

## How to Apply For a DEQ Open-Burn Letter Permit



State of Oregon  
Department of  
Environmental  
Quality

**Air Quality Division**  
700 NE Multnomah St.  
Suite 600  
Portland, OR 97232  
Phone: 503-229-5696  
800-452-4011  
Fax: 503-229-5850  
[www.oregon.gov/DEQ](http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ)

### When is an open-burn Letter Permit required?

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality regulations prohibit certain types of burning in selected areas of the state. In cities larger than 4,000 people outside the Willamette Valley, air quality rules prohibit the open burning of commercial, construction, demolition, slash burning outside of the Department of Forestry's jurisdiction, and land-clearing debris within three miles of the city limits. Similar restrictions apply in prescribed areas in the Rogue Valley (Medford to Grants Pass), the Umpqua basin (Myrtle Creek to Sutherlin) and along the southern Oregon coast (Reedsport, Coos Bay, Coquille and Brookings).

In the Willamette Valley the restriction on these types of burning, including residential household burning, applies within three miles of cities over 1,000 population. The restricted area extends to six miles for Willamette Valley cities with over 45,000 people. The burning of industrial waste anywhere in the state is prohibited without a permit from DEQ.

A permit is also required for any material to be burned that has been moved off the property of origin.

Under rare circumstances, when no other means of disposal is available or is severely restricted, DEQ may issue a letter permit to allow the burning of these kinds of waste in the restricted areas.

### How to qualify

To qualify for a DEQ open-burn letter permit you must first obtain a permit to burn the debris

from your local fire department. In addition you will be asked to provide the following information:

- A listing of alternative material disposal methods other than burning;
- The approximate cost of each alternative disposal method;

- The quantity and type of material to be burned.
- The anticipated amount of time it will take for the material to be completely burned;
- The methods proposed to ensure a safe, efficient and complete burn;
- The location of the proposed burn site;
- A diagram showing the proposed burn site, structures and facilities near the proposed burn site and the distances between the structures and facilities at the proposed burn site;
- If the application is for prescribed burning of vegetation to create or restore a wetland or to promote or enhance habitat for indigenous plants or animal, a statement from a federal or state agency recommending the open burn must be included;
- The anticipated need to dispose of similar material by burning in the future;
- Any other information the applicant feels may be relevant in determining the necessity of issuing an open-burn permit.

Please submit the information listed above to the nearest DEQ office that handles applications for open-burn letter permits. Offices are listed on the back.

### Use good burn practices to promote an efficient burn and prevent excessive smoke

- Assure that all combustible material is dry and/or seasoned (leaves and needles are brown). This may include covering the combustible material to protect from moisture (including precipitation or dew).
- Avoid igniting a large pile. Begin with a small pile to establish a hot bed of coals, and feed additional combustible material while maintaining a hot fire, free of excessive smoke. A combustion promoting fan is very effective on large land-clearing debris burns. Eliminate dirt, rocks or other noncombustible material from the burn pile prior to igniting.
- Periodically re-stack or feed the burning pile to ensure that combustion is robust and essentially completed.

### Good fire-control practice

Not only can fires have adverse health effects, they can also spread into dangerous wildfires.

Follow these guidelines to minimize the risk of wildfire:

- Move all burnable materials at least ten feet away from a fire
- Do not build a fire on windy days
- Never leave a fire unattended
- Always have adequate water available and a rake or shovel on hand
- Always make sure the fire is completely extinguished before leaving the area

### **For more information**

For more information on DEQ's open burning regulations in your area, contact your local DEQ office.

#### **NW Oregon/Portland**

700 NE Multnomah St.  
Portland, OR 97232  
Phone: 503-229-5600  
Fax: 503-229-6945

#### **Willamette Valley**

4026 Fairview Industrial Dr.  
Salem, OR 97302  
Phone: 503-378-8240  
Fax: 503-373-7944

#### **Central Oregon**

475 NE Bellevue, Suite 110  
Bend, OR 97701  
Phone: 541-388-6146  
Fax: 541-388-8283

#### **Eastern Oregon**

700 SE Emigrant  
Suite 330  
Pendleton, OR 97801  
Phone: 541-276-4063  
Fax: 541-278-0168

#### **South Coast**

381 N 2nd St.  
Coos Bay, OR 97420  
Phone: 541-269-2721  
Fax: 541-269-7984

#### **Southern Oregon**

221 Stewart Ave  
Suite 201  
Medford, OR 97501  
Phone: 541-776-6010  
Fax: 541-776-6262

### **Alternative formats**

Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696; or email [deqinfo@deq.state.or.us](mailto:deqinfo@deq.state.or.us).