



## Agricultural Burning

Agricultural burning is the burning of vegetative debris from an agricultural operation necessary for disease or pest control, necessary for crop propagation or crop rotation, or where identified as a best management practice by the agricultural burning practices and research task force established in RCW [70.94.6528\(6\)](#) or other authoritative source on agricultural practices. YRCAA implements and enforces the provisions of [WAC 173-430](#).

(1) This regulation applies to burning related to agricultural activities. It does not apply to silvicultural burning or outdoor burning. For these requirements refer to:

- Chapter [173-425](#) WAC for outdoor burning.
- Chapter [332-24](#) WAC for silvicultural burning.

(2) Burning of organic debris related to agricultural activities is allowed when it is reasonably necessary to carry out the enterprise. Agricultural burning is reasonably necessary to carry out the enterprise when it meets the criteria of the best management practices and no practical alternative is reasonably available.

(3) Anyone conducting burning related to agricultural activities must comply with local fire safety laws and rules, and burn when wind takes the smoke away from roads, homes, population centers, or other public areas.

(4) Burning related to agricultural activities must not occur during an air pollution episode or any stage of impaired air quality. Definitions of air pollution episode and impaired air quality are found in WAC [173-430-030](#).

(5) Burning of organic debris related to agricultural activities requires a permit and fee, except for agricultural burning that is incidental to commercial agricultural activities (RCW [70.94.6524](#)). An agricultural operation burning under the incidental agricultural burning exception must still notify the local fire department within the area and not burn during an air pollution episode or any stage of impaired air quality. The specific types of burning that qualify as exceptions to the permit requirement are:

- (a) Orchard prunings. An orchard pruning is a routine and periodic operation to remove overly vigorous or non-fruiting tree limbs or branches to improve fruit quality, assist with tree canopy training and improve the management of plant and disease, and pest infestations;
- (b) Organic debris along fence-lines. A fence-line or fencerow is the area bordering a commercial agricultural field that is or would be unworkable by equipment used to cultivate the adjacent field;
- (c) Organic debris along or in irrigation or drainage ditches. An irrigation or drainage ditch is a waterway which predictably carries water (not necessarily continuously) and is unworkable by equipment used to cultivate the adjacent field;
- (d) Organic debris blown by wind. The primary example is tumbleweeds.

In addition to the regulation, YRCAA has developed and implements the following: [internal links](#)

- Guidance in the form of Board-approved policy (click here to view the policy);
- A written protocol for burning (click here to view the protocol); and
- A permit application and approval process (click here to view the permit application).

The YRCAA permit application requires that a grower state the reason for burning. The task force established in RCW [70.94.6528\(6\)](#) has developed crop-specific best management practices (BMPs) which may be used to satisfy that requirement. Click [here](#) to view the BMPs.