

Plenary Session 4 – We are faced with a new reality and urgency in dealing with risks and emergencies related to fires in our waste streams, facilities and communities. This extended session features presentations from an expert panel and information on how to prevent, mitigate and manage fires in the recycling and waste stream. Our panelists include:

- **Jason Brown, Call2Recycle**
- **Christine Major, Portage & District Recycling Inc.**
- **Rudy Penner, Western Financial Group**
- **Kelvin Toews, Fire Chief, City of Steinbach**
- **Eldon Wallman, City of Steinbach**
- **Randy Webber, Technical consultant/Training Instructor**

Fires can happen in all areas of the waste management operations, including:

- In collection truck, in waste transfer bin, or in landfill cell caused by "hot loads"
- In the truck, bin or landfill caused by chemical reactions - batteries for example
- In a recycling/diversion storage area
- In a processing area
- In an office/admin area
- External or adjacent to waste management sites/facilities - e.g., a forest fire

Burning waste is bad, period!



Instant(!) pollution and long-term impact to the air, land and water

- Arsenic, Mercury, Lead
- Asbestos
- Carbon monoxide
- Particulate matter
- Hydrochloric Acids
- Hydrogen Cyanide
- Hydrogen Sulfide
- Nitrogen Oxides
- Polychlorinated Biphenyls
- Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons
- Sulfur Oxides
- Volatile Organic Compounds
- Burned materials cannot be recycled or reused



Immediate(!) health risks to vulnerable, negative long-term impacts to all community members

- Difficulty breathing
- Eye, nose and throat irritation
- Lung irritation/congestion
- Stomach/intestinal issues
- Eye damage
- Headaches
- Heart damage
- Cancer
- Lung damage
- Metabolic poisoning
- Potential burns or death
- Potential community evacuations





Hagersville Ontario – 1990
Burned for 17 days



Rosser Manitoba – 2001
Burned for 7 days



Tire Pile Before



Tire Pile After



DON'T
Store tires in a big pile



DO
Store tires in rows with space between



Flammable Liquids – Spontaneous Combustion















**NO SMOKING
ANYWHERE
ON SITE**





IMPORTANT

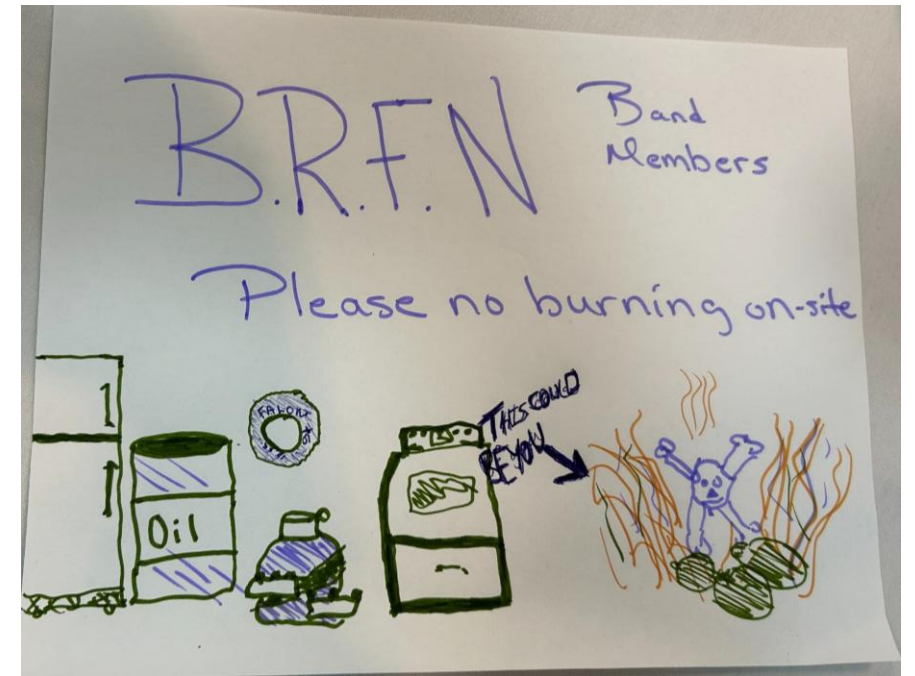
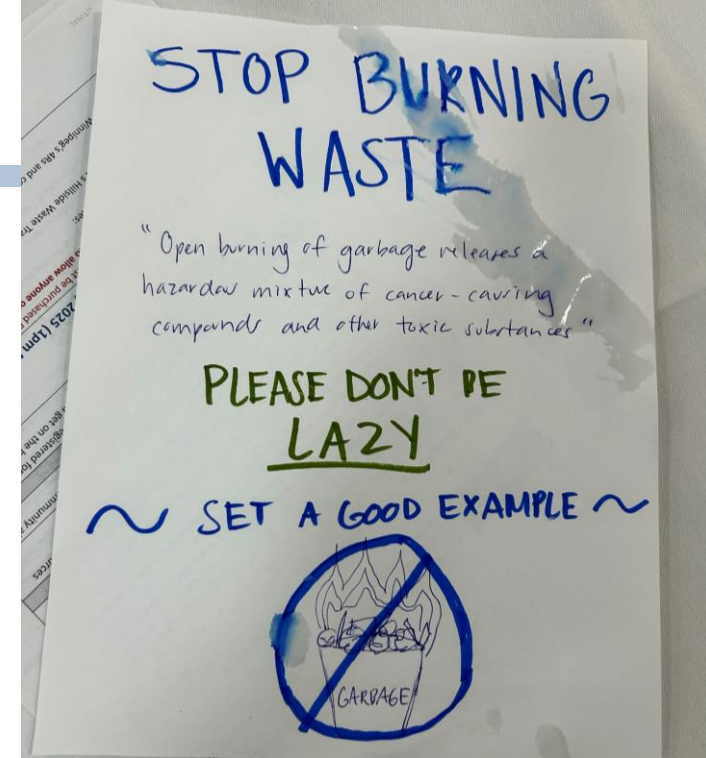
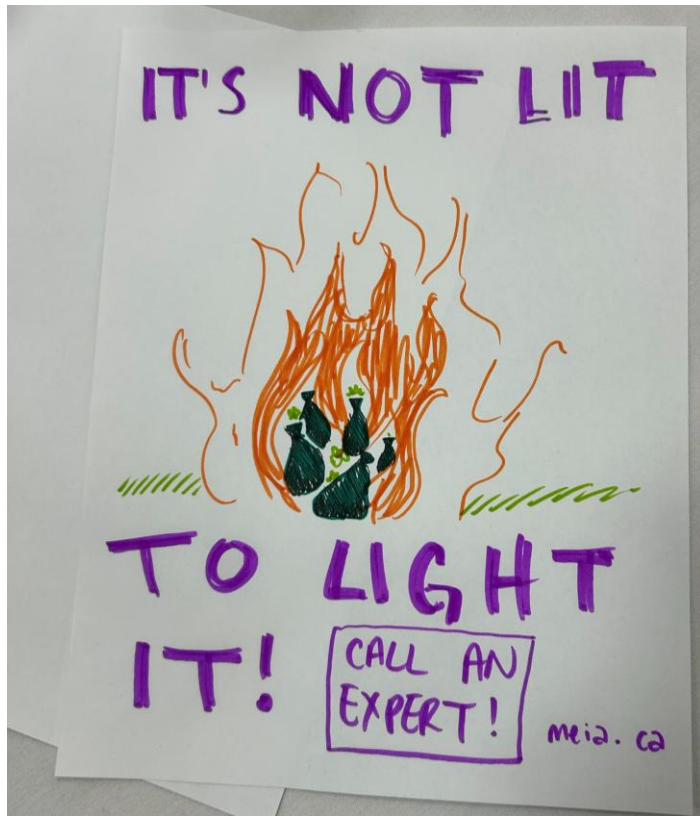
To safely and effectively respond to a fire emergency:

- **You need an emergency plan**
 - **You need equipment**
 - **You must be trained**
 - **You need to practice**
- **Your local fire first responders should know and understand the hazards at your facility**

Basic 4-point Strategy For Dealing with Waste Fires

1. Don't start waste/garbage fires!
2. Try to prevent waste/garbage fires in your community!
3. Plan/prepare so that you're ready when waste/garbage fires happen!
4. Respond/deal with emergency waste/garbage fires safely and effectively!

1. Don't burn waste!



2. Do your best to prevent waste stream fires!

- a) Can we do more to educate our community members about the dangers and impacted of burning waste? What do we tell them to do instead?
- b) Are our workers adequately trained to safely and properly handle the materials they come across in their job duties to reduce fire risk? Have they taken courses on: Hazard Awareness? WHMIS? Operating a fire extinguisher? Landfill Fire Training?
- c) Do we have proper Emergency Plans and Safe Work procedures in place for the materials that pose the greatest risk (ex. lithium batteries, flammable chemicals, stored tires, etc.)
- d) Do we effectively screen incoming waste loads at our site/facility?
- e) Do our workers have the tools and materials they need to safely and effectively deal with small, controllable fires (ex. fire extinguishers)
- f) What actions should we take based on our answers to the above?

3. Prepare Emergency Response Plan BEFORE fire happens!

- a) Do we have an Emergency Response Plan in place that includes all of the essential info listed on the worksheet?
- b) Who is responsible for reviewing, updating the Plan? Who should we involve in this process? How often should we do it?
- c) Have all of our workers been provided a copy of the Plan? When was the last time we reviewed it with them?
- d) Have we consulted with our local fire chief or local fire/emergency response lead? Have we provided them a copy of the plan? Have we invited them to tour the site to understand our operation and the nature and location of materials we collect, handle and store on site?
- e) What actions should we take based on our answers to the above?

4. Respond to fire emergencies safely, quickly and effectively!

By taking action on the items discussed under points 1-3 above, your workers and community will be more prepared to respond to fire emergencies safely, quickly and effectively. Three other important things that should be considered:

1. Reinforce to your workers that they should NOT attempt to deal with any emergency for which they are not properly trained. They should be provided training on basic Hazard Awareness where they will learn to Stop. Assess the risk. Move themselves and others to safety. Call properly trained responders for help.
2. Be ready to communicate any known dangers or hazards to emergency responders when they arrive on site.
3. Understanding your insurance and liability policies so you know what steps you need to take after the emergency is resolved.