Bale Burning
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE GUIDANCE

OVERVIEW

All burning by commercial agricultural operations requires a permit except burning orchard prunings, natural vegetation along fence lines, irrigation and drainage ditches, or natural vegetation blown by the wind. Even if a permit is not required, a grower must still comply with all fire safety regulations of the local fire protection agency including any no-burn directives it may issue.

There are four types of agricultural burn permits.

- spot burn,
- field burn,
- bale burn,
- orchard tear-out burn.

What is a "bale burn permit" and when would it be appropriate to get one?

1) A bale burn permit allows a commercial agricultural operation the opportunity to burn broken or diseased/pest infested bales when other means of disposal are not reasonably available and when the location of the bales impedes the progress of the farming operation. No burning of baled residue from turf or field grass seed production is allowable.
2) This permit is not appropriate for the burning of large hay stacks or when disposal of large amounts of old hay is the driving motivation for requesting a permit.
3) A bale burn permit is good for non grass-seed crop residue equaling no more than ten acres of baled residue and is good only within the season for which it is issued. (Fall or Spring).
4) The cost for a bale burn permit is $25.00 and is not refundable.
5) Burning may take place only on Ecology specified Burn Days. The permit holder must call the 800 burn call number (**1-800-406-5322**) the day of the proposed burn and abide by that day's burn call for the area where the bales are located (The Burn/ No Burn designation and the start and end burn times stated for that day.
6) The Task Force encourages growers to burn only the number of bales which can be fully consumed during the hours listed on the daily burn decisions. However, piles may be allowed to ash over until the next burn day. Under WA law, nuisance smoke is illegal. Smoke from smoldering bales must not impact roads, cities, or any populated areas.
7) The application must contain a map outlining the location of the bales the grower wishes to burn.
8) A legal description (down to the ¼, ¼ section), township, range, must be included as part of the application
9) The application must be signed by the grower attesting that he/she is operating a commercial operation, that no other practical method is available for disposing of the bales, and that all permit conditions will be strictly adhered to.