



Burning Garbage

The Solid Waste Regulations under Yukon's *Environment Act* do not prohibit the burning of solid waste. However, burning is not recommended and should be considered a last resort to dispose of garbage, due to a number of concerns about the practice. These concerns include:

- risk of fire damage to nearby land and property;
- health issues including inhalation of toxic or noxious pollutants and particulate matter;
- the nuisance factor (e.g. smells);
- atmospheric pollution; and
- contribution to global warming.

Before you consider burning garbage, work to reduce the amount of waste you generate. Practice the 4R's of conservation – **reduce, reuse, recycle and reclaim** – contact the Environmental Programs Branch for ideas on how. Doing so will not only reduce the amount of garbage you will have to dispose of, but will also help ensure that fewer contaminants enter the air we all breathe if you decide to include burning as part of your overall waste management plan.

Burning Requirements and Guidelines

If you decide to burn garbage created by a commercial activity, such as a mining or exploration camp, or collected at a public waste disposal site, you will require a Solid Waste permit. In addition, anyone burning more than 5 kilograms of solid waste per day, either by open burning or in an incinerator, must obtain an Air Emissions permit as well.

Householders do not need a Solid Waste permit to burn domestic garbage, but do need to adhere to the Solid Waste and Air Emissions Regulations.

Please take these precautions when burning solid waste:

- Burn only weeds, untreated wood, brush and leaves. Do not burn petroleum products, plastics, rubber, or anything else that causes excessive smoke or toxic fumes.
- Avoid burning during winter thermal inversions because the smoke may settle and accumulate over populated areas.
- Avoid burning on foggy or snowy days because the smoke will not disperse properly and may concentrate in one area.
- Burn only when wind conditions will disperse the smoke away from nearby populated areas.
- Do not burn during high winds or when the wind direction is frequently changing as fire can spread quickly.
- Keep fires an adequate distance from buildings.
- Ensure a quick, hot and complete burn by turning or aerating smouldering materials.

- Avoid burning rain-soaked garbage unless there is a risk of attracting wildlife.
- Make every reasonable effort to prevent runoff water from entering the burning area.
- Burn in small manageable piles.

In addition to these guidelines, you should find out if there are any local bylaws that apply to burning garbage in your community, and follow them if there are.

Other Topics

Fact Sheets are also available on the following topics:

- Solid Waste Regulations
- Air Emissions Regulations
- What You Can Do To Reduce Garbage

For more information on the Solid Waste Regulations or the Air Emissions Regulations, please contact:

Environmental Programs Branch
Department of Environment (V-8)
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Whitehorse, Yukon
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Toll Free: 1-800-661-0408 extension 5683
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Copies of Yukon regulations may be viewed online at <http://environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/monitoringenvironment/> under the "Standards & Approvals" section, or at any Yukon Public Library, territorial agent, territorial representative or regional services office. You may purchase copies at the Inquiry Centre, Yukon Government Administration Building, 2071-2nd Avenue in Whitehorse, or by mail from the Subscriptions Clerk, Yukon Government Queen's Printer, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6 (phone (867) 667-5783 or toll free 1-800-661-0408 extension 5783).