

## **DEBRIS DISPOSAL GUIDANCE (RELATED TO 4/16/2011 STORMS)**

### **Pick-up and Disposal**

The best way to dispose of most storm debris – especially debris from damaged mobile homes, houses and other buildings – is to rely on your city or county's waste disposal services. In areas with significant damage, local governments are providing special instructions on how to get the debris to approved disposal areas. In many areas, state and local agencies are working together to provide roadside pick-up. Using local government pickup and disposal services will ensure that waste material gets disposed of properly. If you have questions about pick-up and disposal of storm debris, contact your local solid waste department or emergency management officials.

### **Burning**

If you choose to burn debris, you need to do at least two things to be sure that you are doing it legally:

- Make sure you have a valid permit. You can obtain a burning permit at any N.C. Division of Forest Resources office or permitting agent or online at <http://dfr.state.nc>.
- Check on local open burning restrictions established by your county or city- outside burning may be prohibited, or may only be permitted during specified hours.

Limit open burning as much as possible because the smoke from outdoor fires can cause serious health problems. Some state rules limiting the kinds of materials that can be burned outdoors have been lifted until June 1, 2011, but it is still wise to avoid burning materials that can be toxic such as: building materials; asphalt shingles; heavy oils; wire, plastics and other synthetic materials; tires and other rubber products; paints, and household and agricultural chemicals. Note: After June 1, 2011, open burning will again be limited to vegetation such as leaves and tree branches.

**Burning of hazardous waste is strictly prohibited.** Some of the most common hazardous wastes are:

- Batteries, such as nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd) and small sealed lead-acid batteries, which are found in many common items, including electronic equipment, cell phones, portable computers, and emergency backup lighting.
- Agricultural pesticides.
- Thermostats, which can contain as much as 3 grams of liquid mercury and are located in almost any building, including commercial, industrial, agricultural, community and household buildings.
- Lamps, which typically contain mercury and sometimes lead, and are found in businesses and households. Examples include fluorescent, high-intensity discharge (HID), neon, mercury vapor, high-pressure sodium and metal halide lamps.
- Used oil.
- Electronic waste such as cathode ray tubes contained in computer monitors and televisions.

Scrap metal should be recycled. Burning scrap metal and treated lumber could release heavy metals that are constituents of hazardous waste (chromium and arsenic).

### **Burial of Debris**

Federal law prohibits the open dumping of waste, including construction debris. To avoid violating federal law, waste disposal has to meet a number of standards intended to prevent groundwater contamination; pollution of rivers and streams; obstruction of floodplains; and other problems. To safely and lawfully bury waste on your property, you must give careful attention to both the kinds of waste and the place chosen for disposal. A copy of federal rules on disposal of household waste and construction debris can be found at:

<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=72cda062b68ac7e9da9f0a73cc05dd67&rgn=div5&view=text&node=40:24.0.1.4.38&idno=40>

A permitted local landfill or approved disposal site will meet those federal standards.

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Storage and disposal of hazardous waste is more strictly regulated. Examples of hazardous waste are listed above under the section on burning. Hazardous waste cannot be burned. The best way to dispose of hazardous waste is to follow instructions for disposal provided by your local government.

For more information on proper disposal of hazardous wastes, please visit the following page on the N.C. Division of Waste Management website:

<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wm/hw/Technical>.