

How bad can it really be?...



The amount of toxins released from uncontrolled low temperature burning in open spaces depends on the composition of the waste being burned, the temperature of the fire and the supply of oxygen. The major problem with open burning is that it is rarely carried out at high enough temperatures to destroy toxic substances. Under calm weather conditions toxins released from this type of uncontrolled low temperature burning can remain at dangerous levels near the ground for a long time, causing high amounts of contamination.

Below is a list of pollutants that can potentially be generated by uncontrolled low temperature burning:

Dioxins and furans, some of which are classified as carcinogenic (i.e. they can cause cancer).

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which can aggravate respiratory and heart illnesses and lead to kidney and liver damage. They also contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone (photochemical smog).

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are generated when elements of municipal waste are not completely combusted. PAHs are known carcinogens.

Carbon monoxide (CO), small amounts of which can cause nausea and headaches when inhaled. CO contributes to the formation of harmful low level ozone.

Hexachlorobenzene (HCB), which has similar properties to dioxins as it is persistent and builds up in humans and the environment. At certain levels of exposure it may cause serious health problems such as cancer, kidney and liver damage.

Nitrogen oxides (NOx), which contribute to acid rain and the formation of ground level ozone. Short term exposure to very high oncentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) can result in adverse effects on the respiratory system.

Microscopic particles, which can be small enough to get deep into our lungs. They are associated with health problems including bronchitis, asthma and heart attacks. People who already have respiratory or heart problems, the elderly and infants are most at risk when exposed to these particles. These particles are known to transport dioxins in the environment.

Ash, which may contain mercury, lead and arsenic. These are toxic to humans and animals when consumed, causing heart problems, kidney and brain damage. If deposited in the garden, vegetables can accumulate them and they can then be passed onto humans when eaten.

Source:

http://www.ecochem.com/t_compost_faq2.html Complied for your convenience by Daily Dump

