



Media statement

Friday, 11 September 2020

Tyre dumping scam leaves landowner with \$100,000 clean-up cost

A warning is being issued over a used tyre dumping scam that results in victims being thousands of dollars out of pocket and thousands of used tyres illegally dumped.

The scam targets tyre retailers and vehicle wrecking yards in Perth, with the offender promising to dispose of worn out tyres substantially cheaper than legitimate tyre recyclers. The offender dumps the scrap tyres at properties they have leased. These have included storage lockers, vacant land lots and back yards of rented homes.

The offender abandons the property, leaving the owner with the problem - and cost - of disposing of the tyres. For one property owner this has resulted in a disposal bill of more than \$100,000.

The advice for tyre retailers and vehicle wreckers is to check that any contractor hired to dispose of their used tyres is legitimate. Allowing used tyres to be transported by unauthorised operators is an offence under the *Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004* attracting a penalty of up to \$25,000.

Senior Manager of Waste Operations at the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Matt Warnock, said business should tread carefully when it comes to tyre disposal.

“Businesses disposing of used tyres have a legal responsibility to ensure that any contractor who transports their used tyres is licensed to do so,” Mr Warnock said.

“Used tyres pose an environmental pollution risk mainly due the potential discharges and emissions from tyre fires.

“If an operator’s price seems too good to be true, you can check whether they are licensed with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

The unauthorised transport of a controlled waste and abandonment of waste are serious offences. Under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (Section 49A), abandoning waste carries a maximum **penalty of \$62,500 for an individual and \$125,000 for a body corporate** for each offence. This investigation is being managed by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

Property owners and agents are reminded to perform due diligence before leasing a property and ensure regular inspections are carried out on properties to ensure illegal activities are not taking place.



Consumer Protection Commissioner Lanie Chopping encouraged landlords and property managers to carry out thorough checks of prospective tenants, as well as regular inspections of the property during the lease.

“Four property inspections a year are allowed for residential tenancies after giving at least seven days’ notice, so landlords should consider scheduling an inspection soon after a new tenant moves in,” Ms Chopping said.

“I have issued bulletins today to landlords, and vehicle repairers and sellers, to warn them about the tyre dumping issue and how they can play their part in preventing this activity.”

Illegal dumping can be reported to DWER's Pollution Watch Hotline on 1300 784 782 or to pollutionwatch@dwer.wa.gov.au. For advice on compliance with the Regulations or any other controlled waste matter, please contact the department on 08 6364 7000, or email controlled.waste@dwer.wa.gov.au.

DWER media contact – media@dwer.wa.gov.au