

Managing Storm Debris

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has specific guidelines for properly managing storm debris. Proper management of storm debris is important because it protects human health, safety, and our environment. There are specific regulatory requirements that must be met when managing storm debris. This fact sheet provides important contact information and resources for local officials, emergency response planners, and residents to learn more about **burning of debris, solid waste disposal, and asbestos disposal**.

Recycling is the preferred method for managing many kinds of debris.

Find recycling options by contacting your solid waste hauler or visit Michigan.gov/RecyclingDirectory and Michigan.gov/EGLEHHW.

If recycling is not possible, other options must be explored. EGLE's Materials Management Division (MMD) has the authority to issue **emergency disposal authorizations** to municipalities recovering from a disaster or emergency. Requests for emergency disposal authorization generally come from the county emergency management program and are sent to the State Emergency Operations Center who coordinates with appropriate EGLE staff. For questions about emergency disposal permits, contact the **MMD's Solid Waste Section** at 517-284-6588.

LEARN BEFORE YOU BURN

Debris from homes and businesses should not be burned. This includes structural materials, roofing, insulation, siding, appliances, carpet, furniture, and other household items.

"Open burning" is the burning of unwanted materials, such as paper, trees, brush, leaves, grass, and other debris whose smoke and other emissions are released directly into the air. During open burning, air pollutants do not pass through a chimney or stack, and/or the combustion of solid waste is not adequately controlled. Air quality regulations only allow open burning of trees, logs, brush, and stumps. No other materials can be burned for disposal. When burning trees logs, brush, and stumps, it must occur further than 1400 feet from an incorporated city or village. The open burning cannot cause a nuisance, nor can it violate any other air pollution rules. Local laws often prohibit open burning of these materials. To ensure it is allowed and the appropriate local permits are obtained, check with your local officials before open burning these materials.



For questions about open burning, call the Environmental Assistance Center at 800-662-9278 or visit Michigan.gov/OpenBurning.

WOODY AND VEGETATIVE WASTE

Cutting, splitting, shredding, or chipping untreated wood and woody debris for reuse is the best option for handling excess wood and woody materials. When handling storm-generated vegetative debris, composting is the preferred option. To learn more about Michigan's compost regulations or find a registered commercial composter, visit Michigan.gov/EGLECompost.



Storm-generated woody and vegetative debris from a catastrophic event like a flood, tornado, infrastructure failure or extreme erosion can be disposed in a licensed solid waste landfill if EGLE has granted an emergency disposal permit. To obtain an emergency disposal permit, work with your county emergency management staff. A list of licensed solid waste landfills can be found at [Michigan.gov/EGLEWaste](https://www.michigan.gov/EGLEWaste) under the “Solid Waste” tab.

For questions about emergency disposal permits and composting or solid waste disposal of wood and woody or vegetative debris, please **call the EGLE, MMD, Solid Waste Section at 517-284-6588.**

HOUSEHOLD AND NON-HAZARDOUS BUSINESS DEBRIS DISPOSAL

Construction and demolition debris that are emergency or storm-related should be treated as potentially containing asbestos and maintained in a wet condition from demolition to disposal. Construction and demolition debris may be disposed in a licensed solid waste landfill. For more information on handling asbestos waste, **contact the Environmental Assistance Center at 800-662-9278** or visit [Michigan.gov/EGLEAsbestos](https://www.michigan.gov/EGLEAsbestos).

Appliances can be picked up and taken to a recycling center. To find a recycling center, contact your solid waste hauler or visit [Michigan.gov/RecyclingDirectory](https://www.michigan.gov/RecyclingDirectory). For questions about appliance recycling, **MMD’S Solid Waste Section at 517-284-6588.**

Household and non-hazardous business waste must go to a licensed solid waste landfill. For a list of licensed solid waste landfills, visit [Michigan.gov/EGLEWaste](https://www.michigan.gov/EGLEWaste) and select the “Solid Waste” tab on the left.

Business debris contaminated with hazardous waste must be managed as a hazardous waste. Household hazardous waste is best managed through a local household hazardous waste collection. For a list of common types of household hazardous waste and local household hazardous waste collection contacts, visit [Michigan.gov/EGLEHHW](https://www.michigan.gov/EGLEHHW).

For questions about disposal of household and non-hazardous business debris, including appliances, and construction and demolition debris, call MMD’s **Solid Waste Section at 517-284-6588.** For questions about hazardous waste debris, please **call the Environmental Assistance Center at 800-662-9278.**

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

- **Pollution Emergencies:**
800-292-4706
- **Environmental Assistance Center:**
800-662-9278
- **EGLE, MMD, Solid Waste Section:**
517-284-6588

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

Using any search engine, search for:

- **The Michigan State Police [Local Disaster Debris Management Planning Handbook](#).**
- **The USEPA [Disaster Debris Recovery Tool](#) or visit <https://r5.ercloud.org/WAB/DDRT/>.**
- **The USEPA [Planning for Natural Disaster Debris guidance](#) or visit www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/guidance-about-planning-natural-disaster-debris**

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