



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

### Scrap Tire Storage Best Management Practices

Scrap tires present several potential threats to human health and the environment, including, but not limited to: accelerating the breeding of mosquitoes and air and water contamination in the event of a fire. Proper storage of scrap tires can substantially reduce these threats. This guidance document will provide a description of suggested best management practices (“BMPs”).

Mosquitoes may carry and transmit infectious diseases (West Nile virus, malaria). According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, mosquitoes breed 100 times faster in tires than they do in the natural environment. Mosquitoes must have access to stagnant water in order to reproduce. Scrap tires that are allowed to accumulate water provide an excellent breeding habitat for mosquitoes. In addition, scrap tires provide an excellent habitat for other vectors and nuisance pests (rats, mice, snakes, wasps) Recommended BMPs to control mosquitoes and other vectors are:

- Store the scrap tires under a secured tarp or in an enclosed structure when not in use (e.g., barn or shed).
- Slash or bore a hole in the side of the tires to allow any water that collects in them to drain out.
- Apply approved chemicals (pesticides) by spraying or insertion.

Scrap tires are very difficult to extinguish if they catch on fire. Tires have a higher BTU value than coal and can produce an enormous amount of heat if burned. Burning tires emit dense smoke that may affect visibility on nearby roads and cause breathing distress if inhaled and release oil which may run-off and contaminate rivers, streams, creeks, ponds, and groundwater. Recommended BMPs to manage this threat are:

- Store the scrap tires at least 25 feet away from accelerants (e.g., gasoline, kerosene, motor oil) and open flame sources.
- Keep vegetation from becoming tall around scrap tires stored outdoors. Cut the vegetation, and rake the cuttings away from the tires.
- Maintain a 50-foot wide fire lane around the perimeter of each scrap tire pile.

Storing scrap tires in public view can cause unwanted attention, such as additional scrap tires and solid waste being dumped by others on the property. Unauthorized persons searching for used tires to sell may enter unattended property and scatter tires and/or steal them. Many of the tires that are stolen are, upon closer examination, not suitable for sale and are then illegally dumped. Recommended BMPs for this threat are:

- Store scrap tires out of public sight, if possible.
- Store the scrap tires in a secured area, rather than in an open field.
- Maintain owner/employee awareness and conduct routine examinations of scrap tire storage areas for disturbances.