

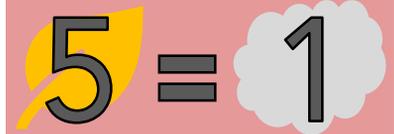
# Before you burn... ...consider the alternatives!



## Open burning damages health!

- Even healthy adults and children are affected by small particles, molds, fungi, and chemical pollutants in smoke.
- Leaf smoke can cause eye, nose, and throat irritations; lung irritation and congestion; shortness of breath and coughing; headaches; and skin irritations.
- Some compounds in leaf smoke are even cancer-causing, and smoldering leaves can produce deadly carbon monoxide.
- Smoke is especially harmful for:
  - People with asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, pneumonia, or allergies
  - Older people, those with lung problems, pregnant or nursing women

**Did you know?** Smoke from burning five pounds of leaves contains about one pound of air pollution.



**Did you know?** Moist leaves give off more smoke and chemicals than do dry leaves.

## Open burning contributes to harmful ground-level ozone!

- Ground-level ozone, or smog, is a problem for big cities and rural areas alike. Open burning creates volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which react with heat and sunlight to create ground-level ozone.
- Ground-level ozone can cause or worsen respiratory, heart, or other health problems. It also deteriorates rubber, corrodes metal and damages crops and forests.

**Did you know?** Because of unacceptably high ozone levels in Lake and Porter Counties, all residential open burning is illegal by state law in those counties. Elkhart County has a history of higher ozone levels, and less burning will help keep our ozone levels acceptable.

## For more information

- IDEM Open Burning Web page: <http://www.in.gov/idem/airquality/2411.htm>.
- Elkhart County Leaf Management Web page: [www.elkhartcountyswmd.com/leaf-management](http://www.elkhartcountyswmd.com/leaf-management).
- To report inappropriate outdoor burning, please contact the Indiana Department of Environmental Management at (800)451-6027 x3 or at <https://www.in.gov/idem/5274.htm>.

# Before you burn... ...consider the alternatives!



## Open burning damages property!

- Uncontrolled fire is a significant risk for property damage and injuries.

**Did you know?** In Vanderburgh County in 2017, a house fire caused by leaf burning resulted in a total loss of the house. This could happen in Elkhart County, too!

## Open burning impacts Elkhart County residents!

Numerous residents in Elkhart County have told us how open burning in Elkhart County affects their daily lives. By pursuing alternatives to leaf burning, you will be contributing to a better quality of life for yourself, your neighbors, and local businesses.

- Many **residents** with health problems are forced to leave Elkhart County when leaf burning starts. Even residents without health problems are bothered by burning leaves ... as it is harmful to all of us.
- **Businesses** can lose income because of open burning. Smoke from leaf burning provides a bothersome environment that discourages business transactions. Some businesses even report having to close when the smoke is too thick.
- **Fire departments** have to respond to leaf fires that go out of control, which is a concern for firefighters and their families.
- In **schools** and other buildings that draw in air from the outside, leaf smoke is brought indoors, making it harder for people inside the buildings to work, learn, and play.
- [Impact to healthcare system: Do we have anything to share here?]

## So, what's the best way to manage leaves and yard waste?

- Compost your leaves, grass, weeds, brush, kitchen scraps, and other organic waste.
- Mulch leaves into your lawn.
- Bag your leaves and bring them to the Elkhart County Landfill (59530 County Road 7, Elkhart, IN 46517).
- Hire a local landscaper to help you manage your yard waste.
- If you must burn, be sure you are burning in accordance with the law.