

# GARBAGE BURNING

The burning of garbage used to be considered convenient and harmless practice, but is now recognized as dangerous. Burning household products produces toxic chemicals (including dioxins), contributes to air pollution and is a proven health risk.

Typically, dioxins do not exist in materials before they are incinerated, but are produced when waste is burned, forming when products containing carbon and chlorine are burned. Open burning of household waste creates significant amounts of dioxins for several reasons; poor air circulation, low combustion temperatures, and chlorine, which is found in most household waste products. Backyard burning is one of the largest known sources of dioxins.

## Health Effects of Dioxins:

- Skin disorders, such as chloracne
- Liver problems
- Impairment of the immune and endocrine systems, and reproductive functions
- Effects on the developing nervous system and other developmental events
- Certain types of cancers

# DID YOU KNOW?

## Dangers of Burning in Barrels

Significantly higher levels of dioxins are created by burning trash in burn barrels than in municipal incinerators. Household burn barrels receive limited oxygen, and thus burn at fairly low temperatures, producing not only dioxins, but a great deal of smoke and other pollutants. Backyard burning is also particularly dangerous because it releases pollutants at ground level where they are more readily inhaled or incorporated into the food chain.

# ONLINE RESOURCES

## EPA Backyard Burning Website

US government website: <https://bit.ly/35HxE6C>

## BC Air Quality

Government website: <https://bit.ly/3fcVjPz>

## Recycling Council of BC

[rcbc.bc.ca](http://rcbc.bc.ca)

Phone: 1-800-667-4321

E-mail: [hotline@rcbc.bc.ca](mailto:hotline@rcbc.bc.ca)

## City of Prince George Air Quality

City website: <https://bit.ly/2IEEyBe>

## BC Wildfire

Government website: [bcwildfire.ca/FAQ/burning.htm](http://bcwildfire.ca/FAQ/burning.htm)



# REAPS

RECYCLING & ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACTION PLANNING SOCIETY

Location: 1950 Gorse St. Prince George

Mailing Address: PO Box 444,  
Prince George, B.C. V2L 4S6

Phone: 250.561.7327

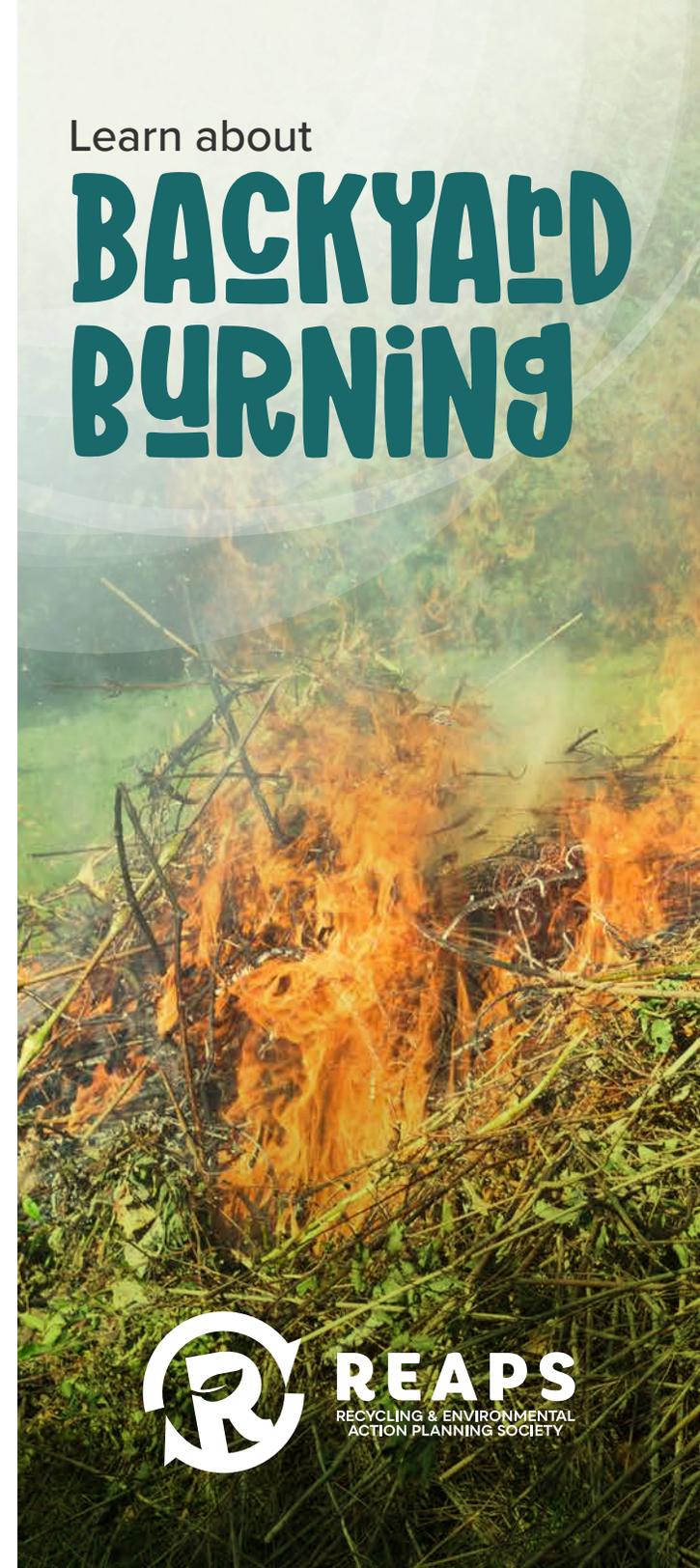
Fax: 250.561.7324

Website: [reaps.org](http://reaps.org)

Email: [recycling@reaps.org](mailto:recycling@reaps.org)

Learn about

# BACKYARD BURNING



# REAPS

RECYCLING & ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACTION PLANNING SOCIETY



# ALTERNATIVES TO BURNING

## How Else Can You Get Rid Of Your Garbage Other Than Burning It?

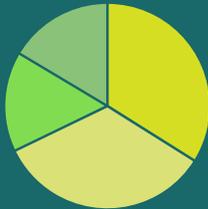
Take it to the landfill, or better yet, recycle and compost as much of it as you can! After all, only 18% of the typical household garbage actually belongs in the garbage. Visit our website to check out our Waste Reduction Directory to see where you can recycle your items.

**Paper: 32%**

**Organics: 32%**  
(yard and kitchen)

**Recyclables: 18%**

**Other: 18%**  
(actual garbage)



# GENERAL TIPS

- Avoid burning where you can - if you live in an area that has inaccessible garbage facilities, join together with your neighbors to bring garbage into town.
- Start a community compost pile; a great way to make beautiful compost for your garden, and get rid of your organics!
- Buy items that have minimal packaging (i.e. in bulk), are made of recyclable/compostable materials, and bring your own bags when you go shopping.
- Buy minimizing waste you bring into your house, you will minimize the amount that you need to get rid of.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## What Can't I Burn?

To prevent the release of dangerous toxins, the following materials must **NOT** be burned:

- Tires; plastics; drywall; demolition waste; domestic waste (household material and food waste not including newspaper and cardboard); special waste; biomedical waste; asphalt and asphalt products; treated lumber; railway ties; manure; rubber; paint and paint products; tar paper; and fuel and lubricant containers.

## When Can I Burn?

In many areas of the province the following conditions apply to when you can burn:

- The smoke-release period for each parcel of land must not be greater than 72 consecutive hours.
- Open burning of debris may proceed if no open burning has occurred on the parcel of land at any time during the 15 days preceding the open burning.
- Smoke may be released during open burning on a parcel of land on no more than four separate occasions during a calendar year.

## Where Can I Burn?

The following restrictions apply to the location for open burning:

- The open burning of debris must be carried out at least: 100 metres from neighbouring residences and businesses, 500 metres from schools in session, hospitals and facilities used for continuing care as defined under the Continuing Care Act.
- Strategies and techniques must be employed so that the smoke from open burning of debris does not pose a hazard at airports or on provincial highways by significantly reducing visibility.
- Open burning of debris must not be initiated if the local air flow will cause the smoke to have a negative impact on a nearby population or cause pollution.

# REGULATIONS

## Prince George Regulations

- No person shall conduct open burning within the area of the City.
- No person shall conduct open burning or ignite or maintain any recreational fire if an air quality advisory has been issued.
- No person shall conduct any open burning or maintain any recreational fire in such a manner as to discharge air contaminants that are likely to cause or significantly contribute to the cause of injury or damage to human health, plant or animal life or property, or so as to unreasonably interfere with the enjoyment of life or property.
- No person shall cause or allow any garbage or noxious material to be burned by open burning or by a recreational fire.
- All wood burning appliances installed in Prince George must meet environmental standards for particulate emissions. This includes wood furnaces, outdoor wood boilers, woodstoves, fire place inserts, and fireplaces.

## RDFFG Regulations

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG) does not have specific rules regarding burning, but the following general pieces of advice should be followed:

- Do not burn when an air quality advisory has been issued
- Keep the fire under control
- Construct the fire away from people and buildings
- Avoid burning plastics

Even if you are not burning garbage, you should be careful of what and where you are burning items, and do what you can to **minimize their risk.**