



**New Jersey State Legislature
Office of Legislative Services
Office of the State Auditor**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
TIRE RECYCLING
July 1, 2013 to May 1, 2016**

We found that scrap tire piles, while reduced since the 2004 legislation established a management program, have reemerged on previously remediated sites as well as new sites. Greater efforts should be made to proactively monitor, identify, and remediate scrap tire piles within the state. Nevertheless, the vast majority of scrap tires generated in the state do ultimately arrive at an appropriate end-market.

AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS

As a result of our audit, department enforcement officials visited 26 of the known major scrap tire pile sites that were previously identified, and in most cases remediated, to determine if new accumulations of tires had developed. Their investigation found 18 of the 26 sites did not comply with state regulations and require additional remediation efforts. In addition, 11 new tire sites were identified and also determined to be noncompliant. In total, the department estimates that these 29 sites contain approximately 350,000 to 565,000 scrap tires.

Utilizing satellite map software, we scanned aerial images of junk yards and identified 13 sites that appeared to contain scrap tires. During the investigation referred to above, the department visited five of these sites and estimated an accumulation of 85,000 to 156,000 tires. The remaining eight sites, which may contain additional tire accumulations, were referred to the department's enforcement unit for further investigation.

Scrap tire piles present environmental and public health threats which include fire hazards and mosquito breeding habitats. Once ignited, scrap tire fires are notoriously difficult to extinguish, emit dense, black, noxious smoke, and can produce an oily residue that can contaminate groundwater. Tire piles can also accumulate rainwater which creates the small stagnant pools necessary for mosquito breeding habitats. Recent attention has focused on the role that mosquitos play in transmitting the Zika virus.

AUDITEE RESPONSE

The department generally concurs with our findings and recommendations.

For the complete audit report click [here](#).