

This interpretive sign appears in our bathroom

HOW IT WORKS

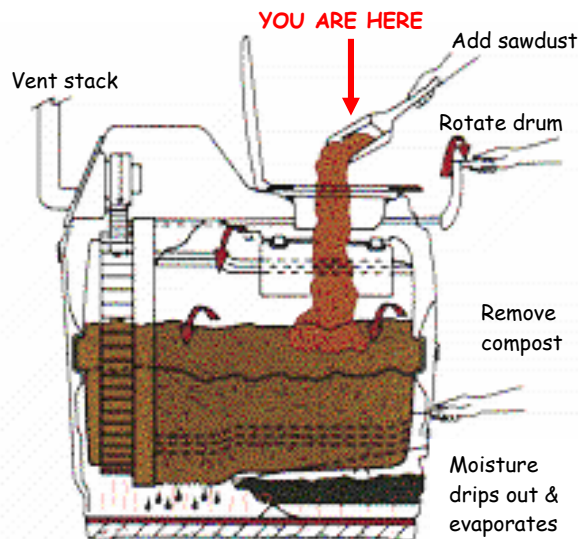
The Indoor Outhouse



You are using a Centrex A/F waterless, central/external composting toilet system by Sun-Mar. This composting toilet works much like the compost heap in the backyard, but faster, breaking down human waste and toilet paper through the natural process of decomposition. Because most of this waste is evaporated (90% of waste content entering the toilet is water), only a very limited quantity of finished compost is produced.

Oxygen, moisture, heat and organic material are needed to allow minute natural organisms to transform the waste to fertilizing soil:

- **Oxygen** is provided by drum rotation and by the ventilation system.
- **Moisture** is obtained directly from human waste.
- **Heat** is generated by the compost itself.
- **Organic material** in the form of peat moss or sawdust is added manually, since they are absorbent, hold oxygen, and are cheap and readily available.



Ongoing maintenance includes adding a cupful of sawdust after you poop. Every few days we also rotate the drum in the unit below the toilet to facilitate aerobic breakdown. Excess moisture is removed automatically from the drum into the evaporating chamber through a screen in the rear of the drum. About once a month we scoop out the composted material and add it to our outdoor compost, which includes coffee grounds, vegetable waste and other organic materials. Eventually the compost will be returned to the earth, completing a natural cycle.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I flush the toilet? A composting toilet requires no flushing. Your only responsibility is to add a cupful of sawdust after you poop.

What's that hum I hear coming from the toilet? This composting system ensures a virtually odor-free environment by engineering the air flow within the unit to maintain a partial vacuum at all times. Air is drawn in by a 12-volt DC cooling fan (like what's in your computer) in the vent chimney, over the evaporating chamber and up the vent stack, thereby evaporating excess liquid and minimizing odors.

Does it ever get stinky? Occasionally, especially on windy days, the wind across the top of the stack interferes with ventilation, which we combat by running the exhaust fan in the gray water room. Odor can also be an indicator that the drum needs to be cranked or emptied.

Is there anything that should not go in the toilet? Kitty litter/waste, feminine hygiene products, plastic wrappers, etc. cannot be composted. Also, food scraps alter the composting cycle and should be disposed of separately in the white ceramic container by the sink and then disposed of in the compost barrel outdoors when necessary.