



Okanogan County Public Health

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<http://www.okanogancounty.org/ochd/>

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Information for Contractors and Homeowners on Disposal of Inert Waste and Non-Inert Debris from Burned Buildings

In the aftermath of the Carlton Complex Fire, many property owners are faced with cleaning up debris from burned buildings. The following information is intended to help property owners and their contractors do this in compliance with environmental regulations.

As described in WAC 173-350-410(1) below, up to 250 cubic yards of inert waste may be buried at a site without going through the process of permitting an inert waste landfill. Any property owner who elects to bury up to 250 cubic yards of inert waste on a site must make sure to meet the location standards outlined in WAC 173-350-410(2) shown below, even though they are not required to obtain a permit.

WAC 173-350-410 Inert waste landfills. (1) *Inert waste landfills - Applicability.* These standards apply to landfills that receive only inert wastes, as identified pursuant to WAC 173-350-990, including facilities that use inert wastes as a component of fill. In accordance with RCW 70.95.305, facilities with a total capacity of two hundred fifty cubic yards or less of inert wastes are categorically exempt from solid waste handling permitting and other requirements of this section, provided that the inert waste landfill is operated in compliance with the performance standards of WAC 173-350-040. An owner or operator that does not comply with the performance standards of WAC 173-350-040 is required to obtain a permit from the jurisdictional health department, and may be subject to the penalty provisions of RCW 70.95.315.

(2) *Inert waste landfills - Location standards.* All inert waste landfills shall be located to meet the following requirements. No inert waste landfill's active area shall be located:

- (a) On an unstable slope;
- (b) Closer than ten feet from the facility property line;
- (c) Closer than one hundred feet to a drinking water supply well; or
- (d) In a channel migration zone as defined in WAC 173-350-100, or within one hundred feet measured horizontally, of a stream, lake, pond, river, or saltwater body, nor in any wetland nor any public land that is being used by a public water system for watershed control for municipal drinking water purposes in accordance with WAC 248-54-660(4).

What is considered to be inert waste?

Under the regulations, certain wastes are automatically designated as inert wastes, and can be disposed of as described above. This section of the regulation lists those wastes designated as inert.

WAC 173-350-990(2) Criteria for inert waste - Listed inert wastes. For the purpose of this chapter, the following solid wastes are inert wastes, provided that the waste has not been tainted, through exposure from chemical, physical, biological, or radiological substances, such that it presents a threat to human health or the environment greater than that inherent to the material:

- (a) Cured concrete that has been used for structural and construction purposes, including embedded steel reinforcing and wood, that was produced from mixtures of Portland cement and sand, gravel or other similar materials;

- (b) Asphaltic materials that have been used for structural and construction purposes (e.g., roads, dikes, paving) that were produced from mixtures of petroleum asphalt and sand, gravel or other similar materials. Waste roofing materials are not presumed to be inert;
- (c) Brick and masonry that have been used for structural and construction purposes;
- (d) Ceramic materials produced from fired clay or porcelain;
- (e) Glass, composed primarily of sodium, calcium, silica, boric oxide, magnesium oxide, lithium oxide or aluminum oxide. Glass presumed to be inert includes, but is not limited to, window glass, glass containers, glass fiber, glasses resistant to thermal shock, and glass-ceramics. Glass containing significant concentrations of lead, mercury, or other toxic substance is not presumed to be inert; and
- (f) Stainless steel and aluminum.

Any materials that do not meet these criteria must be disposed of at a permitted facility like the Okanogan County Central Landfill (509-422-2602). Note: the Twisp Transfer Station (509-997-2025) and the Bridgeport Bar Transfer Station (509-686-4242) are not able to accept the debris from burned homes due to the extremely large volume of debris.

Note: While stainless steel and aluminum are considered inert waste by definition, we recommend you dispose of these materials through a metal scrapper/recycler, rather than burying them. Metals should be washed clean of ash before being collected for recycling.

Note: Materials like insulation, roofing materials, plaster, wood and drywall are not considered to be inert waste. Plaster and drywall in particular react with water to form an alkaline leachate. Only materials that fit the criteria outlined in WAC 173-350-990(2) may be buried on site. Also, collected ash may not be buried on site, due to similar leachate formation. When cleaning up large amounts of ash, it should be safely collected, bagged or otherwise secured and disposed of at the Okanogan County Central Landfill. Information on safe handling of debris and ash is available from Okanogan County Public Health and is also posted on the Okanogan County Public Health website at <http://www.okanogancounty.org/ochd/> .

For questions or further information please call Okanogan County Public Health at (509) 422-7140.