

## MATC Accessible Moldering Privy Maintenance Tip Sheet

This tip sheet is for maintainers of accessible moldering privies. It includes items to bring, duties to perform and their expected frequencies. A clean privy ensures hiker compliance.

### Background Information

Human waste is actively deposited in one of the two bins in the above-ground crib. A bulking agent (planar wood shavings) is added by users of the privy with each deposit. Because the waste is exposed to air, the decomposition process is aerobic. This environment is more inviting to critters that break-down waste. Urination is encouraged to keep the pile moist.

Link to ATC's Backcountry Sanitation Manual- Chapter 5 is on moldering privies:

<https://www.appalachiantrail.org/docs/trail-maintainers-corner/backcountry-sanitation-manual-2-0-august-2014.pdf>

### Items to Keep in the Privy

- Broom and dust pan
- Planar wood shavings, preferably hardwood (**no sawdust!**). Can be purchased in bales at Tractor Supply, and submitted to your Overseer for reimbursement
- Long-handled clam rake (typically affixed to the crib divider wall under the floor)
- "Welcome to a Moldering Privy" sign (e-mail: [campsite@matc.org](mailto:campsite@matc.org) if you need one)

### Items to Bring for a Maintenance Visit

- Driver with Torx bits (20 and 25) and Philips bits (battery powered preferred)
- Hammer
- Rubber gloves
- Cleaning agent ([7th Generation Disinfecting Bathroom Cleaner](#)) **Nothing w/bleach!**
- Paper towels
- Garbage bag
- Shavings (if needed)
- Spade (if removing and dispersing composed material)

### Portals to the Pile

- Hatch in the floor
  - ~3x3-foot removable section of the floor, 3-4 boards in from the privy door. Newer privies have finger hole(s) to lift it out. Older privies it may be screwed in.

- Side of the active crib
  - Hardware cloth and screen typically affixed with Torx head (but possibly Phillips) fasteners and fender washers. Remove all except the two at the end closest to the seat.
- Rear hatches
  - On the back-side of the crib. Newer privies will have nails as “keepers” and can be removed by hand or with a hammer. Older privies the hatch frames may be screwed in.
  - This access will not be as useful for raking the pile; purpose is for removing fully composted materials.

### **Maintenance Actions and Frequency**

If there is trash in the active crib, there is no need to remove it; it can be removed after the pile is fully composted.

Perform the following every visit (assuming visits are at most monthly):

- Ensure adequate supply of wood shavings.
- Sweep the privy.
- Clean the grab bars.
- Clean the toilet seat (separate cloth than used for grab bars).
- Knock down the cone.
  - Use the long-handled clam rake through the floor and the side of the crib

Perform the following twice a season:

- Turn and rake the active pile flat.
- Turn pile in inactive crib.
  - If the pile is dry, water should be added.

Perform the following ~every 3-5 years, or if active crib is ~2/3 full with the pile raked flat:

- Move seat to other bin.
- Removed composted material from inactive crib.
  - If fully composted, material can be scattered in the woods away from water sources and human activities.
    - Remove any trash.
  - Material that is not fully composted can be moved to the active bin.