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## ILLEGAL DUMPING AND BURNING

Dumping waste, such as discarded trash, oil, appliances, scrap tires, furniture and other items on private or public land and waterways is strictly prohibited as stated in Ohio Revised Code 3767.32. This code also prohibits unauthorized persons from knowingly placing litter and household wastes in a private trash receptacle, unless he or she has authorization to use the trash receptacle or the waste materials were generated on public property where the receptacle is located.

Burning waste is also regulated. According to the Ohio Revised Code, a person may not burn household trash, packaging materials, coated or laminated paper, painted or treated wood, coated or treated cardboard, animal, vegetable, and kitchen waste, plastics, wire and metals, rubber, including tires or oily rags.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to being against the law, illegal dumping and burning have serious health and social costs. For example, the dioxins that result from burning plastics are a known carcinogen<sup>2</sup> and illegal dumping decreases property values.<sup>3</sup>

### Baseline for Illegal Dumping and Burning

The Athens City County Health Department works with the SEPTA Correctional Facility, the Athens Municipal Court Diversion Program, Athens County Prosecutor Diversion Program, Athens County Sheriff's Office, Township Trustees, the County Engineer's Office, Wayne National Forest, and the AHSWD to clean up dumpsites regularly on the weekends. AOZWI also has an Ohio Stream Restore Corps AmeriCorps members dedicated to cleaning up litter and illegal dumpsites within Athens-Hocking watersheds. The Athens County Sheriff's Office has a part-time officer who does some work on illegal dumping but funding for this position has been inconsistent. In Hocking County, dumping cases are reported directly to the OEPA, and the OEPA investigates the situation and will notify property owners. The Hocking County Sheriff's Office also receives occasional calls. Prosecution rarely happens in Hocking County because the case has to go through the state, a more complicated process than addressing the issue at the local level.

In Athens County, the health department is responsible for keeping track of dumpsites, cleanups, and tire collections, and reporting them to the AHSWD. In Hocking County, the OEPA tracks the information.

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1 ORC 3734.01, 3734.02, 3734.70, and 3734.73

2 United States Environmental Protection Agency. (2003). The Hidden Hazards of Backyard Burning. Accessed March 23, 2011. <[www.epa.gov/osw/nonhaz/municipal/backyard/pubs/residents.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/osw/nonhaz/municipal/backyard/pubs/residents.pdf)>

3 United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5. (1998). Illegal Dumping Prevention Guidebook. Accessed March 27, 2011. <[www.epa.gov/reg5rcra/wptdiv/illegal\\_dumping/downloads/il-dmpng.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/reg5rcra/wptdiv/illegal_dumping/downloads/il-dmpng.pdf)>

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## **ACTION STEPS FOR ILLEGAL DUMPING AND BURNING**

### **1. RAISE AWARENESS OF ILLEGAL DUMPING AND BURNING AND INCREASE ATHENS AND HOCKING COUNTIES' ABILITY TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY.**

- a. Identify one existing phone number in Athens and one in Hocking County for citizens to report illegal dumping and burning. Advertise it widely. **(1 YR)**
- b. Provide training for people and organizations on the proper response to a found dumpsite so people are safe and evidence can be used to identify a suspect. **(1 YR)**
- c. Provide education on the impacts of illegal dumping and burning. **(1 YR)**
- d. Run announcements in the paper about cases of illegal dumping including information such as fines charged, number of cases tried, and people's name when allowed by public records law. **(3 YRS)**
- e. Share Lawrence-Scioto illegal dumping enforcement success<sup>1</sup> with local officers, prosecutors, and judges and demonstrate connection of illegal dumping to other more serious offenses. **(3 YRS)**

### **2. ENGAGE CITIZENS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN A FOCUSED EFFORT TO CLEAN UP AND PREVENT ILLEGAL DUMPING.**

- a. Promote Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful Affiliate and encourage additional organizations to join as partners. **(1 YR)**
- b. Continue to host regular cleanups. Make a special effort to engage local people, raise local support, make cleanups fun, and share the progress made after each cleanup on the web, in the newspaper, and on the radio. **(1 YR)**
- c. Seek the most economic and effective options to discourage illegal dumping<sup>2</sup>. **(1 YR)**
- d. Encourage townships to take advantage of funding through the AHSWD to prevent illegal dumping and burning, clean up illegal dump sites, and host at least one community-wide cleanup annually. **(1 YR)**

### **3. MAINTAIN A MAP OF ILLEGAL DUMPSITES AND MONITOR SITES.**

- a. Develop a marking system in the field so all partners know if a site has already been documented. **(1 YR)**
- b. Consolidate and expand existing dumpsite maps and turn them into a live online document that all partners working on dumpsite removal can view and can be given special access to update when appropriate. **(3 YRS)**
- c. Identify priority dumpsites and place cameras at them. Ensure the footage can be monitored remotely by an existing staff person.<sup>3</sup> **(3 YRS)**

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence-Scioto has a very strong program that is included in a case study in the appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Examples include creating berms, using downed trees and rocks, or reclaimed gates. Signs should be avoided as they increase illegal dumping and new gates are unnecessarily costly.

<sup>3</sup> Two preconditions should be in place: identification of an organization that will own and monitor cameras, and a plan for securing and replacing cameras when needed.