

Enviro FACTS

ILLEGAL DUMPING

As many as 15,000 dumps statewide

People dump and burn illegally for many reasons. Some do so to avoid the expense of proper disposal, because of the extra effort that disposal and recycling takes, or because of a tradition of burning and dumping their garbage. Some items are too large or bulky and the landfill is too far away. Some people actually believe that dumping and burning is proper management.

West Virginia has an estimated 15,000 illegal dumps. There is also a large amount of litter and debris along our highways and river banks that results from improper management of solid waste. The Department of Environmental Protection spends almost \$1 million annually on dump and river cleanups. Also, many volunteer organizations, contractors and the Division of

WV GARBAGE DISPOSAL LAWS

A Mandatory Garbage Disposal (WV Code 22C-4-10)

Each household and business must do one of the following:

- Subscribe to, pay for and use a garbage collection service.
- Provide proof they have properly disposed of their garbage at an approved solid waste facility.

B Illegal dumping (WV Code 22-15-10, 22-15-15, 22-11-24)

- No one may "create, contribute to or operate an open dump" or allow one to exist on his or her property.
- Violators of this law face civil penalties of up to \$5,000 a day and criminal penalties of \$100-\$50,000 a day and up to three years in prison.

Highways spend time and money cleaning up illegal dumps. Solutions to our disposal problems include:

- ensuring that comprehensive disposal services are available in all areas
- making the public aware of the environmental and legal consequences of improper waste management
- using active enforcement policies
- instilling a sense of pride and personal accountability and understanding that improper waste management is an infringement upon the rights of others.



For more information contact:

DEP Division of Land Restoration
Visit our Web site @ wvdep.org
or call us at (800) 322-5530

PROBLEMS

Illustrated below are eight problems created by illegal disposal:

Burning puts contaminants into the air, overloading it, and hindering the development of industry and jobs.

Wind and rain will disburse the trash.

Trash dumps set on fire can cause forest fires.

Litter and trash is unsightly and portrays a negative image.

Wildlife is endangered when animals consume or become entangled in the garbage.

Trash in streams can clog them, causing erosion and other water flow problems.

Wastes that are hazardous further magnify water and air pollution problems.

Decaying garbage produces leachate and pollutes water.

PROGRESS

If you'll help, there's hope!

Volunteer groups across West Virginia are helping the Department of Environmental Protection manage the illegal dumping crisis. Churches, schools and civic organizations are all involved.

