

Thompson Logging Inc

Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) - Customer Information Guide

Installation Instructions for Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)

1. Prepare the Area:

- **Clear the Site:** Start by removing any grass, weeds, or debris from the area. If the ground is uneven, you may need to grade it to make it level.
- **Install a Border (Optional):** You can add timber or plastic edging to keep the EWF in place and prevent it from spilling over.
- **Lay Down Landscape Fabric (Optional):** If you want to reduce weed growth, lay down some high-quality landscape fabric before spreading the wood fiber.

2. Spread the Engineered Wood Fiber:

- **Distribute Evenly:** Use a wheelbarrow or shovel to spread the EWF evenly over the surface. For playgrounds, aim for a depth of **12in. compacted, 14in. uncompacted**, depending on your needs. See below for CPSC Guidance. Can also visit www.cpsc.gov for more information on depth.
- **Spread in Layers:** It's best to spread the EWF in 2-3-inch-thick layers. Compact each layer before adding the next to ensure the material settles properly.
- **NOTE:** Machinery can be used to distribute Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF); however, please be aware of some risks. See below for guidance when using machinery to minimize risk.

3. Compact the EWF:

- After spreading each layer, use a hand tamper or mechanical compactor to compact the fiber. This helps the EWF settle and ensures a stable, even surface.
- **Check the Depth:** After compaction, check that the EWF is at the desired depth. See guidance below for recommended depth. If needed, add more material and compact again until you have the right thickness. See guidance below for depth recommendations.

4. Level the Surface:

- Use a leveling tool, like a rake, to smooth out the surface. Make sure the entire area is level to prevent any uneven settling later

Distribution of Engineered Wood Fiber

- **Distribute Evenly:** Ensure that the wood fiber is spread evenly across the surface for consistent coverage and compaction. Uneven distribution can cause areas to be over compacted or under compacted, leading to safety concerns or uneven wear.
- **Rake or Machinery:** After dumping the material, use a rake to spread it in a uniform layer.
- **Avoid Overfilling:** Overfilling or piling the EWF too high in some areas can result in uneven surfaces and rapid wear in high-traffic zones. Ensure the depth is consistent throughout.
- **Guidance for Machinery-** Machinery can be used to distribute Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF); however, please be aware of some risks. Below is guidance on how to mitigate risks.
 - Use Proper Attachments: For a skid steer or excavator, using the right attachments (such as a landscape rake or grading blade) can help evenly spread the EWF and prevent over-compaction of the material. These attachments are designed to help level the surface without putting too much pressure on the fibers.
 - When using heavy equipment, try to avoid driving over the freshly laid EWF too many times. The goal is to distribute the material without compacting it too much.
 - If possible, operate the machinery in a way that limits direct contact with the EWF surface, or use a light touch to avoid compressing the material and diminishing its shock-absorbing properties.
 - Ensure that the ground is firm and level before distributing the EWF. If the ground is soft or wet, the machinery could sink in, making it harder to distribute the material evenly and potentially causing uneven settling.
 - After using machinery, you may need to do some manual leveling with a rake or hand tools to ensure the surface remains even and non-compacted. This step helps correct any areas that may have been slightly disturbed during the mechanical distribution.
 - Use a separate compact tool (such as a mechanical tamper or roller) to properly compact the material. This helps the EWF settle evenly, ensuring the surface is stable and cushioned, without the over-compaction that machinery might cause during distribution.

Maintaining Engineered Wood Fiber

Routine Maintenance:

- **Replenishing the EWF:**
 - Over time, the EWF may settle or wear down, especially in high-traffic areas. Plan to top it up annually or as needed to maintain the proper depth.
 - **Add** fresh EWF each year or whenever you notice that the surface is thinning.
- **Level the Surface Regularly:**
 - After the EWF settles, use a rake to redistribute material where it's needed. This keeps the surface even and prevents areas from becoming too compacted or uneven.
- **Compaction Check:**
 - High-traffic areas may become compacted over time. You can use a hand tamper or mechanical compactor to refresh the surface and keep it cushioned.
- **Weed and Debris Removal:**
 - Regularly inspect the surface for weeds or debris. Remove weeds early to keep them from rooting into the EWF and rake up any debris to keep the surface clean and tidy.

Seasonal Considerations:

- **Winter Care:** In colder months, make sure to remove any excess snow and ice. Use a plastic shovel when clearing snow to avoid damaging the EWF. Avoid compacting the surface too much in the winter, as it can cause it to freeze or become too hard.
- **Rainy Weather:** During wet conditions, the EWF may get softer and more compacted. If water begins to pool in certain areas, consider adding more drainage or regarding the surface to help with water flow.
- **Check Depth Often:** Make sure the EWF is at the right depth for safety. A consistent depth ensures the proper cushioning and shock absorption.
- **Inspect for Wear:** Regularly inspect the surface for any signs of wear or areas that need replenishing. Keeping up with maintenance will help ensure a safe and durable surface, especially in high-traffic areas like playgrounds.

Recommended Depth for Playground EWF:

Per CPCS Manual- 1. Loose-fill materials will compress at least 25% over time due to use and weathering.