



## Fire Debris Disposal Information Updated August 22, 2023

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Safety is a core value at WM. At Graham Road Landfill, safety includes training and protocols to protect our employees, customers, the community and the environment. Our commitment to safety includes the safe management of wildfire debris.

Wildfire debris can contain many types of hazardous materials, including:

- Tiny particles of dust, dirt, and soot that can easily become airborne and inhaled.
- Toxic amounts of heavy metals including arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead and mercury.
- Asbestos and asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in both friable and non-friable states.
- Material such as propane tanks, air conditioners, batteries, cleaning products, pesticides, and herbicides that are hazardous or require special handling and disposal.

As a result, there are special requirements for transporting and disposing of wildfire debris.

### **Site Preparation Considerations**

Before entering any area impacted by wildfire, clearance from the appropriate governmental authorities supervising the fire remediation and cleanup process should be obtained, and any applicable procedures and guidelines followed. Please visit the Department of Ecology website for the latest information at <https://www.cdhd.wa.gov/emergency/after-a-wildfire>.

Any cleanup of fire-impacted properties should be conducted by professionals who have the appropriate expertise for these activities. Anyone who is in an area impacted by fire should take several precautions. First and foremost, the area should be cleared of all fire and potential for fire recurrence due to unstable structures, hazardous materials, falling vegetation, open pipes, burning gas, propane tanks and other hazards. Appropriate personal protective equipment including N-95 masks, gloves, long shirts and pants, safety glasses and safety boots/shoes are recommended. Appropriate procedures should be followed when leaving such an area, including potentially changing shoes and removing outer layers of clothing. Ash should not be disturbed to the greatest extent possible.

Remediation of property destroyed or damaged by wildfire can be dangerous and should be approached with caution. The area should be deemed safe by state and local authorities prior to remediation and cleanup activities. **No wildfire debris should be transported for disposal unless it has been fully extinguished with no hot spots or risk of re-ignition.**

### **Fire Debris Segregation, Management and Disposal**

The following activities should be considered as part of the remediation and cleanup process:

- Conduct a Hazardous Waste Assessment by Certified Professionals.
- Identify site-specific hazards (unstable structures and/or vegetation) and remove hazards before proceeding.
- Establish stormwater best management practices and implement prior to cleanup activities.

Certified professionals should identify obvious hazardous materials, including gross ACM, radioactive materials, mercury, bullets and mortar rounds, and other explosive materials. Such materials will need to be removed and handled by the appropriate professionals and disposed of in accordance with applicable laws. Note as additional debris is uncovered, hazardous material may be present that was not previously identified. If uncertain, do not attempt to handle potentially hazardous items without professional guidance.



Certified Asbestos Consultants should assess areas for ACM (including ash). Any waste containing asbestos will be disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and guidelines. For more information visit: <https://lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/other-licenses-permits/asbestos-certification#certified-contractors-list>

The following procedures should be followed for specific debris types:

### **Building/Structure Debris (Non-Ash)**

Any debris (non-ash) from a building or structure being delivered to Graham Road Landfill must be accompanied by a current and Approved WM Solutions Profile specific to each generator's address. Profiles are completed, approved and managed on the WM Solutions website. WM Solutions ([www.wmsolutions.com](http://www.wmsolutions.com) or 800-963-4776) will require appropriate laboratory analysis and an asbestos survey that certifies the material does not contain asbestos or other hazardous materials.

Any non-hazardous debris (non-ash) from a building or structure that contains asbestos must be transported and disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and guidelines.

### **Ash**

Ash delivered to the Graham Road Landfill by private and commercial haulers must have an Approved WM Solutions Profile through the WM Solutions ([www.wmsolutions.com](http://www.wmsolutions.com) or 800-963-4776) process. Once approval is obtained, each load must be wetted down prior to transportation and wrapped in at least 6 mil plastic. Roll-off containers used to transport wetted down ash must also be lined with a minimum of 6 mil plastic.

All loads must be covered prior to transportation to minimize dispersion of ash and debris during transportation.

Ash that contains hazardous contaminants cannot be accepted at Graham Road Landfill and must be transported and disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and guidelines.

### **Contaminated Soil**

Soils impacted by wildfires are required to be tested and evaluated for hazardous materials that may have leached into the soils (i.e. heavy metals or petroleum products). An Approved WM Solutions ([www.wmsolutions.com](http://www.wmsolutions.com) or 800-963-4776) generator's profile is required for each address. This profile documentation includes laboratory testing and is required prior to receiving profile approval in addition to approval for disposal of soil at Graham Road Landfill.

### **Deceased Animals and Livestock**

Graham Road Landfill cannot accept deceased animals or livestock. Additional information is available by visiting <https://www.wmnorthwest.com/spokane/#!rc-cpage=396990>.

### **General Household Items (not structural debris)**

General household items (not structural debris) that are damaged by wildfire (e.g., furniture, clothing) may generally be disposed of in accordance with general household waste guidelines. These materials should be separated from the other materials.



### **Vehicles and Metal**

Graham Road Landfill cannot accept discarded or abandoned vehicles but may be able to accept damaged vehicles (with appropriate documentation) that a recycling facility does not accept. Please contact our WM Solutions team ([www.wmsolutions.com](http://www.wmsolutions.com) or 800-963-4776) to address protocol elements, including the following:

- Identify any vehicles (i.e. cars, boats, motorcycles, ATVs, trailers, etc.) and other large metal debris that need to be removed for recycling and disposal.
- Confirm that motor vehicles have been cleared of their titles.
- Verify that any liquid in the vehicle is removed prior to transport for recycling or disposal.

### **Refrigerant Containing Appliances (such as refrigerators and freezers)**

Since refrigerant-containing appliances require special handling and removal of refrigerant prior to recycling, they cannot be discarded with other waste. Appliances are accepted at Graham Road Landfill if they have a licensed technician certification that shows all refrigerants have been removed. All contents of the appliance need to be removed prior to disposal.

### **Medications and Medical Waste**

Medications and sharps should be segregated and properly packaged for delivery to appropriate disposal drop-off sites, disposal at a Household Hazardous Waste Event or with a licensed medical waste disposal facility. Graham Road Landfill does not accept medical waste that has not been incinerated and rendered non-infectious.

For large quantities of medications or sharps, contact WM Solutions ([www.wmsolutions.com](http://www.wmsolutions.com) or 800-963-4776).

### **Concrete and Asphalt**

Concrete and asphalt may be recycled if segregated from other waste. Such materials will be disposed of as waste at Graham Road Landfill

### **Other Wildfire Debris**

Contact WM Solutions ([www.wmsolutions.com](http://www.wmsolutions.com) or 800-963-4776) to determine whether disposal is allowed at the landfill.

### **Additional Information:**

FEMA has posted advice on Salvaging Damaged Family Treasures and can be downloaded at [https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema\\_after-fire\\_082023.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_after-fire_082023.pdf).