

Fugitive Dust

Fugitive dust is defined as a particulate emission made airborne by forces of wind, man's activity, or both. Unpaved roads, construction sites, and tilled land are examples of areas that originate fugitive dust.

Why the concern over dust?

The Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency (Yakima Clean Air) responds to many citizen complaints regarding dust. During the dry summer months, dust can especially be an air quality concern and a public nuisance.

If left uncontrolled, dust can be a public health hazard. When inhaled, fine dust particles travel deep into the lungs, increasing breathing problems, damaging lung tissue, and aggravating existing health problems. Those at highest risk to experience health impacts are those with respiratory conditions, the elderly and the young. Children are at risk because their lungs are still developing.

Where does all the dust come from?

In the Yakima area, most of the dust pollution comes from a combination of activities, including:

- ❑ Construction and demolition activities
- ❑ Driving on unpaved roads and parking lots
- ❑ Dirt and mud tracked onto clean roadways (from dirt roads, construction sites, dirt alleys, etc.)
- ❑ Dirt, gravel and other types of storage piles
- ❑ Handling and transfer of materials
- ❑ Agricultural/farming activities



What can be done to reduce dust?

- ❑ Avoid travel on unpaved roads whenever feasible. Use an alternate route to reach your destination.
- ❑ If you have to drive on an unpaved road, keep your speed down. Driving slowly on an unpaved road will dramatically reduce the amount of dust emissions.
- ❑ Hire a private contractor, who is approved by the city or county, to apply a dust suppressant to your road (often referred to as road "oiling" although it isn't oil that is applied.)
- ❑ Keep your vehicle in the driving lane and off the shoulder of the road where dirt and debris accumulate.
- ❑ Don't use a leaf blower to clean dirt/debris from sidewalks, parking lots, or driveways. Blowing this into the air doesn't solve the problem, it just moves it around. Use a broom and dustpan instead!
- ❑ When hauling debris, keep the load covered at all times.

For more information contact the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency at 834-2050, or visit www.yakimacleanair.org.

