



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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## EPA MAKES NORTHWEST FIELD BURNING A TOP PRIORITY

EPA Region 10 is stepping up its efforts to reduce or eliminate harmful health effects related to agricultural burning in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. We are devoting significantly more resources -- people and money -- to this issue so that we can facilitate a more consistent and effective approach to managing the field burning issue region-wide. EPA's goal is to prevent agricultural burning from endangering people's health and safety across the three state region.

We recognize that the states and tribes have primary responsibility for addressing field burning. Our plan is to work in partnership with all interested and affected people and organizations to learn how field burning is currently managed and to help identify and address areas where improvements are needed and can occur.

### What Specifically is EPA Doing?

- We are meeting with people throughout the Northwest to hear from different points of view on field burning. We are planning several Stakeholder Forums in the Northwest to gather and share information on different aspects of the issue. These forums will likely take place January through March 2001.
- We are funding several projects to improve air quality monitoring near field burning areas and studies that look at the toxicity of smoke, community exposure and potential health effects. We are funding other projects to research alternatives to field burning and the feasibility of using crop residues in making fiber-based products.
- We have participated in the mediation of a federal lawsuit related to field burning: *Save Our Summers v. Washington Department of Ecology*.
- To guide our efforts, we are developing a *Strategy for Agricultural Field Burning in Region 10* that will help us to: (1) prioritize our activities for the best use of resources; (2) improve understanding about where and why field burning occurs, its impacts and alternatives; and (3) create a framework for exploring long-term regional solutions with all stakeholders.

### How Can You Get More Information?

We will provide information about the dates and locations of the stakeholder forums later this year. You can find out about EPA's strategy, the stakeholder forums and other information on EPA's **Region 10 website**: <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/> (click on the button for AIR and then select Agricultural Field Burning).

