



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **State Health Department Encourages Proper Management and Disposal of Scrap Tires**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is reminding residents about the proper way to dispose of scrap (used) rubber tires to reduce both health and environmental hazards.

Tires and tire piles pose two major health threats: pests and fires. Disease-carrying pests, such as rodents, may live in the tire piles. Mosquitoes also can breed in the stagnant water that collects inside tires. Several varieties of mosquitoes can carry diseases, including West Nile virus. Controlling mosquitoes when tires are present is very difficult.

Fire presents the second concern. Scrap tire fires are difficult to put out and can burn for long periods of time. Tire fires release thick black smoke that can contain pollutants harmful to human health. Tire fires also produce an oily runoff that contains harmful contaminants such as lead and arsenic. This oily runoff may pose a threat to nearby water sources. Tire fires can pose serious threats to firefighters, nearby residents and the environment. The open burning of tires is prohibited in North Dakota.

“Sometimes tire fires can be started unintentionally by things like lightning or grass fires,” said Steve Tillotson with the North Dakota Department of Health. “This is why having large piles of tires can be so dangerous.”

Instead of creating piles of scrap tires, the department encourages people to take tires to proper disposal sites. Commercial businesses collecting and hauling scrap tires must have a waste hauler’s permit issued by the North Dakota Department of Health.

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“Property owners are advised to use caution when storing tires on their own property to reduce health, environmental and liability issues,” said Tillotson. “It is against health regulations to drop off or discard tires at any public or private site that is not approved for tire disposal. This includes roads, alleys, gravel pits, tree rows, ravines and coulees.”

Anyone with tires that need to be disposed of can check with their garbage-pickup company to see if they accept tires. Most tire dealers also will dispose of old tires when you purchase new ones. The Department of Health also maintains a list of companies that specialize in the disposal of tires. That list is available at [www.ndhealth.gov/wm/Publications.htm](http://www.ndhealth.gov/wm/Publications.htm).

More information regarding scrap tire issues is available through the Scrap Tire Management Council of the Rubber Manufacturers Association (RMA) at [www.rma.org](http://www.rma.org).

For more information, the media can contact Steve Tillotson, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5163

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