



Things You Should Know About Flood and Storm Debris

What is Storm and Flood Debris?

Storm and flood debris is any natural vegetation, such as leaves, branches or uprooted trees and shrubs that have been left behind by storm or flood activity. Such material is considered storm or flood debris if:

- ✓ The storm or flood occurred within the last two years, and
- ✓ The city, county, or state government declared an emergency as a result of the storm or flood.

Can I burn debris left by storms or floods?

Yes, if you adhere to the following requirements *and* your city, county or state government has declared a storm or flood-related emergency for your area:

You must:

- ✓ Obtain a permit to burn from YRCAA;
- ✓ Burn only natural vegetation;
- ✓ Burn only debris which collected on your property as a result of the storm or flood (not general residential yard and garden material or land clearing material);
- ✓ Only burn material from the property where it was deposited (you may not burn material from other sites);
- ✓ Allow the deposited debris ample time to dry prior to igniting it; and
- ✓ Not burn during a declared burn ban

Who may apply for a permit to burn Storm and/or Flood Debris?

As a Yakima County resident affected by a flood or storm, you may be eligible for a "Conditional Use Permit" to burn storm or flood debris deposited on your property. You must apply to the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency (YRCAA) to obtain such a permit. YRCAA can also provide related information on rules and other options.

YRCAA is the only agency in Yakima county authorized to issue "Individual Permits" or "Conditional Use Permits", when applicable, to property owners, solely for the purpose of burning natural vegetation deposited on their property by flood or storm. It is illegal to attempt any such outdoor burning without a permit.



COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Do I have to own the property in order to obtain a “Conditional Use Permit”?

Yes, YRCAA will only issue a permit to the owner of the property on which storm or flood debris has been deposited and who will be responsible for the burning. You must have obtained the permit from YRCAA prior to igniting any outdoor burning for this purpose.

Once a permit is obtained, the property owner or his/her designee may burn flood or storm debris land on which it was deposited.

The burning may only take place during daylight hours and the property owner or designated fire supervisor must be present at *all* times during the burning activity.

Remember:

- ✓ It's illegal to burn anything other than natural vegetation for disposal.
- ✓ Permits for burning woody storm debris may not be issued if other reasonable alternatives are available.

What kind of alternatives to burning are there to get rid of storm or flood debris left on my property?

There are several alternatives to burning storm or flood-deposited debris. Smaller sized woody materials can be chipped and mulched. Debris can be hauled to the local landfill.

Check with your local community to see if there is a storm or flood debris disposal program.

What's the big deal about burning? It seems like the simplest solution for me.

As residents of Yakima County, we all take pride in our natural surroundings. But one part — the air we breathe — is being threatened. In 1993 Washington State produced 3,000,000 tons of air pollution. Outdoor burning accounted for more than 10% of that figure. Pollution that is generated from outdoor burning poses a serious threat to Yakima residents and the environment in which we live.