



**City of Austin**  
**Planning Development Review Department**

**To:** All Internal and External Stakeholders  
**From:** Leon Barba, P.E., PDRD, Building Official  
**Date:** April 6, 2012  
**File:** Code Interpretation Manual

---

**INTERPRETATION NUMBER: 2012.003**

**TITLE:** Installation of Composting Toilets

**CODE EDITION:** 2009 Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC) Ordinance Number 20100624-146

**SECTIONS:** 303.0, 304.0, 305.1, 305.2, 305.2.1, 405.1, 713.1 thru 713.6

**PURPOSE:** The City of Austin adopted the 2009 UPC in June of 2010. One of the core purposes of the Plumbing Code is to protect the health and safety of the citizens of Austin as well as visitors.

**Question:** Can a new composting toilet be installed when a public sewer is available in accordance with the adopted plumbing code?

**Answer:** **No.** Code sections 303.0, 304.0, 305.1, 305.2 and 713.1 thru 713.6 require that sewage and human excrement be disposed of through an approved drainage system connected to a public sewer. Section 305.2.1 requires that the drainage system of every house or building be connected to the public sewer system if any part of the lot or tract is within 100 feet of the public sewer system. Code section 405.1 prohibits toilets that do not have their walls thoroughly washed at each discharge.

**New Installations:** If a lot or tract in the City of Austin does not have public sewer available and has been approved for an On-Site Sewage Disposal Facility (OSSF), the new installation of a composting toilet may be considered for approval by the Austin Water Utility.

**Leon Barba P.E., Building Official**  
**City of Austin Planning Development Review Department**