



**Summary of Open Burning of Landscape
Waste Regulations
McHenry County Public Health Ordinance
Effective April 1, 2008**



**View a copy of the Ordinance:
www.mcdh.info
or call 815.334.4585**

**This Ordinance applies to all areas of McHenry County.
If you live in a city with more stringent restrictions, the more restrictive rules apply.**

PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES

- Burning of manure, garbage, construction debris, trash, etc. on any property in McHenry County.
- Burning of landscape waste within 100' of a habitable structure (i.e. residence, school, etc.).
- Burning of landscape waste within 50' of a non-habitable structure (i.e. detached garage, barn, etc.).

RESTRICTIONS WHEN GREATER THAN 100' FROM A HABITABLE STRUCTURE AND 50' FROM A NON-HABITABLE STRUCTURE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only landscape waste and only on the property where the landscape waste was generated • Only during the months of April, May, Oct. and Nov. - on weekend days (Saturdays and Sundays) • Only between dawn and dusk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only when the winds are less than 10 mph • Must be supervised by an individual at least 18 years of age • A fire extinguisher, garden hose or water source must be available at the burning site |
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500' EXEMPTIONS:

Burning of on-site generated landscape waste 500' or greater from a habitable structure is allowed:

- 1) During any month of the year
- 2) On any day of the week
- 3) At any time of the day

OTHER EXEMPTIONS:

- Recreational fires; not larger than 3'x3'x3', and excludes leaves, grass or shrubbery clippings
- Ceremonial fires (bonfires) larger than 3'x3'x3', and excludes leaves, grass or shrubbery clippings; permit required from McHenry County Department of Health
- Habitat Reclamation or Firefighter Training (permit required from Illinois Environmental Protection Agency - Bureau of Air)

NOTE: All other prohibitions / restrictions apply.

ENFORCEMENT

Any officer of the McHenry County Department of Health, law enforcement agency, fire department or fire protection district is authorized to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance.



McHenry County Department of Health
Division of Environmental Health
2200 N Seminary Avenue—Route 47-Bldg A
Woodstock, IL 60098
Telephone 815-334-4585
Fax 815-334-4637
www.mcdh.info



Alternative Ways to Dispose of Landscape Waste



The Health Department encourages more environmentally sound alternatives to open burning of landscape waste and recommends composting, mulching and native landscaping as possible alternatives to reduce/reuse landscape waste. If landscape waste removal is necessary, residents can contact their waste hauler for curbside pickup, or work together with neighbors to rent roll-off dumpsters or contract waste haulers to organize a group pickup of leaves and landscape waste. For a fee, residents may drop off yard waste at an approved compost facility or landscape waste transfer station. Complete details about the Ordinance, suggested alternatives, exemptions and permit applications are available on our web site at www.mcdh.info or by calling 815-334-4585.

Composting

Composting returns organic matter to the soil in a useable form. The composting process reduces material volume by 70 - 80%. Organic material in the soil improves plant growth by:

- Enhancing soil texture
- Adding nutrients back into the soil
- Increasing the soil's ability to retain water & nutrients
- Improving soil structure by adding organic matter
- Loosening heavy soils, allowing better root penetration
- Reducing the need for fertilizers

Mulching

Use a mower to shred leaves into bits which will be washed down into the soil between the grass blades during the next rain. Mulched leaves contribute to soil health by:

- Adding nutrients & organic content
- Encouraging earthworm activity
- Preventing soil compaction
- Conserving moisture
- Reducing weeds and soil erosion

Native Landscaping

Selecting plants that are native to our area will provide the following benefits:

- Reduce pesticide use
- Reduce use of power equipment
- Enhance wildlife habitat
- Less upkeep and watering
- Benefit local wildlife
- Reduce yard work

Landscaping Service Companies

Landscaping service companies may remove landscape waste produced from landscape maintenance services and also offer products such as wood chips, wood mulch or firewood for sale to customers.

Local Municipal Waste Haulers

Municipal solid waste haulers who are licensed in McHenry County and provide regular residential waste pickup are required to offer landscape waste collection service to residential customers. An additional fee may be charged for the service.

Many municipalities and several unincorporated areas of the county are served by designated municipal waste haulers who have exclusive contracts to serve specific geographic areas. Residents who are unsure if they have a designated waste hauler should contact their municipality or the McHenry County Solid Waste Manager for further information.

Residents who do not have a designated waste hauler may contact any municipal solid waste hauler licensed in McHenry County and are encouraged to work collectively with neighbors and subdivision associations to identify the most economical solution for their neighborhood such as:

- working cooperatively with neighbors and subdivision associations to contract with a licensed municipal solid waste hauler to pick up bagged or loose leaves from curbsides or dumpsters, or
- coordinating roll-off containers that would be shared by multiple properties then picked up by the municipal waste hauler for appropriate disposal.

A list of McHenry County licensed municipal solid waste haulers and their services is available on the Solid Waste Program webpage at www.mcdh.info.

Yard Waste Recycling Facilities

Homeowners also have the option of dropping off their yard waste at an approved compost facility or landscape waste transfer station for a fee. Finished compost is available for purchase.

For more information call:

Thelen Sand and Gravel Compost Facility
815-675-6613
www.thelensg.com

Petersen Pit Landscape Waste Transfer Facility
815-675-6613

Garden Prairie Organics
815-597-1318
www.gpocompost.com

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