

## Burning Household Waste

### Burning Household Waste is Unhealthy

Burn barrels are inefficient and pollute because they create low temperature fires, receive little oxygen and produce a lot of smoke. Smoke from burning household waste is unhealthy to breathe, particularly for small children, pregnant women, older adults and people with asthma or other respiratory ailments:

- Many household products, such as bleached paper products and some plastics contain chlorine. When burned, chlorine creates dioxin. Exposure to dioxin is associated with cancer and birth defects.
- Many household products, such as slick colored papers and synthetic inks, release heavy metals when burned. Human contact with heavy metals is also linked to cancer and birth defects.
- Many household products contain chemicals such as hydrochloric acid which are known to irritate the skin and eyes.

Many toxic air pollutants are produced from a burn barrel. Virtually all of the pollutants are released into the air close to ground level where they are easily inhaled.

### Burning Household Waste Harms the Environment

Pollutants released when household waste is burned eventually end up back on the ground and in the water and can build up to dangerously high levels in plants, animals, and people. Health effects after exposure to these pollutants can include cancer, deformed offspring, and reproductive and immune system failure.

### Alternatives to Burning Household Waste

- Reduce – Avoid purchasing disposable items. Buy products in bulk or economy sizes instead of in individually wrapped or in single serving sizes. Buy products that can be recharged, reused, or refilled.
- Reuse – Donate unwanted clothing, furniture, and toys to friends, relatives or charities. Give unwanted magazines and books to hospitals or nursing homes. Mend and repair rather than discard or replace.
- Recycle – Separate the recyclable items, such as newspapers, glass and plastic containers and tin cans, from your residential waste and prepare them for collection or drop-off at a local recycling station.

- Disposal – Have your household waste pick up by a licensed waste removal company or take it to a licensed disposal facility rather than burning it.

### Regulations on Burning Household Waste

State of Oregon regulations prohibit the open burning of any material that creates dense smoke or noxious odors. This includes the following materials:

- Plastics, like foam cups, meat trays and egg containers
- Asbestos
- Tires or other rubber products
- Garbage and food waste
- Wire insulation
- Waste oil and other petroleum products
- Automobile parts, including frames
- Dead animals

In addition, burning household waste is prohibited altogether in certain areas by DEQ rules or local city and county ordinances.

Regulations regarding burning household waste in Oregon are found in Oregon Administrative Rules, Chapter 340, Division 264:

[http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars\\_300/oar\\_340/340\\_264.html](http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars_300/oar_340/340_264.html)

For more information on Oregon's open burning rules and your city or county recycling contact person, call your local DEQ office, or for open burning issues in Lane County, the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA).

(See page two for list of contacts)

### Complaints

Please call your local fire department to report an open burning complaint.

You may also contact DEQ's complaint hotline at 888-997-7888 or submit a complaint online at

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/complaints/>

You will need to provide a complete address if you would like DEQ to follow up on your complaint.



State of Oregon  
Department of  
Environmental  
Quality

### Air Quality Program

Northwest Region  
Eastern Region  
Western Region

Contact: Martin Abts  
(541) 269-2721 x222  
[Abts.martin@deq.state.or.us](mailto:Abts.martin@deq.state.or.us)

For DEQ online:

[www.oregon.gov/DEQ/](http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ/)

County/City/District	Open Burning Information	Recycling Information (DEQ)
Portland-Gresham	503-618-3083	503-229-5529
Multnomah County	503-695-2225	503-229-5529
Washington County	503-992-3242	503-229-5529
Clackamas County	503-632-0211	503-229-5529
Hillsboro	503-681-6204	503-229-5529
Forest Grove	503-359-3242	503-229-5529
Newburg Fire Department	503-538-7441	503-229-5529
Scappoose Fire District	503-543-3590	503-229-5529
Benton, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Yamhill	503-378-5085	503-378-5089
Lane ( <a href="#">LRAPA</a> )	541-736-1056	541-686-7868
Coos, Curry, Western Douglas	541-269-2721 x222	541-686-7868
Douglas, Jackson, Josephine	541-776-6010	541-686-7868
Hood River, Sherman, Wasco	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Deschutes, Harney	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Crook, Jefferson	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Grant, Malheur	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Gilliam, Morrow	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Wheeler	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Umatilla, Union, Wallowa	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Baker	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Klamath	541-388-2016	541-633-2025
Lake	541-388-2016	541-633-2025