

Southern Oregon Outdoor Burning Guide



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

A source of air pollution

In parts of Oregon, burning waste continues to be the disposal method of choice for a significant part of the population. Burning creates visible smoke, which may create a nuisance condition, and emits a number of air pollutants that may adversely affect public health.

Outdoor burning guidelines

Outdoor, or “open,” burning includes any burning outdoors. A fire in a burn barrel is open burning. Other examples include burning yard debris piles, burning stumps and burning construction or demolition debris.

This guide outlines DEQ’s burning regulations for debris from land clearing, agricultural, commercial, construction and demolition, and domestic activities. Since some cities and counties in Oregon have local burning ordinances, there may be additional restrictions in your area. For example, it may be illegal to burn certain types of waste where you live, or you may need a permit to burn your waste. Check with your city or county for local regulations.

Don’t burn prohibited materials

DEQ regulations prohibit open burning of the following materials at anytime, anywhere in Oregon:

- Any material that contains asbestos
- Asphalt or industrial waste
- Auto parts, including frames
- Any material that creates dense smoke or noxious odors
- Dead animals
- Petroleum and petroleum-treated materials, including waste oil
- Plastic products
- Rubber products
- Tires, including burning tires to start an approved agricultural waste fire
- Wet garbage and food waste

It is against the law to conduct any open burning that:

- Creates a public or private nuisance
- Is a hazard to public safety

State open burning regulations

State regulations give DEQ the authority to prohibit open burning anywhere in the state on a day-to-day basis depending on air quality and weather conditions. The rules governing open burning are found in Oregon Administrative Rules, [Chapter 340, Division 264](#).

Open burning violations may result in fines of up to \$12,000 per day of violation. The Oregon State Fire Marshal can also make a separate determination to prohibit open burning.

DEQ regulations prohibit certain types of burning in selected areas of the state. Cities with a population greater than 4,000 people have a control area that

extends 3 miles from the city’s limits. Within these control areas, the following materials are prohibited from being burned: commercial waste, forest slash, and construction and demolition debris. State rules also prohibit burning for land clearing.

Southern Oregon open burn control areas and cities

The following areas have additional open burn regulations.

- Coos Bay open burn control area
- Rogue Basin open burn control area
- Umpqua Basin open burn control area
- Medford-Ashland Air Quality Maintenance Area
- Coquille
- Reedsport
- Brookings

Contact [your local DEQ office](#) to confirm whether your area has any specific restrictions.

Alternatives to open burning

Open burning is not the only way to deal with wastes. DEQ recommends that Southern Oregon residents consider these alternatives.

- Compost or chip plant materials on site
- Organize community cleanups
- Use curb-side pickup
- Take materials to a local recycling center or landfill
- Reclaim used lumber
- Utilize construction site recycling programs
- Use debris as fuel for a municipal steam generator

Specific regulations

Open burning is allowed outside of fire season in the Rogue Valley on burn days only. Josephine County residents call 541-476-9663, or 541-476-WOOD, and Jackson County 541-776-7007 for burn day info. If you are located in the Medford-Ashland Air Quality Maintenance Area, all open burning is prohibited from Nov. 1 to March 1.

An interactive map of the air quality maintenance area can be found on the [Jackson County Interactive Mapping](#) website under the Development Overlays tab.

An open burn control area interactive map can be found on the [Josephine County GIS](#) website using the Rogue Basin Burn Control link.

Caution: Always check with your local fire department before you burn. Individual fire districts may issue fire permits and may prohibit open

Air Quality Division
Western Region – Medford
221 Stewart Ave., Suite 201
Medford, OR 97501

www.oregon.gov/DEQ

DEQ Offices:
Medford: 541-776-6089

Coos Bay: 541-269-2721,
ext. 222

Headquarters in Portland:
503-229-5658
800-452-4011
TTY: 503-229-6993

DEQ is a leader in restoring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of Oregon’s air, land and water.

To file a pollution complaint:

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Get-Involved/Pages/File-Pollution-Complaint.aspx>

or call 888-997-7888

burning based on local fire safety or air quality concerns. Always contact your local fire department to find out if burning is authorized on a particular day.

Complaints for open burns located in Jackson County may be filed with DEQ or with Jackson County Environmental Health at:

<https://jacksoncountyor.org/hhs/Environmental-Public-Health/Wood-Stove-and-Open-Burning/Air-Quality-Complaint-Form>

Complaints for open burns in other counties may file their complaint with DEQ.

Slash burning

Slash burning, or burning logging debris, is limited to burning on forestlands for forest management and is usually managed by the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Agricultural burning

Open burning for agricultural purposes is usually allowed unless fire safety concerns restrict or prohibit burning on a given day. Contact your local fire department to inquire if an agricultural burn permit is needed.

Agricultural burning is regulated by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and is limited to genuine agricultural waste. Agricultural waste is material generated by an agricultural operation that uses, or intends to use, land primarily for the purpose of obtaining a profit in money by raising, harvesting and selling crops or raising and selling animals, including poultry, or the products of animal husbandry. Prohibited materials, including but not limited to plastic, can't be burned in an agricultural setting.

Agricultural burning must be an integral and necessary part of the agricultural activity. The agricultural activity might include clearing of land, but does not include the construction and use of dwellings. Burning associated with a dwelling is considered to be domestic burning, backyard burning, or burning of yard debris and is not part of the farming operation.

Commercial burning

Commercial waste is defined as waste material from offices, wholesale or retail yards, warehouses, restaurants, mobile home parks, multi-family dwellings, and domestic waste removed from the property of origin.

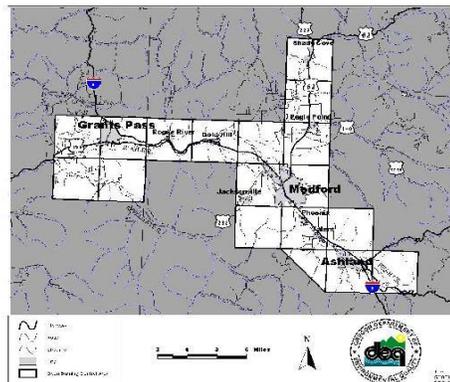
Industrial burning

Industrial waste includes any waste material, including process waste, produced as the direct result of any manufacturing or industrial process.

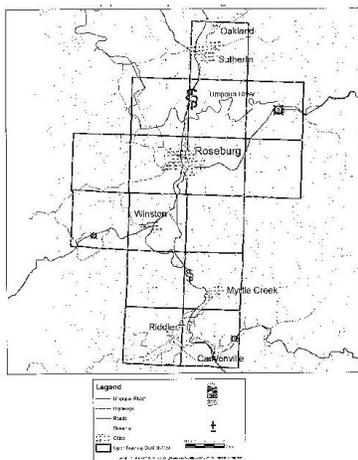
While industrial burning is prohibited throughout the state except for cases where DEQ issues a letter permit, construction or commercial burning is allowed in certain areas. Refer to OAR 340-264, or contact DEQ, to determine if your area allows construction or commercial burning, or if you need a DEQ letter permit to burn.

Alternative formats

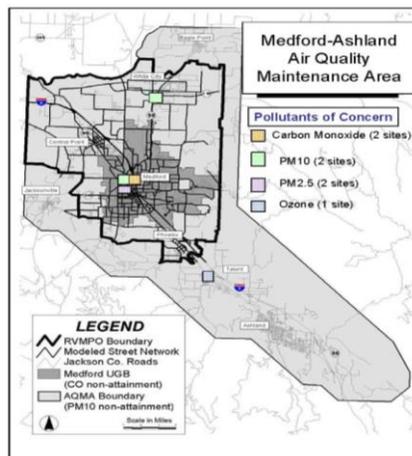
Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 800-452-4011,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



Rogue Basin open burn control area



Umpqua Basin open burn control area



Medford-Ashland Air Quality Maintenance