

Up In Smoke !!

Burning garbage in a burn barrel in your backyard, on the farm or cottage, has been a long standing practice in Alberta. But now we know that there are serious health consequences. Because home garbage fires smoulder and burn at lower temperatures - dioxins and furans and many other pollutants are created. [1]The burn barrels of less than 40 households can release the same combined amount of dioxins as a modern incinerator designed for servicing up to 120,000 households.

[2] Burning waste – including packaging, plastics, treated lumber, even newspaper and junk mail in barrels, woodstoves, fireplaces, outdoor furnaces or open pits releases a large number of pollutants including:

- Dioxins
- Furans
- Arsenic
- Styrenes
- Barium
- Mercury
- Chromium
- PCBs
- Particulates
- Lead
- Cadmium
- Halogenated hydrocarbons
- Formaldehyde
- Benzene
- Carbon monoxide
- Nitrogen oxides



- Sulphur oxides
- Polyaromatic hydrocarbons
- Hydrochloric acid

Toxic pollutants released into the air by burning garbage fall back to earth as particles or in rain drops and contaminate water and plant surfaces, eventually making their way up the food chain and into the food we eat. Toxic pollutants such as dioxins, can accumulate in the fat of animals and fish, which are then passed onto people when eaten. Dioxin exposure has been linked to:

- Liver problems
- Impairment of the immune system, the endocrine system and reproductive functions
- Certain types of cancer
- Effects on children's developing nervous system and other developmental events

Pollutants in the smoke can also trigger respiratory health problems

What Can We Do?

Reduce the amount of waste you generate by buying products with less packaging, buy reusable goods instead of disposable and compost when you can. Recycle whatever you can at your local Transfer Stations or Recycling Drop-off Centre.

IF YOU ARE BURNING GARBAGE YOU ARE MAKING POISON!!!!