

Illegal Dumping - A Serious Issue

Illegal Dumping is the improper disposal of waste at any location other than a permitted landfill or facility. Illegal dumping poses a threat to human health and the environment.

Also known as open dumping or midnight dumping, illegal dumping usually happens in open areas, along roadsides, in wooded areas, streams and rivers, and frequently occurs late at night to avoid detection. The waste is dumped to avoid disposal fees or time and effort required for proper disposal.

It is illegal to allow open dumping on your property. Property owners sometimes try to benefit financially by charging a fee for someone to dump waste on their property. This is illegal.

What types of materials are commonly dumped?

- construction and demolition debris like drywall, shingles, lumber, bricks, concrete and siding
- large appliances and furniture
- household garbage
- medical waste
- abandoned vehicles, parts and tires
- yard waste or plant materials

Why is illegal dumping a problem?

The human health risks associated with illegal dumping are significant. Illegal dumps can be accessible to people who could come in contact with chemicals (fluids or dust) or get hurt from nails and sharp edges of materials.

Illegal dumps also attract rodents and insects. For example, illegally dumped waste tires provide an ideal place for mosquitoes to breed. Mosquitoes multiply 100 times faster than normal in the warm, stagnant water collecting in waste tires. Dumps also result in a decrease in property values.

Illegal dumping can impact proper drainage making areas more susceptible to flooding when debris blocks creeks, culverts and drainage basins.

What can I do?

- If you see illegal dumping or an open dump, call your community and report it - they can direct you to the proper authority
- If you are having a house built or remodeled, make sure the waste from your site is being properly disposed of - ask your contractor for the details
- Recycle
- Grasscycle (leave grass clippings on lawn when mowing)
- Compost your yard waste or plant materials
- Properly dispose of solid waste

For more information, contact your community,
the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District (216/524-6580, www.cuyahogawcd.org),
or the Cuyahoga Solid Waste District (216/443-3749, www.cuyahogawd.org)

