

## Open Dumping and Its Effects on our Environment

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) investigates all complaints of open dumping of solid waste. When a violation is found, DEQ takes action to stop the dumping and have the waste cleaned up. In almost all instances, open dumping is a violation. There are many reasons, both environmental and aesthetic, why open dumping is not permitted.

### **Q: What is solid waste?**

By definition, solid waste includes, but is not limited to trash, yard waste, used motor oil, household chemicals, building materials and demolition materials. Solid waste does not include rock, dirt or brick.

### **Q: What is open dumping?**

Open dumping is the disposal of solid waste at any location other than a facility permitted by the DEQ.

### **Q: How does open dumping affect the environment?**

In the environment, chemicals and other contaminants found in solid waste can seep into our groundwater and can also be carried by rainwater to rivers and lakes that provide essential wildlife habitat. These contaminants can also end up in our ground water, rivers and lakes that are our sources for drinking water.

### **Q: What else does it do?**

Open dumping is also detrimental to the natural beauty of Oklahoma. Dumped solid waste, when visible from roadways, is aesthetically unpleasant. Solid waste dumps are in direct conflict with Oklahoma's goal of developing tourism.

### **Q: How can I get rid of solid waste in a legal and environmentally sound manner?**

Recycle as much as you can. Compost your yard waste. Chip your tree limbs and use the chippings as mulch. Dispose of the remainder of your solid waste at a DEQ permitted landfill.

### **Q: How do I report dumping?**

Call the DEQ complaints line at (800) 522-0206. Dumping on roadsides or road easements is under the jurisdiction of the county sheriff's office.

