



## WINDBLOWN TUMBLEWEED BURNING

Benton Clean Air Agency - 526 S. Clodfelter Road - Kennewick, WA 99336  
Phone 509.783.1304 - Website: [www.bentoncleanair.org](http://www.bentoncleanair.org)

### What does this mean?

This is outdoor burning to dispose of dry plants (typically Russian Thistle and Tumble Mustard) that have broken off and blown onto your property.

This information is intended to clarify when and where windblown tumbleweed burning is allowed. Windblown tumbleweed burning is exempt from burn permits and exempt from having a burn day. Common sense safety rules do apply. Alternative means of managing tumbleweeds is encouraged.

Tumbleweeds that are anchored in the soil and where wind has not naturally detached them are subject to either land clearing or weed abatement permits.

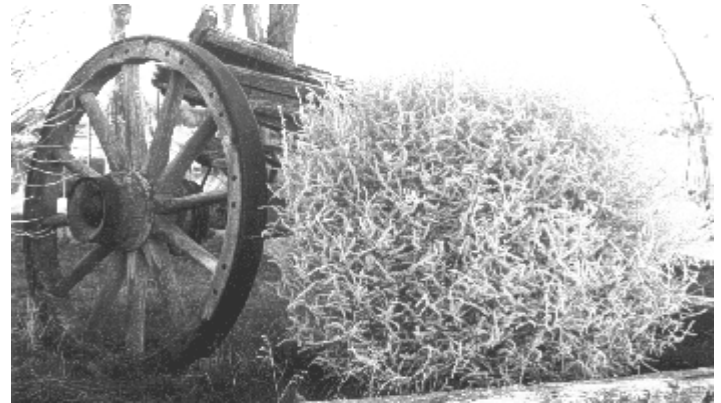
**Permits from Benton Clean Air Agency are required outside the Urban Growth Area (UGA) for non-residential fires, which include burning for land clearing, storm or flood debris disposal, weed abatement and other outdoor fires.**

Land clearing and weed abatement burning are not allowed inside the UGA or where there are reasonable alternatives. Land clearing or weed abatement debris cannot be hauled from an area where burning is prohibited to an area where burning is allowed.

### GENERAL BURNING RULES FOR WINDBLOWN TUMBLEWEEDS

While windblown tumbleweed burning is allowed without a permit, there are still rules that must be followed and other common sense rules should be followed:

### Rules that must be followed:



- The fire must not include any prohibited materials. (See **PROHIBITED MATERIALS** section).
- The fire must not include vegetative materials (except firewood) **hauled** from another property in an area where burning is prohibited.
- Call **509-783-6198** to insure a burn ban is not in place. No windblown tumbleweed fire may be ignited and fires must be extinguished during an **emergency burn ban** in a geographical area where:
  - ◆ *Washington State Dept. of Ecology or Benton Clean Air Agency has declared a period of impaired air quality or*
  - ◆ *Appropriate fire protection authorities have declared a ban because of high fire danger.*
- Fires are considered **unlawful outdoor burning** if they cause any or all of the following effects:
  - ◆ *Detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of any person.*
  - ◆ *Causes damage to property or business.*
  - ◆ *Causes a nuisance.*

## **An unlawful rural residential fire must be extinguished immediately.**

- If an **outdoor container** (e.g. burn barrel) is used for burning vegetation, it **must** meet the following requirements:
  - ◆ *Be constructed of concrete or masonry*
  - ◆ *Have a completely enclosed combustion chamber*
  - ◆ *Be equipped with a permanently attached spark arrester constructed of iron, heavy wire mesh, or other noncombustible material with openings not larger than ½ inch.*
- A **person capable of extinguishing** the fire must attend it at all times, and the fire must be extinguished before leaving it.
- No fires are to be **within fifty feet** of structures. *This is particularly important because tumbleweeds burn fast and hot.*
- **Permission from a landowner**, or owner's designated representative, must be obtained before starting an outdoor fire on someone else's property.

## **Other common sense rules, which you are not required to follow, but it is recommended that you should follow:**

- Although a "burn day" is not required to burn tumbleweeds, please try to avoid burning when it is deemed a "no-burn" day. Burning tumbleweeds are prohibited on a "no-burn" day due to high winds. A phone call to **509-783-6198** will give you the burn-day status updated daily by 9:00am.
- Please restrict pile size to less than 2 cubic yards. *This is particularly important because tumbleweeds burn fast and hot.* Build a smaller fire and carefully feed it.
- If multiple piles are being burned, then burn only one pile at a time and let each pile burn out and completely extinguish it before lighting another. Keep piles separated sufficiently to avoid accidentally igniting several piles at once.

## **PROHIBITED MATERIALS**

Generally, only vegetative material may be burned when burning for tumbleweed disposal or any outdoor fire. The following materials

may not be burned in any outdoor fire: garbage, dead animals, asphalt, petroleum products, paints, rubber products, plastics, paper (other than what is necessary to start a fire), cardboard, treated wood, construction/demolition debris, metal, or any substance (other than natural vegetation) that normally releases toxic emissions, dense smoke, or obnoxious odors when burned.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

Alternatives to burning tumbleweeds are encouraged although tumbleweed burning is generally exempt. Alternatives to burning include:

- On-site burial
- Hauling to an approved landfill
- Large amounts of tumbleweed can be avoided if vegetative growth is controlled and eliminated by mowing, herbicide application, or other means of control. It is especially important to prevent tumbleweed growth to be a good neighbor and not allow tumbleweeds to blow from your property onto other's property.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

### **Weed Control**

- Yellow Pages: *Weed Control, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance*
- WA State Weed Association 509-547-5538
- Benton Co. Noxious Weed Control 509-786-6988
- Franklin Co. Noxious Weed Control 509-545-3847

### **Landscaping**

- Yellow Pages: *Tree Service, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance*
- WA State University Master Gardeners 509-735-3551 or 509-786-2226 .
- Internet
  - Search Term: *xeriscape, low water use landscaping*

### **Chipping and Mulching**

- Yellow Pages: *Tree Service, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance, Landscape Equipment & Supplies, Hardware – Retail*
- WA State University Master Gardeners 509-735-3551 or 509-786-2226.

### **Landfill and Transfer Information**

- Waste Management of Kennewick 509-582-5121
- Kennewick Transfer Station Kennewick 509-586-7555
- Richland Landfill 509-942-7498
- Richland Solid Waste Collection 509-942-7497
- Basin Disposal Inc. (Prosser, Benton City, and Benton County) 509-547-2476
- Ed's Disposal (W Richland and Benton City) 509-547-2476

### **On-Site Burial**

- No restrictions in cities. Call if burying large amounts.
- No restrictions in Benton County on small amounts, larger amounts may need to be permitted 509-736-3086 or 509-786-5621