

Best Management Practices for N.H. Solid Waste Facilities

Scrap Tires

Stockpiles of waste tires can cause safety and health problems. Although tires are difficult to ignite, once lit, they are almost impossible to extinguish. When tires burn, they emit toxic fumes that pollute the air and cause respiratory problems for nearby residents and firefighters. Fire also melts the rubber in tires and generates oil (called “pyrolitic oil”) that can pollute the ground and surface water.

Another hazard is stagnant water. When water collects inside tires, it becomes an excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes. This is a concern, since mosquitoes transmit illnesses, including West Nile Virus and encephalitis.

Waste tires can be expensive and difficult to dispose of. Landfilled tires take up valuable space and can be an unstable base for landfill capping. Although recycling markets for waste tires are improving, the number of waste tires stockpiled in this country, plus the number being generated each year, far exceeds the market demand.

Best Management Practices for Scrap Tires

- Tires may be collected and stored in outdoor transfer containers or on the ground, although collecting them in a trailer keeps them dry and ready for prompt shipping without additional handling.
- If tires must be stored outside in the open, cover the pile with plastic tarps to help minimize the collection of water. Store the tires in a sunny location to allow evaporation of standing water and to kill heat-intolerant mosquito larvae.
- Check with the local fire officials and configure waste tire stockpiles according to their instructions. In no case should the stockpiles be larger than 25 feet in diameter and 15 feet in height. Provide fire lanes at least 25 feet wide around each stockpile. Also, construct a berm at least 12 inches high around each stockpile to contain the pyrolitic oils and other liquids resulting from fire and fire fighting.
- If stored indoors, the storage facility must comply with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards for storage of rubber tires. Contact local fire officials for more information.

Did You Know?

- In 2012, over 308 million of scrap tires were generated in the United States.
- N.H. municipalities can charge a fee on motor vehicle registrations to be used to pay for tire disposal at local transfer stations. (RSA 149-M:18).
- In a fire, tires can melt into an oily substance. When the fire is doused with water, this oily substance can become run-off and contaminate nearby surface water.

NO!



Tires are not actively managed. The pile is too large and there is not adequate access for firefighting equipment. Tires are not covered, which allows water to accumulate.

- Keep equipment, cover material and other supplies nearby to help control a fire until the nearest fire company can arrive to extinguish the fire.
- Ship tires from transfer stations once a full load (approximately 1000 to 1500 tires) has accumulated.
- If landfilled, split, quarter or shred the tires beforehand to reduce the potential for the tires to resurface.



Tires are actively managed. The tires are stored in a closed trailer where water cannot accumulate. There is access for firefighting equipment.

For additional information, contact:
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