



# NEVER BURN TIRES

## AND OTHER IOWA OPEN BURNING RULES

### Burning waste releases toxic chemicals into the air

**Open burning** -- What was once an easy and cheap method of disposing of waste now poses serious health and environmental concerns. Because of the many products we consume, today's waste is filled with toxic chemicals that weren't around 50 or 60 years ago. Once pollutants are in the air, there is no way to prevent them from depositing on crops and water sources.

Some pollutants, such as dioxins, are persistent and bioaccumulative: their concentration levels increase as they move up the food chain, with the highest level of concentrations in humans. Other pollutants cause cancer. Still others damage the central nervous system.

Clean air regulations continue to become more stringent because research has shown human health is impacted to a greater extent than previously thought.



### Open Burning Exemptions for Materials that May be Burned

**Recreational fires** for cooking, heating, recreation and ceremonies are allowed.

**Landscape waste** originating on the premises can be burned unless prohibited by local ordinance. However the burning of landscape waste produced in clearing, grubbing and construction operations is limited to areas located at least one-quarter mile from any building inhabited by anyone other than the landowner or tenant conducting the open burning.

**Bona fide training fires** for public or industrial employees in firefighting methods are allowed. The DNR must be notified at least 10 working days before the proposed controlled burn. Materials containing asbestos must be

removed and an asbestos inspection must be conducted prior to the burn. See training fires at [www.iowadnr.gov/asbestos](http://www.iowadnr.gov/asbestos).

**Burning demolished buildings** by city governments are allowed with certain restrictions. The DNR must be notified at least 10 working days prior to the demolition and at least 30 days before the proposed controlled burn. A more complete listing of restrictions is given at [www.iowadnr.gov/asbestos](http://www.iowadnr.gov/asbestos).

**The burning of disaster rubbish** is exempted for the duration of the community disaster where an officially declared emergency condition exists.

**Residential waste** can be burned in the backyard of dwellings of four-family units or less in cities without ordinances prohibiting the action. Garbage, tires, trade wastes, and any locally recyclable goods or plastics are specifically excluded in the definition of "residential waste" and therefore cannot be burned.

***If curbside pick-up or a redemption center for plastics, glass, metal cans and paper is locally available—even for a fee—it is illegal to burn these materials.***

**Check with your city or county government office before burning.** Local ordinances may be stricter than state rules. Polk and Linn counties require burning permits. Other local governments may also require permits.

## Open Burning Exemptions in Agriculture

**Burning landscape waste** which originates on the premises and is generated as a result of agricultural activities such as crop harvesting or livestock raising is allowed unless it is prohibited by local ordinance.

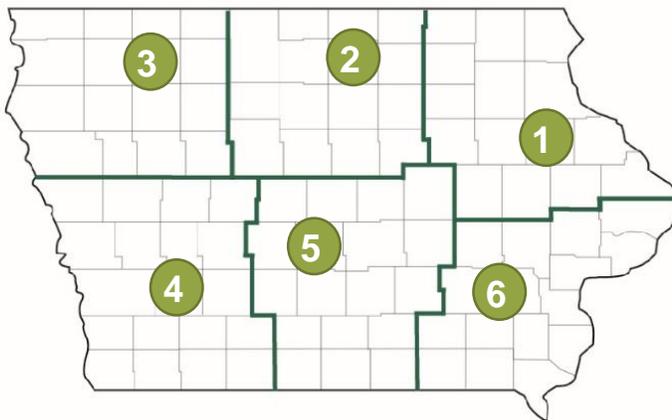
**Burning of paper or plastic pesticide containers and seed corn bags** resulting from farming activities on the premises is allowed. Burning must occur at least one quarter mile from any building inhabited by another person, as well as from a livestock area, wildlife area or water source.

The maximum burn allowed is one day's accumulation or 50 pounds, whichever is less.

**Burning of agricultural structures** on the premises with advance permission from the local fire chief is allowed. **Materials containing asbestos must be removed** unless the building is a single residential structure. All asphalt shingles must be removed prior to the burn. See complete list of conditions at [www.iowadnr.gov/asbestos](http://www.iowadnr.gov/asbestos).

**Land managed under the federal conservation reserve program** as well as prescribed burns for purposes of restoring, reconstruction of, or managing natural area vegetation such as prairies, grasslands, wetlands, woodlands, or wildlife habitat is allowed under the same conditions as allowed for other landscape waste. Only landscape materials may be burned.

**Additional Questions?** Contact your local field service office



**Manchester**  
Field Office 1  
563-927-2640

**Mason City**  
Field Office 2  
641-424-4073

**Spencer**  
Field Office 3  
712-262-4177

**Atlantic**  
Field Office 4  
712-243-1934

**Des Moines**  
Field Office 5  
515-725-0268

**Washington**  
Field Office 6  
319-653-2135

**Also see:**  
[www.iowadnr.gov/openburning](http://www.iowadnr.gov/openburning)  
[Asbestos Rules](#)  
[Field Offices](#)

**DNR Air Quality Bureau**  
7900 Hickman Road, Suite 1  
Windsor Heights, IA 50324  
515-725-9500

## DO NOT BURN

1. Rubber tires (Not even just one)
2. Materials containing asbestos
3. Asphalt
4. Railroad ties
5. Treated wood
6. Dead animals
7. Demolition debris
8. Petroleum products
9. Plastic
10. Metals
12. Carpet
13. Furniture

*This is not a complete list. Before burning, contact the DNR if you are unsure of the rules.*



Rev. March 2016

This brochure is not a complete interpretation of Iowa Administrative Code 567 Chapter 23 open burning rules or Chapter 20 definitions. This document is intended solely as guidance, cannot be used to bind the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and is not a substitute for reading applicable statutes and regulations.