

## What are the risks of using a burning barrel and how can I burn farm wastes safely and legally?

**The best bet is to reduce, reuse, recycle and not burn at all**

Open burning barrels, commonly used in the past to dispose of various farm wastes, can present a number of health and environmental risks. They typically do not reach temperatures high enough to completely incinerate waste and destroy dangerous chemicals created in the burning process. Barrels tend to smoulder and smoke and can release toxic materials into the surrounding area.



Although the burning of farm wastes is subject to provincial regulation, the best option is to avoid the regulation process by not burning at all - in other words, reduce, reuse and recycle. This is where an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) can help. Developing an EFP can help producers develop a personalized strategy to safely manage farm waste and a number of other on-farm environmental risks.

For those who still choose to burn, technical assistants with the EFP program can help producers understand the regulations pertaining to burning, including which materials can and cannot be legally burned.

### Approved incinerators

For producers interested in having an approved incinerator on their farm or ranch, Alberta Environment's Code of Practice for Small Incinerators lays out the legal requirements related to the design factors of small incinerators. The Code is available at the Province of Alberta Queen's Printer Web site at <http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca/documents/codes/INCINERATORS.CFM>.

### What can be burned

According to the Substance Release Regulation of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, wastes that can be legally burned include:

- Brush and fallen trees
- Wood or wood products that do not contain preservatives
- Solid wastes from tree harvesting, straw, stubble, grass, weeds, leaves and tree prunings
- Used power or telephone poles that do not contain preservatives
- Solid waste from post and pole operations that does not contain preservatives

The Act also defines waste materials that cannot be burned. Prohibited debris includes:

- Animal manure
- Pathological waste
- Wood or wood products containing wood preservatives
- Waste materials from construction sites
- Rubber, including tires
- Plastics, including baler twine

- Oil
- Containers that held pesticides or other chemicals
- Plastic or rubber coated materials, including copper wire
- Any waste that causes dense smoke or offensive odours or releases toxic substances

### **Where to go for help**

Information and assistance on managing farm wastes is available from TAs throughout the province.

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