

Operational policy

Mining

Disposal and storage of scrap tyres at mine sites

Operational policies provide a framework for consistent application and interpretation of legislation by the Department of Environment and Science. Operational policies will not be applied inflexibly to all circumstances. Individual circumstances may require an alternative application of policy. This policy concerns mining activities as defined under s. 110 of the Environmental Protection Act 1994.

1 Policy issue

Best practice environmental management for scrap tyres generated by mining activities follows a waste management strategy according to the following hierarchy in decreasing order of preference and desirability: avoidance, recycling, waste-to-energy, and disposal. Adoption and implementation of this hierarchy reflects the economic cost of handling and transporting large mine tyres in Queensland and the considerable energy and material resource embedded in the tyres.

2 Determination

For new applications, environmental authority conditions for scrap tyre management on mine sites should adhere to the following waste management strategies in decreasing order of preference and desirability:¹

2.1 Avoidance

When negotiating purchase agreements with new tyre suppliers, seek take-back clauses to maximise freight backloading opportunities.

2.2 Recycling

Explore opportunities to recycle scrap tyres on-site and locally through use in impact-absorbing surfaces, bitumen and road construction, pastoral and agricultural use, and civil engineering applications.

2.3 Waste-to-energy

Use existing opportunities in Queensland to recover the intrinsic energy value through waste-to-energy options.

2.4 Disposal

- (a) Tyres stored awaiting disposal—or transport for take-back and, recycling, or waste-to-energy options – should be stockpiled in volumes less than 3m in height and 200 square metres in area. Additional fire precautions should be taken, including removal of grass and other materials within a 10m radius of the scrap tyre store. Tyres should be stored in a manner that prevents water retention and minimises mosquito breeding events. Options may include holing side-walls, covering with tarpaulins, spraying with a non-persistent insecticide, or reducing the stockpile during rain events.

¹ Information contained in the guideline 'Application requirements for activities with waste impacts' (available from www.qld.gov.au using ESR/2015/1836 as a search term) should also be considered.

- (b) Disposing of scrap tyres in underground stopes is acceptable provided this practice does not cause an unacceptable fire risk or compromise mine safety.
- (c) Disposing of scrap tyres in spoil emplacements is acceptable, provided tyres are placed as deep in the spoil as possible but not directly on the pit floor. Placement should ensure scrap tyres do not impede saturated aquifers and do not compromise the stability of the consolidated landform.
- (d) Disposing of scrap tyres (and other wastes) on mine sites is a notifiable activity under Schedule 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, and the locations of the disposal sites need to be recorded on the Environmental Management Register.

3 Other issues to consider

Scrap tyre management issues that arise under ERA 16 (extractive and screening activities) should also follow this operational policy when establishing conditions for new environmental authority applications.

Disclaimer

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Version History

Version	Effective date	Description of changes
1.00	5 December 2014	First published version of the guideline.
2.00	5 December 2014	Minor changes.
2.01	18 November 2016	General administrative updates.
2.02	17 May 2018	The document template, header and footer have been updated to reflect current Queensland Government corporate identity requirements and comply with the Policy Register.