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Hillsborough County
Solid Waste Management Department
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This brochure was re-created by Marina D'Abreau, Horticulture Agent II, and Lynn Barber, Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Agent I.

For more information about mulch, compost, or other Florida-friendly practices, contact:

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Mulches for the Landscape

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

813-744-5519
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MULCHING TECHNIQUES

- Mulch entire landscape beds.
- Wood and bark mulches should be 3" deep after settling.
- Mulch newly-set plants after they are planted and watered.
- Re-apply mulch around established plants as needed to maintain 3" depth.
- When mulching a tree, create a 2'-diameter circle of mulch for every inch of trunk diameter.
- Pull mulch 2" away from plants' trunks/stems to prevent rotting.
- Pull mulch 1' from exterior walls to discourage termites.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

WHERE CAN I BUY RECYCLED MULCH AND SOIL PRODUCTS IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY?

Products are available for sale to residential and commercial buyers at each site. Visit the sites for availability and pricing.

Falkenburg Facility - 350 Falkenburg Rd., Tampa, 33619

Northwest County Facility - 8001 W Linebaugh Ave., Tampa, 33615

South County Transfer Station - 13000 US Hwy 41 South, Gibsonton, 33534

Types Available: Aged Fines (available only at Falkenburg and Gibsonton facilities); Log/Pallet Wood Mulch; Yard Waste Mulch.

For information on yard waste sites, call (813) 662-0977. For more information regarding products, general questions, or service concerns, call the County's Yard Waste Contractor, Consolidated Resource Recovery, at 1-888-756-0977.



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BENEFITS OF MULCH



- Retains soil moisture
- Moderates soil temperature
- Reduces runoff and erosion from yards
- Improves soil structure
- Suppresses weeds
- Enhances the beauty of the landscape
- Provides increased area for root growth

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

HOW MUCH MULCH DO I NEED TO BUY?

<u>Depth</u>	<u>Coverage per yd³</u>	<u>25 lbs will cover</u>	<u>30 lbs will cover</u>
3" (.25 ft)	108 ft ²	5 ft ²	6 ft ²

1) Determine the square foot measurement of the area to be mulched.

EX: 4 feet x 25 feet = 100 ft²

2) Multiply depth of mulch by the area to be covered (Step 1).

EX: 0.25 ft x 100 ft² = 25 ft³

3) Bagged mulch is available in volumes such as 2 ft³. One cubic yard equals 27 ft³ (3 ft x 3ft x 3ft). Using this example, you can determine how many bags you will need to buy.

EX: 25 ft³/2 ft³ = 12.5 You will need to buy 13 bags of mulch.

ORGANIC MULCHES

Pine Bark

- Timber industry by-product
- Good color retention
- Large pieces tend to float away

Pine Straw

- Timber industry by-product
- Settles quickly

Eucalyptus

- Produced from FL plantations
- Light, reddish-brown color
- Minimal settling over time

Melaleuca (Punk Tree)

- Produced from an invasive exotic
- Almost no settling over time
- High termite resistance

Yard Waste Mulch

- Mixed species mulch
- Minimal settling over time
- Color and size may vary

Oak Leaves

- Free source of mulch
- Create “self-mulching” areas under trees
- Minimal settling over time

Cypress

- Difficult to determine source
- Can absorb or repel water away from plant roots
- No decay or insect resistance

INORGANIC MULCHES

Recycled Tires

- Last a long time
- Can be very costly
- High zinc levels in leachate may harm plants (based on USDA research)

Crushed Shell/Gravel/Rock

- Provide nice texture and color in landscaped beds
- Do not help prevent weeds
- Reflect heat, drying out soil

WHAT ABOUT TERMITES?

University of Florida research indicates that termites may be present in mulched areas more frequently than in areas where mulch is non-existent. However, there are certain practices to help deter these critters.

- Leave space between plants and exterior walls.
- Pull mulch 1 foot away from walls.
- Apply mulch 1” thick near buildings to reduce moisture near foundations.
- Apply no more than 1” of water every time you irrigate.