

SCRAP TIRES

Each year in Georgia, we generate millions of used tires as waste or scrap. Scrap tires are found stockpiled at landfills, stacked in scrap yards, and abandoned in communities. Scrap tires can be recycled, reducing potential environmental and health hazards, and reused for many beneficial purposes.



HEALTH HAZARDS

Tire stockpiles are an environmental, public safety, and health threat. Because of their shape, scrap tires can collect water and debris, which creates a breeding and feeding habitat for insects and rodents carrying diseases such as West Nile Virus. Scrap tires are also a collection source of dirt, dust, moisture, and mold.

Scrap tires have oily chemicals that are flammable, and tire fires create injury hazards. Burning tires also release hazardous chemicals, such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and toxic metals, into air, water, and soil. Tire fires are difficult to extinguish, and are expensive to clean up.

RECYCLED TIRE MATERIAL

RECYCLING SCRAP TIRES REDUCES OR ELIMINATES:

- ✓ *the number of tires entering the solid waste stream*
- ✓ *the need for clean fill dirt and other natural resources*
- ✓ *costs to communities by using inexpensive materials*

The majority of scrap tires are shipped to recycling facilities where they are shredded and used primarily for civil engineering projects, such as road asphalt, rubber mulch, playground surfaces, and fuel hoses.

Tires can also be collected, shredded, colored, and used locally by residents for community projects. These projects include providing rubber chips and mulch for decorative and functional landscaping in public areas, and for safe and affordable walking paths and playgrounds,



PUBLIC HEALTH BENEFITS OF RECYCLING TIRES

There are many health and safety benefits to using recycled scrap tire material, including

- ❖ reduced impact and injury from falls
- ❖ shock absorbent surfaces that reduce muscle and joint strain
- ❖ reduced mold, moisture, and dust common with wood chips, rocks, and dirt surfaces
- ❖ low maintenance walking, jogging, or biking paths, landscaping, and playground areas



Photo courtesy of Scrappy Green Recycles

Studies on the health impacts of using recycled tire material for recreation areas and children's playgrounds have been conducted by health departments in many states. These studies tested the effects of recycled tire materials on heat stress, potential for injury, latex allergy, chemical exposure, and infection.

The studies concluded that although heat stress may be a concern when using rubber material, it is safe to use and reduces the risk for injury. To reduce the potential for heat stress, light colored recycled tire material can be used.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE MY SCRAP TIRE ROUND-UP EVENT?

Some local governments in Georgia offer scrap tire round-up collection events in which used tires are collected, transported, and recycled for a minimal fee. Residents can check their local newspaper for event listings, or search for tire recycling locations at www.earth911.org.

You can organize a **Scrap Tire Round-up!** For ideas, the nonprofit organization Keep America Beautiful offers community clean-up planning tools at www.kab.org. To get started:

1. Develop a plan.

Decide when and where your event should be held and how to inform people about it.

2. Identify resources and fund-raising needs.

Identify what is needed and how much it will cost to properly remove, transport, and recycle scrap tires, including safety measures, equipment and services. Explore existing funding sources and fund raising options.

3. Organize and involve local volunteers.

Recruit from area neighborhoods, schools, businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and at public events to assist and support the event.

4. Haul collected scrap tires to a recycler.

Scrap tires can be recycled at drop-off recycling centers, participating tire stores, and at events sponsored by government agencies and non-profit organizations. Businesses can coordinate recycling through the Georgia Scrap Tire Program by calling (404) 656-7802.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Georgia Department of Public Health
Chemical Hazards Program
(404) 657-6534
www.dph.ga.gov/chemical-hazards

Georgia Environmental Protection Division
Scrap Tire Program
(404) 363-7026
<https://epd.georgia.gov/scrap-and-used-tires>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Recycled Tire Program
epa.gov/epawaste/conserves/materials/tires

Keep America Beautiful, Inc.
www.kab.org



RECYCLING AND REUSING SCRAP TIRES



CHEMICAL HAZARDS PROGRAM

Environmental Health Section

