

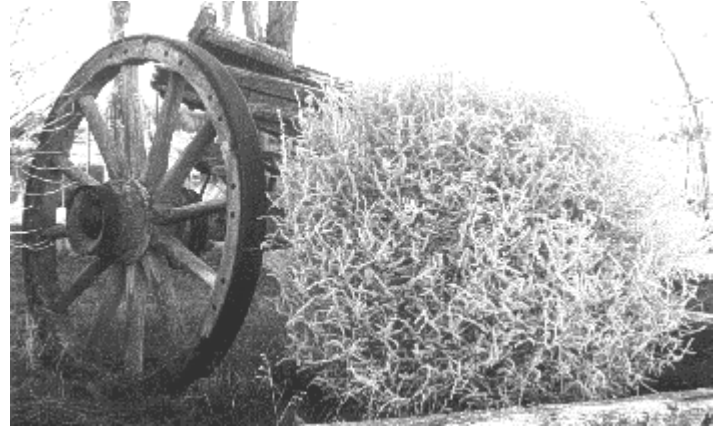


WINDBLOWN TUMBLEWEED BURNING

Benton Clean Air Authority, 650 George Washington Way, Richland, WA 99352 509/943-3396

What does this mean?

This is outdoor burning to dispose of dry plants (typically Russian Thistle and Tumble Mustard) that have been broken off and rolled about by the wind.



This information is intended to clarify when and where windblown tumbleweed burning can or cannot be conducted. Windblown tumbleweed burning is exempt from burn permits and exempt from having a burn day. Common sense safety rules do apply. Alternative means of managing tumbleweeds is encouraged.

Tumbleweeds that are anchored in the soil and where wind has not naturally detached them are subject to either land clearing or weed abatement permits.

Permits from the Benton Clean Air Authority are required in rural areas for non-residential fires, which includes burning for land clearing, storm or flood debris disposal, weed abatement, and other outdoor fires.

After December 31, 2000 land clearing and weed abatement burning will not be allowed within the urban growth areas of cities or where there are reasonable alternatives. Land clearing or weed abatement debris cannot be hauled from an area where burning is prohibited to an area where burning is allowed.

GENERAL BURNING RULES FOR WIND-BLOWN TUMBLEWEEDS

While windblown tumbleweed burning is allowed without a permit there are still rules that must be followed and other common sense rules should be followed:

Rules that must be followed:

- The fire must not include any prohibited materials. (See **PROHIBITED MATERIALS** section).
- The fire must not include vegetative materials (except firewood) **hauled** from another property in an area where burning is prohibited.
- No windblown tumbleweed fire may be ignited and fires must be extinguished during an **emergency burn ban** in a geographical area where:
 - ◆ The Washington State Dept. of Ecology or the Benton Clean Air Authority (BCAA) has declared a period of impaired air quality or
 - ◆ Appropriate fire protection authorities have declared a ban because of high fire danger.
- Fires are considered **unlawful outdoor burning** if they cause any or all of the following effects
 - ◆ Detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of any person.
 - ◆ Causes damage to property or business.
 - ◆ Causes a nuisance.An unlawful rural residential fire must be extinguished immediately.
- If an **outdoor container** (e.g. burn barrel) is used for burning vegetation, it must:
 - ◆ Be constructed of concrete or masonry

- ◆ Have a completely enclosed combustion chamber
- ◆ Be equipped with a permanently attached spark arrester constructed of iron, heavy wire mesh, or other noncombustible material with openings not larger than ½ inch.
- A **person capable of extinguishing** the fire must attend it at all times, and the fire must be extinguished before leaving it.
- No fires are to be **within fifty feet** of structures. This is particularly important because tumbleweeds burn fast and hot.
- **Permission from a landowner**, or owner's designated representative, must be obtained before starting an outdoor fire on someone else's property.

Other common sense rules, which you are not required to follow, but it is recommended that you should follow:

- The person responsible for the fire should contact the BCAA for information on the burning condition for each day. Please try to avoid burning when the BCAA calls a no-burn day. A phone call to 509-946-0865 will give you the burn-day status.
- Try to restrict pile size to less than 2 cubic yards. This is particularly important because tumbleweeds burn fast and hot. Build a smaller fire and carefully feed it.
- If multiple piles are being burned, then burn only one pile at a time and let each pile burn out and completely extinguish it before lighting another. Keep piles separated sufficiently to avoid accidentally igniting several piles at once.

PROHIBITED MATERIALS

Generally, only vegetative material may be burned when burning for tumbleweed disposal or any outdoor fire. The following materials may not be burned in any outdoor fire: garbage, dead animals, asphalt, petroleum products, paints, rubber products, plastics, paper (other than what is necessary to start a fire), cardboard, treated wood, construction/demolition debris, metal, or any substance (other than natural vegetation) that normally releases toxic emissions, dense smoke, or obnoxious odors when burned.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives to burning tumbleweeds are encouraged although tumbleweed burning is generally exempt. Alternatives to burning include:

- On-site burial
- Hauling to an approved landfill
- Large amounts of tumbleweed can be avoided if vegetative growth is controlled and eliminated by mowing, herbicide application, or other means of control. It is especially important to prevent tumbleweed growth to be a good neighbor and not allow tumbleweeds to blow from your property onto other's property.

MORE INFORMATION

Weed Control

- Yellow Pages: *Weed Control, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance*
- WA State Weed Association 509/547-5538
- Benton Co. Noxious Weed Control 509/786-6988
- Franklin Co. Noxious Weed Control 509/545-3847

Landscaping

- Yellow Pages: *Tree Service, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance*
- WA State University Master Gardeners 509/735-3551 or 509/786-2226 or <http://gardening.wsu.edu/eastside>
- Internet
 - Search Term: *xeriscape, low water use landscaping*

Chipping and Mulching

- Yellow Pages: *Tree Service, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance, Landscape Equipment & Supplies, Hardware – Retail*
- WA State University Master Gardeners 509/735-3551 or 509/786-2226 or <http://gardening.wsu.edu/eastside>

Landfill and Transfer Information

- Waste Management of Kennewick 509/582-5121
- Kennewick Transfer Station Kennewick 509/586-7555
- Richland Landfill 509/942-7498
- Richland Solid Waste Collection 509/942-7497
- Basin Disposal Inc. (Prosser, Benton City, and Benton County) 509/547-2476
- Ed's Disposal (W Richland and Benton City) 509/547-2476

On-Site Burial

- No restrictions in cities. Call if burying large amounts.
- No restrictions in Benton County on small amounts, larger amounts may need to be permitted 509/736-3086 or 509/786-5621