

New Field Burning Legislation: Senate Bill 528

The 2009 Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 528. This legislation has broad implications for the grass seed industry in the Willamette Valley by significantly changing the field burning operating rules.

Senate Bill 528 Overview:

1. Reduces the number of “Regular” (perennial and annual grass seed and cereal grain residue) acres that growers may burn from 40,000 acres annually to 20,000 acres in 2009. No “Regular” acres may be burned following the 2009 field-burning season.
2. Reduces the number of “Identified Species” and “Steep Terrain” acres that growers may burn from 25,000 acres annually to 15,000 acres annually. (“Identified Species” are Highland Bentgrass, Chewings Fescue, Creeping Red Fescue. “Steep Terrain” are fields with highly erodible slopes).

“Identified Species” and “Steep Terrain” may not be burned in Benton, Lane, and most areas of Linn County (“Identified Species” and “Steep Terrain” may be burned in a small area in North East Linn County).
3. Reduces the number of acres that can be “Stack” or “Pile” burned. 1000 acres may be burned annually in 2009 through 2012. No “stack” or “pile” burning will be allowed after 2012.
4. Reduces the number of acres that can be “Propane Flamed”. 500 acres may be propane flamed annually in 2009 through 2012. No propane burning will be allowed after 2012.
5. Doubles the fees for field burning registration and field burning.
 - a. Open Burning Registration Fee: \$4.00 per acre
 - b. Open Burning “burn fee”: \$16.00 per acre
 - c. Propane Flaming “burn fee”: \$4.00 per acre
 - d. Stack Burning fee: Unchanged at \$10.00 per acre
6. The identification of “Critical Non-burn Areas” to include prohibiting field burning directly under power transmission lines.