

Alternatives to Burning Yard and Garden Debris



A Message from the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency

As of May 1, 2009, burning residential yard and garden debris is no longer allowed in Spokane County.*

This publication provides information on some options available for handling natural vegetation.

What is residential yard and garden debris?

Residential yard and garden debris consists of garden trimmings, tree branches, grass clippings, leaves, needles, etc., that originates on the **maintained, improved area** of residential property (i.e. lands immediately adjacent to a residence).

Why has outdoor burning of yard and garden debris been phased out?

Burning natural vegetation emits harmful smoke particles and chemicals that can damage the lungs. As rural areas become more populated, more people are impacted by smoke from burning. Alternatives to burning debris are more available and accepted. Spokane Clean Air's Board of Directors determined that administering a yard and garden debris burning program is not in line with the agency's clean air mission.

May I burn natural vegetation from my acreage, beyond my improved yard?

Trees and limbs located on acreage beyond your improved yard area may be considered silvicultural material. Depending on where you live, you may be eligible to burn this type of debris. For details call the Washington State Department of Natural Resources at (509) 685-6900.

What about recreational/cooking fires?

Recreational fires such as barbecues, chimneas and patio/deck warmers are allowed unless other rules prohibit them, such as a homeowner's association, rental agreement, etc. Once you've determined that you can burn, these rules must be followed:

- ✓ A recreational fire is limited to 3' x 2' in size and it must be located 25' away from any structure.

- ✓ Burn only approved fuel: natural charcoal, briquettes, natural gas, propane or clean, dry firewood.
- ✓ Firewood should be split, stacked and covered at least 9-12 months prior to burning to ensure it's dry.
- ✓ Burn only when weather patterns provide good ventilation, but when winds are calm or light.
- ✓ Do not burn during a burn ban.
- ✓ A recreational fire may not be used for disposal of any material, including natural vegetation.
- ✓ The fire may not cause a nuisance to your neighbors with excessive smoke or odors.
- ✓ Approved campfires at designated places (e.g., parks, campgrounds) are allowed, except during a burn ban.
- ✓ Burn barrels are prohibited.

Additional requirements are provided in the "Recreational Fires" Fact Sheet, available by calling 477-4727 or downloading at www.spokanecleanair.org/publications.asp.

How can I handle my yard and garden material?

There are many options for handling yard and garden debris. The options listed below are described on the pages that follow.

- ✓ Grasscycling
- ✓ Mulching
- ✓ Composting
- ✓ Chipping
- ✓ Curbside pick up in some areas
- ✓ Hauling to a transfer station as "clean green"



* If you reside in Fire District # 2, 5, 11 or 12, call your fire district for details on their delegated outdoor burning program.

GRASSCYCLE IT!

Grasscycling is a simple, natural approach to lawn care.



Grass clippings make up an estimated 90 % of the total yard trimmings generated in the Spokane area between mid-April and October.

Any lawn mower can recycle grass clippings. Just remove the grass bag/catcher. Mowers specifically designed for mulching are available and they produce finer clippings for grasscycling.

Grass clippings are a natural organic fertilizer. Your lawn retains its health because each time you mow, you return valuable nutrients and moisture to the soil. Grasscycling does not cause thatch—it is caused by improper watering. Here are some more tips for grasscycling:

- ✓ Mow when the grass is dry. Never cut off more than 1/3 of the grass blade in one mowing. Keep grass mowed to 2" in early spring. Gradually raise the mower's cutting height to 3" by summer then gradually lower back down to 2" by fall.
- ✓ Keep your mower blades sharp. Dull blades tear the grass, giving the turf a brownish cast.
- ✓ If the grass has gotten too high, mow over it a second time to further shred the clippings.
- ✓ To prevent excess growth between clippings, raise the mower height, mow, then gradually lower it over several mowings. This will also reduce shock to the grass from cutting too much at once.

MULCH IT!

Mulch in your own backyard with natural materials: dried grass, chipped woody material, or pine needles.



Spread these materials around trees, shrubs and throughout garden beds. It looks good and saves water! Mulch inhibits weeds, retains moisture and releases nutrients as it decomposes. Most horticultural information advises laying 2-4" of organic mulch depending on the type of material. Keep mulch at least 1-2" away from plant trunks or stems.

COMPOST IT!

Home composting is an economical and convenient alternative to bagging yard debris that is usually picked up or hauled by you to transfer stations. Composting takes ordinary yard and kitchen waste and transforms it into a superior soil amendment. Your plants will be healthier and more able to deal with insects and disease. Compost also aids in water absorption and minimizes the need for chemical fertilizers. Steps to building a compost pile:

- ✓ Choose a site close to a water source if possible and preferably in the shade. Start your compost pile on bare earth to allow worms and other beneficial organisms to enter your pile and begin their decomposition process.



- ✓ Add compostable materials, alternating moist "green" with dry "brown." Add water as you mix materials (should feel like a wrung out sponge). Moist ingredients are fruit and

vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, tea bags (minus the staples), fresh grass clippings, green leaves or plant trimmings. Dry materials are straw, dry leaves, chipped branches and pine needles, shredded newspaper, sawdust and wood ashes. If you use sawdust or wood ashes, sprinkle in small amounts so it doesn't clump together and slow down the entire process. A rule of thumb is to use 2 parts green to 1 part brown.

- ✓ Build pile to 3' x 3' x 3', but no larger than 5' x 5' x 5' for maximum efficiency.
- ✓ For the fastest decomposition, turn pile with a pitchfork once a week to aerate it. Oxygen is required for the process to work and aerating provides this oxygen. If you don't need compost immediately, your pile can be turned less frequently. Remember to add more water if it is dry.

Note: Finished compost still contains material that hasn't fully decomposed. You can sift out the larger pieces if you prefer, but it is not absolutely necessary.

For more information and complimentary brochures, please call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800 or visit www.solidwaste.org. You may also refer to the Recycling Guide in the Dex phone book.

CURB IT!

Garbage haulers may offer an optional curbside subscription service for collecting residential yard or “clean green” debris pick-up. Haulers transport the material to Spokane Regional Solid Waste System transfer station sites to be composted at a certified compost facility. Call your garbage hauler for details:

Solid Waste Management: (509) 625-7878.
City of Spokane residents.

Waste Management: (509) 924-9400.
Cities of Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, Deer Park and most of the unincorporated areas in eastern Spokane County.

Sunshine Disposal and Recycling: (509) 924-5678.
Cities of Cheney, Medical Lake, Airway Heights (residential) and commercial hauling in some areas.

HAUL IT!



Rake up your excess material and haul it to your nearest Recycling and Transfer Station, see maps to the right. A special “clean green” rate is available.

Call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800 for more information, clean green rates, and extended hours at the Recycling and Transfer Stations and Waste to Energy Facility.

If you choose to haul your material, be sure to secure your load to prevent littering and potential fines.

If you are unable to haul your yard and garden debris, there are many hauling services available, including those listed on the back of this page. If you use a hauling service, be sure to request a receipt prior to payment to help combat illegal dumping.

For more information:

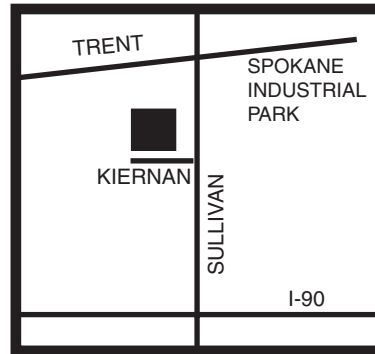
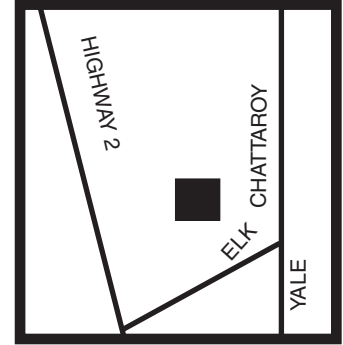
Spokane Regional Solid Waste System: www.solidwaste.org; Recycling Hotline and Master Composters: 625-6800.

Recycling and Transfer Stations

Call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800 for information on **clean green rates** and **extended hours** at the following Recycling and Transfer Stations:

North County Facility

22123 Elk-Chattaroy Road,
at the intersection of Elk-Chattaroy Road and Hwy 2.

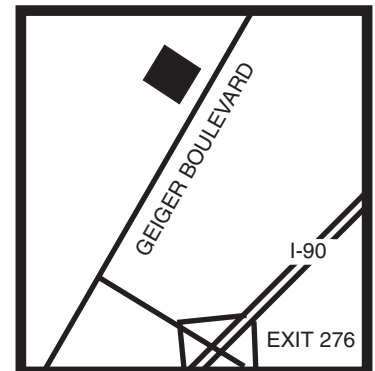


Valley Facility

3941 N. Sullivan Road,
south of Trent across from the Spokane Industrial Park.

Waste to Energy Facility

2900 South Geiger Blvd,
west of Spokane, across from the Washington State Patrol.



CHIPPING, HAULING, DISPOSAL

Local companies that provide services:

ABCO Wood Recycling.....	482-0663
Atchley's Hauling, Inc.....	953-8529
Atlas Tree Service.....	448-5192
Busy Bee Inert Landfill and Wood Recycling.....	244-5049/981-0517
Diversified Wood Recycling.....	467-2823
Empire Disposal Inc.(Colfax).....	1-509-397-3200 <i>(serves southeastern Spokane County)</i>
Ever-Green Lawn & Tree Experts.....	922-4305
Inland Tree Service Inc.	448-1639
Jim's U-Call I-Haul.....	536-0514
Larson's Demolition Inc.....	535-7944
Nick's Landscape & Garden Service.....	924-6983
Sodorff Hauling.....	926-4710
South Hill Hauling.....	747-7659 <i>(serves City of Spokane and south Spokane County)</i>

Free community chipping, collection events:

- Residents of southeast Spokane County (Fairfield, Latah, Rockford, Spangle, Waverly), contact your town hall for dates and locations.
- Spokane Clean Air partners with area Fire Districts, the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System and the Washington Department of Natural Resources to co-sponsor annual "Chipping and Composting Days" in October and April. Call 477-4727 for dates and locations.

CURBSIDE PICKUP SERVICES

Solid Waste Management Department.....	625-7878 <i>(serves City of Spokane)</i>
Sunshine Disposal and Recycling Inc.	924-5678
Waste Management.....	924-9400 <i>(Serves Deer Park, Liberty Lake, Millwood, Spokane Valley and unincorporated areas in northern and eastern Spokane County.)</i>
Zuber Construction.....	926-3777
1-800-GOT-JUNK?	280-5805

CITY DROP BOX LOCATIONS

Some cities in Spokane County have drop boxes available for their residents. Contact your city hall.

DROP BOX COLLECTION SERVICES

Busy Bee Inert Landfill and Wood Recycling.....	244-5049/981-0517
Empire Disposal Inc. (Colfax).....	1-509-397-3200 <i>(serves south Spokane County)</i>
Sunshine Disposal and Recycling Inc.	924-5678 <i>(serves Cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley, and south Spokane County)</i>
Waste Management.....	924-9400 <i>(serves north Spokane County and Spokane Valley)</i>

RECYCLING and TRANSFER STATIONS

"Clean Green" may be hauled to one of the System's Recycling and Transfer Stations or the Waste to Energy Facility at a reduced rate. See addresses and maps on the inside page. For hours, rates and guidelines call 625-6800.

TRUCK, TRAILER RENTALS

Cannon-Hill Industries.....	465-8227
Larson's Demolition Inc.....	535-7944
Sun Rental-Dishman.....	928-5158
Sun Rental-north Spokane.....	487-2788
Sun Rental-south Spokane.....	448-7111
Sun Rental-Veradale.....	928-5155
United Rental Airway Heights.....	244-2464
Spokane	532-1235
Zuber Construction.....	926-3777

LAWN AND GARDEN CARE EQUIPMENT RENTALS

(chippers, mowers, edgers, trimmers, etc.)

River Ridge Hardware	328-0915
Sun Rental-Dishman.....	928-5158
Sun Rental-north Spokane.....	487-2788
Sun Rental-south Spokane.....	448-7111
Sun Rental-Veradale.....	928-5155
United Rental Airway Heights.....	244-2464
Spokane	532-1235

NOTE: This is a partial listing. If you have a licensed, bonded business that provides a service listed above and would like to be included in future publications, please contact Spokane Clean Air, 477-4727.

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