

## Open Dumping and Its Effects on our Environment

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) investigates all complaints of illegal 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 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, commercial waste, building materials and demolition materials. Solid waste does not include clean rock, dirt or brick.

### Q: What is dumping?

Dumping is the unlawful disposal of solid waste at any location other than a facility permitted by 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?

Illegal dumps attract vermin such as rats, skunks, flies, and mosquitoes. Dumping is also detrimental to the natural beauty of Oklahoma. Dumped solid waste 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 or transfer station. If available, subscribe to a local trash pickup or dumpster service.

### Q: How do I report dumping?

Call the DEQ complaints line at **(800) 522-0206** or file an online complaint at <https://tinyurl.com/38w57m4n> Dumping on roadsides or road easements is under the jurisdiction of the county sheriff's office. For additional information on roadside dumping see our fact sheet Illegal Roadside Dumps at Illegal Roadside Dumps. <https://tinyurl.com/3ybresad>

