

Composting Toilet Is Environmentally Friendly

University of Washington



Managing human and animal waste can be a big problem in remote, rural, or environmentally-sensitive areas. But University of Washington-Bothell professor Chuck Henry, Ph.D., has taken a big step toward managing this challenge by inventing an inexpensive, continuously-composting toilet that produces a nontoxic end product that can be used as compost.

“The “Earth Auger” was developed and tested from 2001 to 2006 by Henry and several of his graduate students. The device can be assembled from standard, inexpensive piping and processes both human and animal waste.

It is ideal for locations lacking wastewater treatment facilities, especially undeveloped natural areas or places designed for animal use, such as dog parks.

The Earth Auger is better than pit toilets because it produces usable compost and works continuously with minimal

maintenance. Although other continuously composting toilets exist on the market, Earth Auger is significantly less expensive and is easy to construct, which makes it ideal for use in developing countries.

Brown and Henry LLC owns the technology, which has been licensed to Zaste, a for-profit company, and Creative Sustainable Practices, a not-for-profit organization. Zaste is marketing the composting toilets to city governments for use in dog parks and other suitable areas. Creative Sustainable Practices is using the product to raise international awareness of how lower-cost, alternative sanitation technologies can benefit underdeveloped regions of the world.

This story was originally published in 2008.

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