



For Immediate Release:

Oct. 23, 2020

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Open burning household waste and chemicals is illegal in Louisiana

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality reminds citizens that any open burning of household waste, solid waste and chemicals is illegal in the state of Louisiana – whether conducted on private property or not. Open burning is harmful to those conducting the open burn as well as their families, neighbors, pets and livestock. The ash generated from an open burn contains toxic materials that contaminate our air, soil and ground water.

When burned, household trash can release toxic pollutants into the air such as sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrogen chloride, hydrogen cyanide, phosgene, dioxin and heavy metals. These pollutants can cause health problems for those conducting the open burn as well as anyone nearby. Health impacts include damage to the lungs, kidneys, liver and nervous system. Other health issues that potentially can be aggravated by open burning include asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis and cancer.

While a great deal of open burn activity is a common practice or habit, it is imperative that Louisianans work to change that mindset. Talk to your neighbors! Inform them about the alternatives to open burning, and make the protection of your health and environment a priority. Together, we can all do our part to preserve our Sportsman's Paradise.

Consider the following alternatives to open burning:

- Reduce, Recycle and Reuse as much as possible.
- Compost vegetative matter such as eggshells, coffee grounds and fruit/vegetable peelings for your garden.
- Household paint, chemicals and waste tires can be brought to a Household Hazardous Materials Day event, for disposal – free of charge. Check your city or parish for locations.
- Used fluorescent light bulbs, batteries and plastic grocery bags are accepted for recycling at many big box stores.
- Electronics (laptops, cell phones, etc.) you no longer need are accepted by the CACRC at www.cacrc.com.
- Those without trash pickup service should deliver their household waste to a landfill or trash disposal location within your city or parish.
- Construction and demolition waste should be disposed of at permitted landfills, municipal incinerators or other state-approved facilities.
- Consider selling any used items such as furniture, electronics, tools, household items, etc.

LDEQ encourages citizens to watch for open burning activity and protect yourself, your family, your neighbors and your environment. Report any open burn of waste tires, household debris, oil or chemical waste to your local law enforcement authorities as well as LDEQ at: 1-888-763-5424.

Citizens should also submit an incident report online at: <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/file-a-complaint-report-an-incident>. Reports made online can be anonymous, but a phone number is required for a call back in case additional details are needed. Be sure to document the exact location (including the parish), time/date, materials being burned, parties involved and as much detail as possible in order to better assist the investigating authorities.

If anyone is found to be conducting an illegal open burn, LDEQ's Criminal Investigations Section will investigate and work with the local district attorney and law enforcement partners to aggressively prosecute anyone found to be in violation of the law. If charged with illegally open burning household debris, violators may face a fine of up to \$100,000, ten years' imprisonment at hard labor, or both.

Please view LDEQ's video on Open Burning: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yunEs3aYGY>