

# Rural Crime Prevention

## Illegal Dumping

### Background

In the last few years, illegal dumping has become a major problem for farmers. The illegal dump site can be dangerous and very expensive to clean up. Many times, the illegal dumper will leave old tires, household trash, automobile and other vehicles, hazardous chemicals, and even the remains of clandestine drug laboratories. All land with open access is vulnerable to the illegal dumper, and there is no concern for damage to farmland, wildlife, livestock, or the environment.

To compound this, the cost to the farmer or land owner, may be very expensive, depending on the types of waste material that have to be removed from the property.

### What do I need to do to prevent dumping?

#### 1. The property boundary

The boundary is the property owner's primary line of defense. The stronger and more noticeable it is, the greater the probability that the illegal dumper will go elsewhere. ***You have just made it too hard to do!***

- Secure locks and gates. Gates should be as strong as possible, mounted securely and locked with heavy duty chain and padlocks.
- Keep your fences and gates in good repair.
- Ditch or block access points, farm lanes, road access you no longer use. Ditches form natural barriers. Use posts or large rocks to block access to large openings into your property.
- Post "No Trespassing" signs at regular intervals where they can be plainly seen. Do call the police and report trespassers.



#### 2. Outlying fields

Outlying areas are harder to protect. There some things you can do to protect your property from the illegal dumper.

- Secure locks and gates. Gates should be as strong as possible, mounted securely and locked with heavy duty chain and padlocks.
- Keep your fences and gates in good repair.
- Ditch or block access points, farm lanes, road access you no longer use. Ditches form natural barriers. Use posts or large rocks to block access to large openings into your property.
- Cut back vegetation from areas that the dumper could remain unseen while dumping – remember most are lazy and will dump close to the public road.
- Post "No Trespassing" signs at regular intervals where they can be plainly seen. Do call the police and report trespassers.
- Ensure employees are also on the lookout for dumpers and thieves.

## ILLEGAL DUMPING

### WARNING

Many of the containers found on illegal dump sites may contain hazardous chemicals. They may or may not be in their original containers or have any warning labels. If you are unsure of the contents, please contact your local 911 for assistance.

Some items that are indicative of a methamphetamine laboratory dumpsite are the presence of, but not limited to propane tanks, solvent cans, glassware, tubing and empty boxes of allergy medicine. These items especially once exposed to the environment are very dangerous and can cause severe injury or death.



Contact your local Sheriffs Office.

**If, unsure DO NOT handle the dumped items until you have assistance.**

What do I do if I find a dump site?

- If it is a large dump site, immediately contact your local sheriffs office. Do not disturb the dump site until you receive instructions from them. They may be able to find out who the dumper was.
- Let them know what you can see in the pile, for example, lots of small glassware containing unknown liquids, what appears to be unwrapped flashlight or camera batteries, propane cylinders – may mean you have a dumped clandestine drug laboratory.
- When cleaning up dump sites be sure to wear gloves to protect your hands. It is best to pick up these sites using a loader and a dump truck if possible. Check with your local health department to ensure you can take the trash and debris to your local landfill.
- Take a good look at how the dumpers got on to your property. You may want to either fence, gate, or obstruct that route of entry onto your property. You may want to cutback vegetation in that area so dumper can be seen.
- A Neighborhood Watch can help all land owners in your area prevent illegal dumping and other crimes.

**If you are reporting a crime in progress, dial 911. Stay on the line and follow the instructions from the 911 operator.**

**For More Information:  
Contact your local Sheriffs Department  
or,  
Washington State Department of Agriculture  
(360) 902 - 1800**



**AGR PUB 555-239 (N/12/08)**

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