

Stormwater Management

Illegal Dumping



What is Illegal Dumping

Illegal Dumping is disposal of waste in an unpermitted area. Illegally dumped wastes are primarily non-hazardous materials that are dumped to avoid either disposal fees or to avoid the time and effort required for proper disposal. These materials typically include:

- Construction debris like drywall, shingles, lumber, bricks, concrete, and siding
- Large appliances
- Furniture
- Household garbage
- Medical waste
- Abandoned vehicles, parts, and tires
- Yard waste like planting material, cuttings from bushes and trees, plastics associates with yard maintenance

Site uses for illegal dumping vary but may include abandoned industrial, residential or commercial buildings; vacant lots on public or private property; and infrequently used alleys or roadways. Because of their accessibility and poor lighting, areas along rural roads and railways are particularly vulnerable.

If not addressed, illegal dumps often attract more waste, potentially including hazardous wastes such as asbestos, household chemicals and paints, automotive fluids, and commercial or industrial wastes.



Dumpsites with scrap tires provide ideal breeding grounds for mosquitos, which can multiple 100 times faster in such an environment.

Why is Illegal Dumping a Problem?

The health risks associated with illegal dumping are significant. Areas used for illegal dumping may be easily accessible to people, especially children, who are vulnerable to the physical (protruding nails or sharp edges) and chemical (harmful fluids or dust) hazards posed by wastes. Rodents, insects, and other vermin attracted to dump sites may also pose health risks.

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Countless neighborhoods have been evacuated and property damage has been significant because of dumpsites that caught fire, either by spontaneous combustion or, more commonly, by arson. In rural areas, open burning at dump sites can cause forest fires and severe erosion as fires burn away trees and undergrowth. Dumping activities in such areas can also have a negative impact on plants and wildlife. Additionally, runoff from dump sites containing chemicals may contaminate wells and surface water used as sources of drinking water.

Dump sites serve as magnets for additional dumping and other criminal activities. As a result of such illegal dumping, property values decrease and the community becomes unattractive to commercial and residential developers. Without the tax revenues that accompany development, the funding available to establish and maintain effective illegal dumping prevention programs is limited.

***1 gallon of oil can contaminate
1 million gallons of water -
equivalent to a years supply
of water for 50 people!***



What Can You Do To Help?

Community programs established to organize special waste cleanup events and support community-oriented policing have proven effective in addressing illegal dumping problem.

Organized events to collect and properly dispose of illegally dumped materials, such as tire collections, "Clean Sweeps", and cleanup days, often involve resources provided by government or industry and the efforts of local residents.

Local industry and community groups can assist in the cleanup effort by landscaping and improving the physical appearance of areas. Such beautification efforts can ward of potential dumpers. Residents benefit from the availability of attractive space and improved values.

To Report Illegal Dumping

- Take photos of the illegal dumping as it takes place and save these photos
- Write down the license plate number of the vehicle involved in the dumping, and the time and date of the occurrence.
- Please call (601) 855-5670 to report an issue.

