

# Frequently Asked Questions North Coast Storm Damage December 2007

## Prepared by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)

Fallen trees cover roads, yards, and areas of the forest landscape on the northwest Oregon coast. Before starting recovery, here are some important concepts, answers to common questions, and helpful links to assist you in safely capturing value and protecting your environment.

### **When preparing to remove timber and wood waste, do it safely.**

If you have downed trees that need to be removed, ODF advises using a local contractor skilled in logging practices. Additional information regarding contractors is available from local ODF offices. Please exercise caution if you choose to remove downed or partially downed trees on your property on your own.

Before hiring a contractor, write up and agree on the scope of the job. The agreement doesn't have to be a formal contract, but it is crucial to put in writing specifically what you want the contractor to do. Frequently, during the disaster recovery phase in other regions of the United States, unsuspecting homeowners and landowners have fallen victim to unscrupulous contractors who cut trees that the landowner didn't want removed.

### **I'm removing downed trees from my land. Do I need to contact anyone?**

If you are removing debris and downed trees on your land and the timber is being put to personal uses, including firewood or decorative uses, you do not need to contact ODF for approval to remove trees. If you intend to turn the downed trees into logs and sell them, this constitutes a timber harvest and then you must contact an ODF office.

Trees or other large woody debris in streams that are causing immediate safety threats – such as flooding of buildings or damage to bridges – can be removed right away. On forestland, landowners are required within 24 hours after the action to contact the local ODF office to work through any notice or approval requirements that may apply. If the land is not forested, ODF staff can direct landowners to other state agencies for guidance as necessary.

### **How should I dispose of downed trees?**

First, assess if downed trees can be recovered for their economic value. Sort wastes into appropriate groups, separating wood which can be recovered from other substances or storm-damaged debris and personal effects.

Chipping of wood can produce products such as mulch or hog fuel. Burning may also be an option, although concerns such as air quality and safety must be considered. ODF staff can provide additional guidance about various disposal methods.

Local ordinances may apply to burning as well, including burn ban rules. The [Oregon Department of Environmental Quality](#) has detailed information on when open burning is permitted - contact your local fire department for additional information.

### **Can I donate logs for stream restoration?**

Additional information about donating logs for stream restoration is available from the [Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board](#).

### **What can be done about any remaining damaged trees?**

A tree that is damaged but still standing may require the service of an arborist to restore it to health and prevent it from becoming a hazard tree. Use only a certified arborist - Certified arborists and information about them can be found in the phone book typically under "Tree Service," and on the [ODF Website](#).

### **Links to other useful or related information:**

- [Map of 2007 Winter Storm Wind Damage](#); Prepared by ODF, 1/11/2008
- [Forest and Debris Recovery Final Report: Winter Storm, December 2007](#), Prepared by the Forest and Debris Recovery Team, 1/11/2008
- [Winter Storm Information from ODF for North Coast Residents, 12/21/2007](#)
- [Information from ODF on Landslides and Debris Flows, 12/21/2007](#)
- [ODF Media Release, 12/14/2007: Can your tree be saved after a storm?](#)
- [ODF Media Release, 12/13/2007: Steep slopes and rain make landslides common in Coast Range](#)
- [ODF Media Release, 12/3/2007: Caution advised in post-storm care and clean-up](#)

### **Is there ODF staff that I can contact for additional questions?**

Landowners are welcome to contact local ODF offices for guidance about forest-related storm damage. The primary offices in the affected northwest Oregon coastal area are:

Tillamook: 503-842-2545

Astoria: 503-325-5451

Forest Grove: 503-357-2191

Columbia City: 503-397-2636