistent in the environment and in the human body – meaning they don't break down and they can accumulate over time. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse human health effects. Research from overseas has highlighted that PFAS may be present in compost made with fibre (cardboard or paper) based compostable packaging. The Organic Materials Sector Group is currently researching this issue in the New Zealand context.

Clopyralid

The Organic Materials Sector Group continues to work on the issue of clopyralid in compost. One of the areas of focus for the year is clopyralid and trying to work with the EPA to get it reassessed. WasteMINZ provided information to Consumer NZ on the previous work done on this issue, for Consumer NZ's [article](#) on the issue. Another article has recently been written for Landscapers NZ, which explains how Landscapers can reduce the risk of clopyralid getting into commercial compost.