

2010 Agricultural Wood Waste Chipping Program

Information package

Do you have wood waste left over from an orchard removal?



Register to have your wood chipped for FREE!

Regional Air Quality Program
c/o City of Kelowna Regional Services
1435 Water St Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4
TEL: 250 469-8408 nmarzinik@kelowna.ca
regionaldistrict.com

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Chipping Program - General Information

The Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) is offering a free program in 2010 for Central Okanagan orchardists who want to chip wood waste material that has come from an orchard removal. This type of debris typically includes stumps and branches.

Due to a decline in the tree fruit industry, hundreds of acres of orchard trees are being pulled out within the Central Okanagan each year. The most common method of orchard debris disposal has been burning it in large outdoor fires, similar to forest slash burns. This creates a smoky haze in the region. To help keep our air clean, please consider chipping wood waste rather than burning it.

This project is coordinated by the RDCO's Air Quality Program with support from the British Columbia Fruit Growers Association, the BC Fruit Packers Cooperative and the Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre.

How will the debris be chipped?

A portable tub grinder will be towed to participating orchards where it will be set up to chip stumps and large branches into 1 to 2 inch diameter sized chips. After chipping, the ground wood residue will be left on the property for the agriculturalist to use as he or she wishes. It is recommended the chips be spread around trees to increase the moisture retention of the soil and to control weeds.

What do I do with the wood chips?

Wood chips are very effective as mulch. A mulch of wood chips, applied along the tree row, can help keep the trees' root zones cool and moist. Although wood chip mulch will not entirely control weeds, it will suppress them. Growers whose trees are mulched can attend to the few weeds within the rows on a more flexible schedule than growers who maintain an herbicide strip in the rows. Wood chip mulch also has a positive effect on soil properties and leads to improved tree health and vigor, as well as increased yields (Source: University of Minnesota).

Who may apply?

If you live within the City of Kelowna, Districts of Lake Country, Peachland or West Kelowna, or the Regional District of Central Okanagan Electoral Areas and have wood waste derived from an orchard removal for the purpose of replanting or other agricultural use, you may apply for this program. Orchards being removed for the purpose of residential or commercial development will not be accepted into the program.

Applicants with small amounts of wood waste may not be accommodated through this program due to the very high cost of mobilizing the chipping machine.

When will chipping occur?

Chipping occurs year round.

How do I register?

To register, phone Nicole Marzinzik, Regional Air Quality Program Coordinator at 250 469-8408.

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What do I have to do to qualify for this program?

Please follow these rules when preparing your wood waste for chipping:

- ▶ Large trees should be cut in half (please consult with the chipping program coordinator about this). You only need to make one cut approximately 2 or 3 feet above the root ball. There is no need to de-limb the trees. Salvage your trees for firewood if you want.
- ▶ Make the least amount of wood piles possible. There should be one pile of wood waste for every 3 to 4 acres of trees removed. This reduces the amount of moving the chipper has to make on your property.
- ▶ Pile the wood waste on level ground, since the chipper needs this type of terrain to work on.
- ▶ Pile the wood waste in an area that has easy access for a large truck, trailer and excavator. Piles that are inaccessible to the chipper and excavator will not be chipped (i.e. don't place the pile in a location that a truck and trailer would have difficulty getting to, such as on top of a hill without roadway access).
- ▶ Pile the wood waste approximately 50 meters from any public road, residential house, structure or vehicles and approximately 150 meters from any public gathering place, such as a park.
- ▶ Pile the raw wood waste in an area where you want the wood chips piled, since the chipper emits the resulting wood chips in the immediate area of the raw wood waste pile. The City and the chipping contractor are not responsible for moving the wood chip piles after the chipping process is complete.
- ▶ If your wood waste is slated to be chipped when fruit is ripening on adjacent trees, ensure the wood waste is piled at least 30 meters away so that flying debris from the chipping process does not damage the fruit.
- ▶ Pile the wood waste in an area that is not time sensitive to work projects (Pile the wood waste in an area where it can be left for up to three months). Delays in the chipping program may occur because of mechanical breakdowns or other unforeseen circumstances. If you have been accepted into the program the wood waste will be chipped within a reasonable amount of time. The City of Kelowna will not be responsible for moving any wood waste that has been piled for this program.
- ▶ Clearly mark irrigation lines or anything underground that you don't want the chipping company to drive on.
- ▶ The City of Kelowna or its Chipping contractors have the right to refuse any chipping job deemed unsafe.

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Please follow these rules after your wood waste has been chipped:

- ▶ After your wood waste has been chipped please do not handle the wood chip pile(s) until after the City of Kelowna surveys them to determine volumes (this is how we determine how much to pay the chipping contractor). Surveying usually occurs within one or two days of chipping. A City employee will contact you as soon as the surveying is complete. After the wood chip piles have been surveyed you can use the chips as you wish.
- ▶ You are responsible for the storage and use of the resulting wood chips. Please be aware that large wood chip piles are susceptible to spontaneous combustion and may catch fire in the warmer months of the year. Please knock large piles of wood chips down and spread out immediately after being surveyed by the City to prevent spontaneous combustion. The City is not responsible for any problems associated with the wood chips left on your property.

