

24.9.2010 Planned burn goes wrong

ABC NEWS

24/9/2010

Tyres smoulder after a massive fire near Perth, Tasmania (ABC News: Damian McIntyre)

Map: Perth 7300

Investigations have begun into the cause of a major tyre fire in Tasmania's Northern Midlands.

A stockpile of 500 tyres near Perth is still burning but the blaze is contained.

The fire started after an escaped burn-off on private land moved into what firefighters estimate was a pile of 2,000 old tyres stored nearby.

The blaze sent thick plumes of poisonous smoke into the sky.

Quick action by firefighters using an excavator many of the tyres were moved clear of the blaze.

Tasmania Fire Service South Esk District Officer Ian Bounds says the large number of tyres on the site will be investigated.

"[We will] look at the reasonings behind this sort of storage and the EPA is also assisting with any issues with minor contamination," he said.

People with asthma and respiratory problems are urged to avoid the area.

Cathy Beswick from the Asthma Foundation of Tasmania says the smoke would be a trigger for people with asthma.

"People who have asthma and other respiratory conditions need to make sure that their asthma is well managed ideally but to carry their blue reliever of medication with them at all times because that will help to open up the airways and enable them to breathe."



Authorities estimate the stockpile contained up to 2,000 tyres. (Tasmania Fire Service) tyres burn at perth24.9.10.jpg (19.59 KiB)



Tyres smoulder after a massive fire near Perth, Tasmania (ABC News: Damian McIntyre) tyres burn at perth1_24.9.10.jpg (25.22 KiB)