

STATE OF COLORADO

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Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

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Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

Lower North Fork Fire Ash and Debris – Handling and Disposal Issues

April 5, 2012 - In response to the major wildfire in Jefferson County, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (“Department”) has been asked to provide guidance for dealing with homes damaged or destroyed by the fire.

The wildfire created an unexpected emergency situation that warrants a rapid response. A prompt cleanup will enable residents to move forward with their lives while minimizing potential public health and environmental issues that may be exacerbated the longer the material is left in place, such as water contamination from runoff. In light of this situation, the Department is temporarily waiving certain regulatory requirements that might otherwise apply.

The ash deposited by forest fires is relatively nontoxic and similar to ash that might be found in your fireplace. However, any ash may contain unknown substances, including chemicals. In particular, ash and debris from burned structures may contain more toxic substances than forest fire ash, because of the many synthetic and other materials present in homes and buildings. For example, car batteries or mercury light bulbs may have been present in the buildings. In addition, older buildings have a greater potential to contain asbestos and lead.

Care should thus be taken when handling any materials from buildings that are either partially damaged by the fire (i.e., salvageable building materials remaining) or completely destroyed by the fire (i.e., only ash and debris remain). Protective clothing and equipment should be worn to avoid skin contact and inhalation of ash and other disturbed material.

All debris and ash should be handled in a manner that will minimize potential exposure to any unknown hazardous materials that could potentially be present in the debris. Soil under the area where the ash/debris was deposited should be scraped to ensure that all ash and building debris has been removed from the site.

- Materials must be wetted to minimize dust, and packaged inside a 6-mil plastic sheeting liner and placed in an end-dump roll-off with the top of the roll off sealed with the plastic sheeting to secure the contents during transport once the roll-off is loaded.
- The roll-off can be taken to any of the landfills listed below. Please call the landfill contact listed below before loads are transported to alert the landfill that the material is coming, confirm waste acceptance, and initiate a waste profile.
- If you wish to bring the materials to a different landfill, please contact the landfill to ensure that they can accept the material.

The landfill should be informed that the material has come from the fire area. Contractors should consult with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) at (303) 844-5285 to determine required training and personal protective equipment that will be required for those handling this material.

A demolition permit is not required from the state to remove the ash and debris from buildings that have been partially or completely destroyed. However, the ash and debris must be wetted prior to handling to minimize dust.

The following landfills are accepting Lower North Fork Fire ash, soils, and debris. Additional landfills may be added to this list or may be contacted directly as noted above.

1. Republic Services Landfill, Inc.

ALLIED WASTE SYSTEMS

8480 Tower Road

Commerce City, CO 80022

Amy Hobbs: 720-490-0230

303-459-8752

2. Denver Arapaho Disposal Site (DADS)

WASTE MANAGEMENT OF COLORADO

3500 S. Gun Club Road

Aurora, CO 80018

Jeff Sprowls: 720-947-2114

Jason Chan: 720-876-2633

303-598-1790

Gary Baldwin: 720-977-2104

303-618-0230

3. Buffalo Ridge Landfill

WASTE MANAGEMENT OF COLORADO

11655 WCR 59

Keenesburg, CO 80643

Jeff Sprowls: 720-947-2114

303-886-9693

Bill Hedberg: 1-970-686-2800, X23

1-970-418-8268

Gary Baldwin: 720-977-2104

303-618-0230

4. Republic Services Landfill, Inc.

ALLIED WASTE SYSTEMS

8900 Hwy

Golden, CO 80033

Amy Hobbs: 720-490-0230

303-459-8752

5. Sedalia Recycling Center

WASTE CONNECTIONS INC.

5970 North Hwy 85

Sedalia, CO 80135

Jeff Burrier 303-673-9431

303-968-9508

Metal debris must be washed clean of ash/debris prior to recycling. Concrete debris (foundations) must be disposed of at an approved landfill. If you wish to recycle this material, it must be inspected by a certified asbestos building inspector and found to be free of asbestos-containing materials prior to recycling.

If asbestos-containing material is known to be present in ash or debris in amounts greater than the trigger levels, they must be removed in accordance with Colorado Regulation No. 8, Part B. Trigger levels for single family residential dwellings are 50 linear feet on pipes, 32 square feet on other surfaces or the volume equivalent of a 55 gallon drum. If this is not known, the material may handled and disposed of using the procedures outlined above.

Please contact the Jefferson County Health Department at 303-271-5700 for questions on additional county requirements.

If you need additional information, please contact Charles Johnson at the Department's Solid Waste Unit at 303-692-3348 or Charles.Johnson@state.co.us , or the Asbestos Unit at 303-692-3100 or <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ap/asbestos/index.html>.