

No Burn Areas Expanding in 2007

VANCOUVER, Wash. – As of Jan. 1, 2007 all urban growth areas in the state of Washington will become permanent no burn areas. For Clark County, this includes the Urban Growth Areas of Ridgefield, La Center and Yacolt. The southern Clark County No Burn Area and the Battle Ground No Burn Area are also expanding in a few places. After Jan. 1, only small recreational campfires will be allowed within the new No Burn Areas, as has been the case for the existing no burn areas since 2000.

SWCAA is encouraging residents to explore their alternatives to outdoor burning, such as arranging for yard debris pick-up service, composting, chipping or recycling yard debris.

“Composting is a good alternative to outdoor burning and creates a resource instead of air pollution,” says Elliott. “It is an easy and inexpensive way to turn yard and garden refuse into a usable and valuable product. Compost turns organic matter like leaves, grass, weeds and wood chips into a rich soil conditioner.”

These changes are the result of a revision of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC 173-425) back in 2000. State law also prohibits the use of burn barrels and garbage burning throughout the state of Washington. Penalties can be imposed for violating these state laws.

“Smoke generated from garbage burning is a health hazard and a public nuisance,” says Bob Elliott, executive director of the Southwest Clean Air Agency. Particularly at risk to the effects of smoke are the elderly, children and those with asthma, heart disease or other respiratory

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ailments.

Founded in 1968, the mission of the Southwest Clean Air Agency is to preserve and enhance the air quality in southwest Washington. Serving the counties of Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Skamania and Wahkiakum, SWCAA is responsible for protecting the public's health through the enforcement of federal, state and local air quality standards and regulations.

For any outdoor burning complaints or questions, please call the Southwest Clean Air Agency at 360-574-3058.

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For more information contact:

Robert Elliott
Executive Director
Southwest Clean Air Agency
360-574-3058, ext. 12
bob@swcleanair.org

Kathy Finkle
Public Information Specialist
Southwest Clean Air Agency
360-574-3058, ext. 39
kathy@swcleanair.org